

OCEAN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Minutes – Tuesday, December 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	Absent	James Edwards	Commissioner	Present
Caitlin Quirk	Commissioner	Present	John Aitken	Commissioner	Absent
Jessica Fenton	City Liaison	Absent	Doug Blackman	Commissioner	Present
Cyndy Legowski	Alternate #1	Absent	Harley Cummins	Alternate # 2	Present
Zarian Cabalo	Student Liaison	Present	Joseph Heng	Student Liaison	Absent

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 Betsy Lehman and seconded by Jim Edwards. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.

Public Comments

- Attendees:
 - Wilson Stauffer, Eagle Scout Service Project completion
 - Jason Walsh - Stockton student, attended Sustainable Jersey Summit and noted their program for an energy technical assistance program for municipalities and school districts located in the South Jersey Gas service territories.

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 funding is complete, cups ordered
 - 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.
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 by Betsy Lehman completed.
 - 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. Project complete, Wilson was commended for the project
7. Noise abatement of gas-powered leaf blowers to be investigated.
8. Family Fun Day February 14, 2026 – commissioners to review and recommend exhibitors and crafts.
 - a. Mrs. Heng volunteered to lead new crafts.
9. 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. Beach Toy Box Concept development was presented to the Administration.

10. 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.
11. 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.
 - a. Beach access path was widened to original width.
12. C. Quirk noted the condition of trash receptacles in areas of the city.
 - a. A downtown beta test is in consideration.
13. M. Niederhofer questioned if EC will be installing storm drain medallions this season.
 - a. R. Bernardini advised DPW to provide locations.

New Business

1. 2026 Meeting Schedule - motion to adopt by Caitlin Quirk, seconded by Harley Cummins. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.
2. Commissioner term expirations as of 12/31/25
 - a. Betsy Lehman advised she will not be seeking reappointment. The Commission applauded her service.
 - b. Jim Edwards, Marnie Niederhofer and Caitlin Quirk will accept reappointment.
3. Commissioners questioned the schedule for the Crook Horn Creek trail, R. Bernardini to inquire.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM. Motions to adjourn were made by Caitlin Quirk and seconded by Betsy Lehman. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 13, 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.