



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
&
GREEN TEAM**

DATE/TIME: **May 19, 2026 @ 7:30pm**

	Present	Absent
ENVIRONMENTAL MEMBERS:		
Patty Almberg	<u> X </u>	
David Kraft	<u> X </u>	
Brian Mitchell	<u> X </u>	
Mary Daly		<u> X </u>
Gary Barth		<u> X </u>
Pam Gould		<u> X </u>
Chris Caslin	<u> X </u>	
Laura Hoogstrate, Alt.		<u> X </u>
Aditi Puri, Alt.		<u> X </u>
Councilwoman Klodiana Malellari		<u> X </u>

Patty asked Gemma to talk about the March 26th Junior Prom corsage box collection with Delford & River Dell Flowers. Gemma stated that they did not have many boxes returned to RDHS but most were brought back to the florists. There were approximately 20 boxes returned and Emma Lempanau won the \$25 Dunkin gift card. Patty stated that the Senior Prom is June 11th. Gemma stated that she will put together a flyer and coordinate the collection of prom boxes with the RDHS.

Patty stated that she attended Composting 101 on April 11th at the RE library presented by Source Compost. She spoke to some people after the meeting who wanted to start a composting/garden club. They met on April 15th for their first meeting and then again on May 12th. They have been exchanging seeds and will continue to meet.

Patty stated that on April 18th there was a clean-up at Historic New Bridge Landing as part of NJ 250. It was a multi group activity coordinated by the RE Green Team, Bergen County Historical Society and RE 250. It was a success, about 30 people were there to help including Boys Scouts and RDHS students.

Patty asked Brian to talk about the Second Chance Toy Drive on April 18th. Brian stated that they collected about 450 toys which is a little less than previous years. The Second Chance Toy people picked up the toys at the end. Brian was not sure where the toys were going this year.

Patty asked Linda to talk about Dark Skies. Linda stated she and Pam attended a Bergen Hub meeting in January that had a presentation about Dark Skies. Linda posted on Facebook on 5 different days in April about Dark Skies and the benefits. She stated that on April 22nd they posted about asking people to turn off their outside lights from 7pm to 10pm. This was an initial effort to coincide with Earth Day. She stated that they will continue to work on this effort because it benefits wildlife, saves on energy costs and pollution and allows us to enjoy the stars!! Patty stated that the street lights in River Edge are placed well and have low lighting which is the kind of lighting that is best for dark skies.

Patty asked Marie to talk about the composting on April 25th at the River Edge Run. Marie stated that it was a success and we collected 40lbs of banana and orange peels that filled 2 buckets. The compost was picked up by Neighborhood Compost. Marie stated that we also collected and recycled water bottles and plastic wrap.

Patty stated that on April 25th at Bergen County Zoo there was a Party for the Planet. She stated that Claire O'Connor from the RDMS had sent her the information.

Patty stated that she and Pam attended the April 27th Bergen Hub Meeting in Glen Rock. They discussed Non-Native Plants and the NJ bill that was just passed to combat this problem. They also talked about the construction dust. Patty passed around some information about these.

Patty stated that Pam attended the Hackensack River Nation summit on April 28th @ FDU. Pam told Patty that she discussed with the Hackensack River Keeper whether as part of the River Nation efforts is there anything we should be looking into regarding improving the boat launch. Their advice was to continue to keep the vegetation cut back and continue with our cleanups.

Patty asked Brian to talk about the Hackensack River clean up on May 2nd. Brian stated that Laura coordinated this event with the River Keeper and that it was a success. They had a lot of volunteers and filled a dumpster.

Patty stated that on May 9th the RE DPW hosted a shredding event.

Patty stated that they will present the EPC and Green Team annual reports to the Mayor and Council on May 28th.

Patty stated that Pam sent her information about the RESILIENCY NJ GRANT opportunity that is available again. Pam sent Patty the following information and Patty read her statement as follows:

Last Oct the head of the NNJ Community Foundation and Hackensack River nation brought to our attention a grant for Resiliency Planning. It was a grant that was to encourage bordering towns to work together on resiliency plans (flooding). A new round of this grant has been issued and I discussed it with the NNJCF and a New Milford councilwoman who had been instrumental in the first go round and they wanted to try again. Three bordering towns must work together to be eligible for the grant. NNJCF has been notified as it looks like RE, Oradell, New Milford and Hackensack are interested. We may get one or 2 more towns. The grant proposal must be in by July 7. I told our Admin that the EPC would do anything to help. As part of the SWM Pollution Plan the state asks whether the town has collaborated with neighboring towns on resiliency efforts, this would be a great way to check that box and do some good.

Patty stated that Pam sent her information about Skip the Stuff. Pam sent Patty the following information and Patty read her statement as follows:

The letters to the RE businesses were drafted, signed, copied, addressed, stamped and mailed. We decided to then provide table tents for the businesses to display alerting customers to request any utensils or condiment packs they may need. They have been ordered and we are waiting for the delivery. We also discussed doing a library event/talk on the subject as part of educating the public which is required by the new law. One of our students also created a poster to be posted on Facebook pages and the town website to help let folks know about the new law. The law will be implemented starting August 1 although there is a "break in" period. For this effort we need to decide when to start posting the poster on FB and we need to pick a date for the library talk. Then we need to do a short Power point or something similar presentation for the talk. The businesses as well as residents would be welcome to attend the library talk and it should be geared to both, with time to ask questions. We could distribute table tents then or if not we need to come up with a way to distribute them.

Patty stated the next Hackensack river sweep is on September 12th.

Patty asked Linda to talk about the Flower & Vegetable Garden contest. Linda stated that we would do them together as it is easier. She will run the contest over the summer and promote it on social media.

Patty discussed the idea of recycling pickle balls & tennis balls. She stated that she reached out to Joe Ricca from the Rec Dept and he would like to try to do this but needed someone to manage the collection boxes. Linda volunteered to do this. Patty will let Joe know that the RE EPC and Green Team will help in this project.

Patty stated that we are still waiting for the municipal lawyers to review the Shared Service Agreement with Ridgewood for EPS/Styrofoam. Marie offered to reach out to someone at the town level to see what the progress is with this.

Gemma asked what we could do to get a Community Garden going in town. Patty stated that we need to find a good spot. Once again, Cherry Hill Blossom Park was brought up by the members as a good spot and questioned why it is not available as it is Open Space, which is what a community garden is!

Linda stated that the Kiosk by boat ramp has a map of the Hackensack River.

Marie stated that she has given Linda and Pam access to post on our social media accounts.

David stated that he has signed up for Terracycle FREE Recycling Programs. And if anyone has Crest or Oral B products that are empty, he can take them and add them to his collection box.

Patty stated our next meeting is July 21, 2026.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.