



**Towamencin Township
Environmental Advisory Council**

Minutes for the April 14th, 2026 Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 14, 2026

Time: 7:06 PM – 8:26 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM.

2. ATTENDANCE

- **Members Present:** Joe Meehan, Donna Hegge, Dr. Rich Costlow (Assoc.), Anthony Long (Assoc.), Corinna Fiore.
- **Members Absent:** Brett MacKay, David McCreary, Wendy Zoll Fillgrove, Casey Hannings (Assoc.).
- **Liaisons Present:** Vanessa Gaynor (Board of Supervisors).
- **Public Present:** Bruce Bailey.

3. OPENING COMMENTS

Members noted the absence of several council individuals for the evening's session.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the March 10, 2026 meeting were tabled. As Casey Hannings was not present, the approval will be addressed at the next scheduled meeting.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Troxel Meadow: A resident reported three occupied sparrow nests in the meadow. The public emphasized that emerging sprouts are native growth and should not be treated as weeds.

- Bustard Road No-Mow: Public recommendation was received to name the site “Liam Lookout.” Inquiry was made regarding the legal process for naming township meadows.
 - Action: Vanessa Gaynor will lead the investigation into naming requirements.
- Events: Announcement of a bird-oriented table at the Skippack Earth Day event on April 20, 2026.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Bird Town

- The next meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2026.
- Pine needles have been added to the Purple Martin houses (provided by the PA Game Commission) at Fischer’s Park to encourage nesting.
- The Early Spring Birding event at Fischer’s Park (April 4, 2026) had approximately 30 attendees; 43 species were identified.

7. 2025 Projects

- Annual Report: The report is nearing completion, covering Education/Outreach, Restoration, and Ordinance Recommendations. No formal EAC vote is required; it will proceed to the BOS for publication. Bruce Bailey to provide the Bird Town summary.
- Landscape Ordinance: Currently with the Township Engineer. Vanessa Gaynor will confirm if the draft has been forwarded to the Planning Commission.
- Grasslands Ordinance: Tabled until the May meeting to allow for Casey’s input. Discussion focused on maintenance responsibilities for HOAs and private owners.

8. 2026 Projects

- Troxel Meadow: Project signs have been requested. Public continues to urge ongoing maintenance.
- Bustard Road No-Mow: Native plants are thriving due to fill dirt. Weeds Inc. is expected in June for management. A new candidate for 2027 no-mow status was identified at the corner of Bustard and Keer Roads.
- Subdivision Review: OSPAC is preparing a May 13 presentation for the BOS regarding "Project Hilltop." Discussion held regarding storm water management at North Penn HS and the proposed 207-unit Pinnacle development.
- Towamencin Day (May 30, 2026): Planned presence includes 3-4 tables (Native Plants, Information, and Bird Town). Rich Costlow and Bruce Bailey will lead a tree-planting activity. Corinna Fiore will provide native seeds.
- Workshops: Fall 2026 dates are being reviewed for a Weeds Inc. workshop. Corinna Fiore is exploring partnerships with Temple Ambler and Penn State for deer-resistant plant education.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- Native Plant Promotion: Michael Ricci’s presentation is deferred to a future meeting. EAC to request his files from the Township office.
- Treasurer’s Report: David McCreary was absent; no updates other than the purchase of Troxel Meadow signage.

- Supervisor/Manager Report: Vanessa Gaynor reported on storm sewer/Skipack Creek grants and Comprehensive Plan updates regarding LEED incentives. Data Center Regulation was discussed; the Township is developing regulations for water and utility usage ahead of an April 29 vote.

10. ADJOURNMENT

- Closing Comments: Donna Hegge will email members to finalize the volunteer count for Towamencin Day.
- Adjourned: 8:26 PM.
- Next Meeting: May 12, 2026.

Council members present: Joe Meehan, Donna Hegge, Dr. Rich Costlow (Assoc.), Anthony Long (Assoc.), Corina Fiore

Council members absent: Brett MacKay, David McCreary, Wendy Zoll Fillgrove, Casey Hannings (Assoc.)

Public present: Bruce Bailey

Board of Supervisors (BOS) Liaison present: Vanessa Gaynor

1. **Call to Order Meeting** Called to order at 7:06.

2. **Opening Comments**

2.1 Discussed members not in attendance tonight.

3. Public Comments

3.1 Troxel Meadow Observations A member of the public reported that three nests within Troxel Meadow are currently occupied by sparrows. Additionally, it was noted that the recent sprouts appearing in the meadow should be preserved, as they are believed to be native growth rather than weeds.

3.2 Naming of Open Space (Bustart Road) The public expressed a desire to formally name the open space located on Bustart Road, recommending the name “**Liam Lookout.**” A request was made for specific procedural details regarding the official naming process for township meadows.

- **Action Item:** Vanessa Gaynor offered to lead the inquiry into the naming requirements and process.

3.3 Upcoming Events An announcement was made regarding a bird-oriented informational table being organized for the **Skippack Earth Day** event scheduled for this weekend, **April 20, 2026**

4. Approval of Minutes from 3/10/2026 Meeting - Casey Hastings (Assoc.) was not present to approve the 3/10/2026 minutes. This will be discussed and completed at the next EAC meeting.

