

OCEAN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Minutes – Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call – The following members were present:

Name	Title	Present/Absent	Name	Title	Present/Absent
Richard Bernardini	Chairperson	Present	Elizabeth Lehman	Commissioner	Present
Marnie Niederhofer	Commissioner	Present	James Edwards	Commissioner	Present
Caitlin Quirk	Commissioner	Present	John Aitken	Commissioner	Present
Jessica Fenton	City Liaison	Absent	Doug Blackman	Commissioner	Present
Cyndy Legowski	Alternate #1	Present	Harley Cummins	Alternate # 2	Present
Zarian Cabalo	Student Liaison	Present	Joseph Heng	Student Liaison	Present

Open Public Meetings Announcement – Adequate notice of this meeting was given pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

Approval of Minutes – Motion to approve the minutes for the meetings on October 14, 2025 was made by Marnie Niederhofer and seconded by Doug Blackman. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.

Public Comments

- Attendees:
 - Jacob DeRose, Americorp Watershed Ambassador, WMA15
 - Provided an overview of his function and opportunities to work together with the EC and SEA.

Pending Business

1. Submitted Plan Review

- a. 2 CAFRA/NJDEP notices, 0 Treatment Works, 2 Zoning/Planning Board submissions were reviewed. No adverse comments.
- 2. Student Environmental Association
 - a. Ocean City High School
 - i. Red Cup Project: In the process of getting a pilot program in place in the high school for morning coffee.
 - 1. SEA is seeking grants/funds for reusable cup purchase.
 - ii. Beach Toy Crates - development of the program is in progress to submit to the City and School Administration for review and approval, possibly for use of Public Access funds
 - 1. Motion was made to approve and proceed with the program was made by Cyndy Legowski, seconded by Caitlin Quirk. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.
 - iii. Held a beach sweep on 10/25
- 3. ANJEC
 - a. Open Space Grant was approved for North End Veterans Park garden
 - b. "Best of NJ's Outdoors" program will include an opportunity to view and learn about our pollinator gardens and beach plum programs.
 - i. Program was selected for a site review by ANJEC, to be scheduled
- 4. Monarch Waystation
 - a. North End Veterans Park
 - i. Collaboration in progress with the OC Garden Civic Assoc., OC Garden Club and OCEC
 - 1. This tract was confirmed as a City property. The plan was developed for City review and was accepted.
 - 2. D. Blackman researching plant availability and schedule
 - 3. Spring 2026 installation
 - 4. Irrigation system operation confirmed with area coverage
 - b. Seed harvesting in progress by Betsy Lehman
 - c. Potential locations
 - i. Tabernacle sign at 6th and Asbury
 - ii. Ocean City Welcome sign at 55th Street and 34th St Gateway
- 5. Lectures/Education Program
 - i. 2026 Family Fun Day 2/14/26
- 6. Eagle Scout Service Project – Wilson Stauffer
 - a. Wilson is working directly with the Tabernacle, Shores and Mayor's Aide.
 - i. Received approval for all sites, ready for installation
- 7. Upweller
 - a. Oysters were harvested by NJDEP on 11/13/25.
- 8. Microplastics – the City passed a new Regulations for Construction Projects Ordinance which includes control of microplastics, fiberglass and other issues.
 - a. Enforcement procedures have been requested from administration.
 - i. It was discussed that the control of reporting is relying on neighbors of construction projects.
- 9. Noise abatement of gas-powered leaf blowers to be investigated.

10. Family Fun Day February 14, 2026 – commissioners to review and recommend exhibitors and crafts.
 - a. Mrs. Heng volunteered to lead new crafts.
11. M. Niederhofer noted that Public Access Funds from waterfront mitigation fees may be available for project use. Ideas discussed included Crook Horn Creek Trail and Tennessee Ave. boat ramp area. Concept development required for presentation to Administration. Beach Toy Crates are in consideration.

New Business

1. Offshore Drilling - The "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (OBBBA), signed into law on July 4, 2025, has several provisions that will significantly impact offshore oil and gas drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) by mandating more lease sales, reducing royalty rates, and encouraging downhole commingling of production. These changes are intended to boost industry investment and production in federal waters. A discussion was held regarding the impacts of this on our City. A Motion was held to investigate a Resolution by the City to oppose energy exploration off our shores, as is adopted by Cape May County and other Cape May County towns, by Caitlin Quirk, and seconded by Betsy Lehman. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously. A position paper will be prepared.
2. EC commended Caitlin Quirk on being recognized as a leading environmental business.
3. B. Lehman noted concern that there was significant work being done by DPW on the dunes in the 30's. After a discussion, it was recommended that Betsy contact OC DPW or NJ DEP.
4. C. Quirk noted the condition of trash receptacles in areas of the city. It was discussed and recommended a call to Joe Clark as a source of information.
5. M. Niederhofer questioned if EC will be installing storm drain medallions this season. R. Bernardini to inquire.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM. Motions to adjourn were made by Betsy Lehman and seconded by Cyndy Legowski. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 6:30 PM, in person at the Cape May County Howard S. Stainton Senior Center, Room S107 Senior Lounge/Card Room, 1735 Simpson Avenue.