

Village of Hamburg Environmental Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, June 3, 2025
Hamburg Village Hall, 100 Main St., Hamburg, NY 14075

Present: Chair- Adrienne Punturiero, Village Liaison - Holly Park, Kim Bourke, Andy Schrauth, Gerry Stockmeyer, Kathryn Walsh, Stu Wheaton

Excused: Mike Reilly

Absent: n/a

Guests: Tricia Miller

General Notes:

- *E. coli* updates: Waterkeeper will sample the creek again this spring/summer. Marc Shuttleworth reported that the DPW did find one bad sewer connection. They did cap it, so it should be ok now. DPW will also retest the runoff at Pine St. to make sure their capping was successful.
- Matt Bourke has been in touch with Bonnie Lawrence who heads up the Erie County Environmental Management Council, but has not officially been confirmed to the group yet.
- Adrienne spoke with Tyler Aul from Aul's Upholstery on Union. St and picked up all of the fabric samples and scraps that they were going to discard. She intends to distribute the fabric to groups and individuals who can put it to use.
- The PRISM field crew will still plan to survey the Black Locust in the Bird Sanctuary this summer. They were planning on a July 9th date, with the 10th as a backup rain day. They have asked to have the back up rain day moved to July 11th.
- Kim will reach out to the St. James Church (and maybe other places) to see if we could get a Farmer Pirates drop-off location somewhere in the Village.
- Kim informed the group about an invasive species workshop (Terrestrial Management Workshop: Invasive Trees and Shrubs) from 10-12 on June 12th at the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Link to register: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQ71ldDf2aFhY6WnRfqBF_zljx1l_BvRPXGee4FmXTCzRQpA/viewform
- Kat mentioned two trails related events coming up - a trail stewardship clean up day jointly hosted by the Hamburg Trails Committee and Erie County Department of Recreation will be held at Eighteen Mile Creek Park on Saturday, June 7 from 10-12 (registration required). The Hamburg Trails Committee will also be hosting its second "Tiny Trails" event for parents and kiddos on Thursday, June 5th at 10:30 am at the Taylor Road Cabin.
- TREES: Andy and Adrienne agreed to work with ReTree to help alleviate some of the barriers to choosing trees for in front of resident homes (in the development strip).

Budget

- New fiscal year began on June 1 : Starting budget of \$6,000 + Encumbered amount for billboard of \$1,166.

Total budget as of June 2, 2025: \$7,166.00

Tricia Miller Conversation

- Kat Walsh invited Tricia to join us for the meeting to discuss composting and recycling.
- Tricia has been leading garden and composting education in the schools for about 15 years. Some classrooms compost during snack time, one classroom in each school acts as the “compost crew” and leads the other classrooms that would like to be involved.
- Tricia is hoping to do a pilot study at Union Pleasant Elementary and start a larger composting program in the cafeteria by working with Farmer Pirates (A local for-profit composting company).
- The Pilot will cost about \$1,500, and Tricia is working on getting grant funding to cover most of this cost.
- The group discussed some potential ways of partnering with Tricia and the schools to continue to promote composting in the Village.
- Tricia also brought up the idea of supplying the Community Center/Playground with some can and bottle specific recycling containers to help keep recyclable (\$0.05 returnable) items out of the trash. The HHS Life Skills classes could empty the containers during the school year, the ECC would need to figure out how to empty it during the summer.
- Tricia brought in a few examples of what the containers might look like, but our group will need to actually choose one to order. (Could we find one that we could put our logo on?)
- We will need to check with Josh Haeick to make sure he is OK if we put a container like this in the park.

ACTIONS: 1. Group will think of some creative ways for the Village ECC to partner with the School composting program to promote composting (on a small scale) in the Village
2. Kim will reach out to Josh to see if he is OK with a recycling container in the Village park.
3. Group will research and choose an appropriate recycling container before the July meeting.

Village Recycling

- Kat brought in some information about the “Skip the Stuff” campaign. The idea behind the campaign is to get local restaurants to agree to limit the amount of plastic utensils (and related items) that they are handing out in to-go orders.

- To get restaurant buy-in, we would need to produce some informational flyers and deliver them to each restaurant in the village and explain to them what the campaign is for. If they sign on, they would be given a sticker to place in their window/door stating that they are part of the program. Ideally, there would be some sort of local ordinance passed limiting how much plastic restaurants would be able to provide.
- Once we get to a point of actually handing these things out, Kim mentioned that the Village Economic Development Commission might be a good group to help with the outreach.
- Getting recycling bins in the Municipal buildings was also discussed (is it true that no building has recycling bins?!) This needs to be looked into, and if bins are needed in each building, our group discussed supplying them. Buildings would include: Village Hall, Rec Center, Community Center, DPW office building.
 - This idea would need to be brought to the Board before any action can take place.

ACTION: 1. Holly will bring up the recycling bins in municipal buildings with the Board.

Bird Sanctuary

- Stu informed the group that the recognition plaque for the donors that will hang on the new kiosk is being made
- Stu also spoke with Mike Gangemi (Erie County Cartographer) who was excited about the idea of having some summer interns in his department produce a map of the bird sanctuary for the kiosk.
 - Mike needs a letter from the Village (Holly) stating that the bird sanctuary is entirely located on public lands.
- The sign guiding folks from the overlook to the Bird Sanctuary still needs to be placed (Kim was unable to get a key). The Southtowns Chamber should have a key at their office.
- The Bird Sanctuary clean up day was a great success. About 30 volunteers spread 15 piles of wood chips down the main trail. Some errant trees in the meadow were pulled. And the PRISM Boot Brush Station was installed at the entrance to the Bird Sanctuary.
 - The Boot Brush Station will need to be promoted during Invasive Species Awareness Week (ISAW, June 9-16) by creating a social media post featuring our new sign/boot brush.
- The Village did receive the draft of the Bridge Feasibility study, a few minor typographical errors need to be corrected before the study can be released. It should be ready to be released this month. The study turned out great, and concludes that a bridge can be build, but that funding will be the biggest hurdle to the project.
- Adrienne brought up the issue of trash being tossed over the edge of the Overlook park down into the grass/trees below. Do we need to consider a trash/recycling bin in that part of the park to keep the litter at bay?
- Kim mentioned that visits to the Bird Sanctuary are up over the last year. April 2024 saw 86 visitors, April 2025 saw 165. May 2024 saw 137 visitors while May 2025 saw 152 visitors.

ACTIONS: 1. Kim will locate a key and get the sign hung in the kiosk near the Overlook.

2. Kim will be sure to promote the Boot Brush Station during ISAW.

Climate Smart

- Adrienne and Kim attended the Local Climate Forum hosted by The Univ. at Buffalo Regional Institute (UBRI). It went well, they connected with other leaders in Climate Smart Communities, and learned about some potential grant funding opportunities through the Climate Smart Communities program.
- The Village is still waiting to receive all of the electric landscaping equipment for the Parks and Rec Department, and the Ford Lightening for the DPW. Once all are received, we will make sure to make a social media posts to make sure the community know why/how the Village acquired these things.
- Holly mentioned forming a separate group that would lead all of the climate smart initiatives. The group was in favor of that, as it would take a significant chunk of work off of our plates.

ACTIONS: Holly will look into forming the Climate Smart Task Force.

Next meeting date: **Tuesday, July 1, 2025** at Village Hall, 100 Main St. Hamburg, NY 14075

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Bourke

