

New Castle Climate & Environment Commission

Minutes for February 20, 2025

Attendees: Commissioner Bruce Leland, Chair Sharon Morris, Commissioner Myrna Candraia, Commissioner Kendall Bakich, Commissioner Julia Koch, Commissioner Nancy Barnes,

Commissioner Morris called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

- Commissioner Morris announced that Michelle Huster, Assistant to the Clerk, will take over as CEC liaison from Town Clerk Mindy Andis.

Elemental Film Screening Debrief

- Commissioner Barnes reported on the successful film showing of "Elemental: Reimagine Wildfire." Forty people attended the event. Three expert panelists, Zach Pigati, Paul Smith, and Kate Collins, led the Q&A after the film.

Honoring Chair Tom Elder

- Town Manager Dave Reynolds relayed that Ryan Barkman from the Parks & Rec department reported that Rollie Gordon Park isn't viable as a dig site for Tom's memorial tree due to too many underground and overground obstructions. Tom's life celebration is on April 17th from 2-4 pm at the Lakota clubhouse, and we would like to coordinate the tree planting ceremony for that morning with a plaque presentation. A non-fruiting flowering crabapple tree will be planted.
- **Action item:**
 - Chair Morris will contact Tom's widow to get her preference for tree planting on the site.

Earth Day Update

- Commissioner Leland reported there are twelve confirmed participants for Earth Day. Commissioner Bakich stated that the Girls STEM Leadership Club at Elk Creek Elementary would participate in the event.
- The event will run from 11am-2pm. Commissioners should arrive at 9am for set-up.
- Promotion ideas include announcing on the town's digital sign, posting flyers, sending a press release to Post Independent, announcing in the town's newsletter, and posting on Next Door and Facebook.
- **Action item**
 - Chair Morris will contact the BLM and Parks and Wildlife and invite them to participate.
 - Commissioner Leland will create the flyer.
 - Commissioner Koch will investigate the t-shirt design.

Review Approved Budget and 2025 Projects

- Commissioner Leland noted a few changes to the approved bag fee budget, including an increased cost of reusable bowls and cutlery and a future projects line item.

- Chair Morris recommended that we postpone working on additional projects until Earth Day is complete. The commission will calendar out the rest of their projects for the year.

CEC Website

- The commission discussed gathering new resources for the website. Commissioners Morris, Bakich, and Koch will work on updating the website. Assistant to the Clerk Huster will check on the cost of additional web pages.
- The commission agreed to remove the fire videos from the website.
- The commission agreed to add a section to the website for fire prevention, pollinators, xeriscaping, composting, living with wildlife, renewable energy, evacuation plan, consumption reduction, volunteer recruitment, and bag fee expenditures.

Review Meeting Times for Future Meetings

- Chair Morris asked for feedback on the commission's meeting time. The group agreed to keep at 4pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

Town Council Update

- Commissioner Leland reminded the group that there is a vacancy on the commission to fill Tom Elder's remaining term, which expires in April 2026. Commissioners are encouraged to reach out to interested parties, including adding a student (junior) commission member.

Approve January 16, 2025 Minutes

- **Motion:** Commissioner Bakich's moved to accept the minutes with changes to Bakich's last name. Chair Morris seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Comments

- Chair Morris asked Town Manager Reynolds if the CEC could add a teen commissioner. Reynold stated that the commission would need to bring the request to the Town Council for their approval.
- Commissioner Barnes asked for a volunteer to take minutes in March. Commissioner Koch agreed to take minutes.

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 5:36 pm. Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Nancy Barnes

Commission Chair Sharon Morris