5. Bird Town PA Subcommittee Report

- a. Next Meeting- 6/4/2026

- b. Purple Martin birdhouse from PA Game Commission for Fischer's Park - pine needles have been placed in the houses to improve nesting.
- c. Early Spring Birding at Fischer's Park - 4/4/2026 - approximately 30 people attended, 43 different birds were spotted in 2 hours time.

6. Old Business

2025 projects

- i. Annual Report - Requested additional information from Birdtown Subcommittee as well as pictures from EAC events in CY2025. Information has all been entered and the Annual report is almost ready for publication. The report is broken into three initiatives: Education and outreach Initiatives, restoration and ecological improvement of open space, and reviewing and recommending environmental ordinances for best environmental practices. Discussed if the EAC will need to vote on this report, and determined this was not necessary. It will pass through the board of supervisors and be published. Bruce to provide a write up of birdtown committee activities.
- ii. Landscape - Brett sent the final landscape ordinance to Mary Stover, Township Engineer, they will need to be sent to the planning commission next but have not been so yet. Vanessa to follow up with Mary to confirm if they have been sent.
- iii. Grasslands - Discussed concerns over the grasslands ordinance, and discussed that these concerns will be shared by the township solicitors as well as the board of supervisors. Casey provided a draft email addressing these concerns. Discussed that maintenance will be left onto the property owner, to include home owners associations (HOAs), under the current ordinance verbiage. The discussion of the grasslands ordinance was tabled until the May EAC meeting, when Casey would be present to provide input. The EAC agreed this is a positive contribution to township ordinance, and we should continue to discuss and pursue finalization of the ordinance. The EAC believes the township solicitor should ultimately determine the fate of this ordinance.

b. 2026 projects

- i. Troxel Meadow - David McCreary is not present to discuss this project. Public comments urged EAC members to maintain this project as needed. Signes have been requested per David.
- ii. Bustard Rd. No Mow -This project does not need a total herbicidal kill to remove invasive species, this was populated with native plants due to the the fill dirt that was placed in this location. Weed inc is suspected to be present sometime in June for no mow/meadow management. Discussed selecting an additional area for no mow designation in 2027. Possible candidates included:

1. Corner of Bustard and Keer road, next to the water treatment plant.
- iii. OSPAC/EAC collaboration on subdivision review - OSPAC is working towards a presentation directed at the Board of Supervisors for May 13, illustrating their thoughts on what should be completed by the developers of project hill top. These opinions are in line with EAC opinions presented at the meeting on 2/10/2026. Discussed the storm water management of North Penn high school and the changes taking place along Route 63, to the north of the high school. Pinnacle is offering 66 acres of open space with their new proposed 207 unit development plan.
- iv. Towamencin Day - 5/30/2026 - left over crafts from Birdtown subcommittee children's activity. Proposed ideas of what to present at the EAC table. Rich and Bruce discussed planting a tree again similar to 2025, and they are willing to support this activity again. Corinna and Donna stated they can be there for a majority of the day but not the whole time. Bruce formally requests a table for the Birdtown Subcommittee sponsored by the EAC. Donna reached out to Davids Brothers plants to discuss native plant sales, but have not heard back from them at this time. EAC members could present native plant information to attendees, and Corinna offered to bring native plant seeds. Plan to request 3-4 tables for the event. Table designation is planned as follows:
 1. Native Plant Table
 2. Native Plant Information Table
 3. Birdtown Subcommittee Table with crafts
- v. Workshops -
 1. Potentially Weeds Inc.- per email from David dates will be reviewed for the Fall of 2026.
 2. Deer Resistant Plants - Lead by Rich, the presentation that he has seen was hesitant to present this to the township, as the owner of this presentation was a business owner who was not confident in their upside to this commitment.
 - a. Discussed the potential of reaching out to Temple Ambler Campus, and local Penn State chapters. Corinna has stated she will take the lead on reaching out to connections.
 3. We get a free workshop from Perkiomen Water Shed Commission, the EAC will research this possibility.

2. New Business

- a. Township resident Michael Ricci presentation on native plant promotion - Michael Ricci was not present at this meeting, and the EAC will work to schedule a future time for him to

make his presentation. The EAC will also need to request the file shared by Michael from Michelle (info@towamencin.com).

3. **Treasurer's Report** - David M. - David was not available to present this report. Only change has been the ordering of signs for the Troxel Meadow Project.
4. **Township Supervisor/Manager Report** - Vanessa states they are prepping a grant for the storm sewer improvement, and the Skippack creek improvement. They worked through the comprehensive plan and all the recommendations, relevant to the EAC, stated LEED certification would provide density bonus and the township will work towards property bonus but did not designate a specific incentive. Waiting on updates to the comprehensive plan from the consultant. Data Center regulation, hyperscale data centers are large centers fueling AI boom as well as daily internet operations. Township is required to permit data centers, but they can be regulated under township regulations. Board focused on water usage, sound, utility usage, and this was sent to the planning commission. This was advertised for a vote on the April 29th meeting. At this time there is no state directive, however Montgomery and Chester counties have provided guidance. Township is obligated to have space for all legitimate use, therefore data centers cannot be full blocked from the township. The location of these areas are likely north surrounding Wambold road.
5. **Next Meeting** - 5/12/2026
 - a. Closing comments - What members of the EAC can attend Towamencin day to man the tables? Dona to send out an email for a head count. Anthony cannot attend, Rich and
6. **Adjournment** - 8:26