

OCEAN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Minutes – Tuesday, May 12, 2026

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	Harley Cummins	Commissioner	Present
Marnie Niederhofer	Commissioner	Present	James Edwards	Commissioner	Absent
Cyndy Legowski	Commissioner	Absent	John Aitken	Commissioner	Present
Jessica Fenton	City Liaison	Absent	Doug Blackman	Commissioner	Present
Jason Walsh	Alternate #1	Present	Anthony Verde	Alternate # 2	Absent
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 April 14, 2026 was made by Doug Blackman and seconded by John Aitken. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.

Public Comments

- SEA Student Observation - Flora Morris, Rai Chowdhuri, Kasui Kuhuley, Coryn Driscoll

Pending Business

- Submitted Plan Review
 - a. 18 CAFRA/NJDEP notices, 0 Treatment Works, 2 Zoning/Planning Board submissions were reviewed.
 - i. Recommendations for denial were made for 3700 West Avenue, 4036-4040 & 4044-4048 West Avenue due to wetlands habitat encroachment.

- ii. There were several NJDEP submissions that were received by the EC, but outside the period for comment. EC will request more timely receipt of submissions from the City.
 - iii. No findings or comments on other submissions.
 - Student Environmental Association
 - a. Ocean City High School
 - i. Red Cup Project
 - 1. SEA will submit the project for the Sustainable Jersey Success Story competition
 - ii. Beach Toy Crates
 - 1. Administration approved the installation at 2-3 locations, 1st Street, 18th Street and 40th Street
 - 2. H. Cummins will coordinate construction of the boxes from pallets.
 - a. Crate assembly scheduled for 5/13 and 5/20.
 - iii. High school seed libraries are set up.
 - iv. Upper Twp. Strawberry Festival 5/16/26
 - 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.
 - Monarch Waystation
 - a. North End Veterans Park
 - i. Collaboration in progress with the OC Garden Civic Assoc., OC Garden Club and OCEC.
 - 1. Plant material order in progress, city completed lighting and irrigation
 - 2. Installation scheduled for Tuesday 5/19 5:00 PM
 - b. Potential locations
 - i. Tabernacle sign at 6th Street & Asbury Avenue; Ocean City Welcome sign at 55th Street; and 34th Street Gateway.
 - ii. Duncan Homes requested information for a pollinator garden at their new office at 201 Ave., info provided. Will also recommend registering with Pollinator Pathway.
 - Lectures/Education Program
 - a. R. Bernardini presented an overview of the Environmental Commission activities to Ocean City AARP on 4/17/26.
 - R. Bernardini advised DPW to provide locations for storm drain medallion installations.
 - Crook Horn Creek Trail
 - a. ACT Engineers advised that information has been forwarded to NJDOT. Approval of the Categorical Exclusion Document under the Federal NEPA process is anticipated; bidding to follow; and construction fall of 2026.
 - i. ACT Engineers will be asked to present at our next meeting.
 - Ocean City Utility Advisory Commission will have a tour of the Cape May County Municipal Utility Authority recycling center and landfill on June 17, 2026, EC Commissioners are welcome to attend.

- R. Bernardin confirmed with ACT Engineers the continuation of the Upweller program.
- R. Bernardini provided an overview of a reusable bag recycling program by Goatote. Goatote cleans, sanitizes and redistributes bags to food banks/pantries as part of a New Jersey Clean Community program.
 - a. Local program to be investigated

New Business

- Jason Walsh presented his Stockton University project on Locating Ocean City Flood Risk and Urbanization-Induced Habitat Fragmentation.
 - Information to be submitted to the Administration
- Boardwalk Native Plant demonstration project. Harley Cummins presented and made a motion to forward the concept of planters at pavilions with signage to the City for consideration for installation. It was seconded by Marnie Niederhofer, those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.
- The Sustainable Jersey Success Stories program was reviewed. Our program of pollinator gardens was identified as a project to submit.
- D. Blackman discussed the pending city project to apply dredged material onto Shooting Island for stabilization. ACT Engineers to be invited to present at next meeting 6/9/26
- C. Cummins suggested we study the installation of an observation deck to oversee the 34th Street marsh. Use Beach Access funds?
- M.Niederhofer to provide info on Pinelands education opportunities.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM. Motions to adjourn were made by John Aitken and seconded by Doug Blackman. Those eligible to vote adopted it unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 9, 2026, 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.