

NEW JERSEY ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
SOUTH JERSEY SECTION
Minutes of the September 5, 2024 Business Meeting

Pledge of Allegiance

The business meeting of the New Jersey Environment Association South Section was called to order by President Steve Blankenship at 13:01 hours at The Cape May County Park & Zoo located at 707 Route 9 in Cape May Court House, New Jersey. The following members were present at roll call:

Steve Blankenship, President
Kevin Whitney, Vice President
Kathy Collinge, Treasurer
Kevin O'Donnell, Secretary
Rick Eustace, Trustee
Rocco Maiellano, Trustee
Joe Rizzuto, Trustee
Joe Pantalone, Past President

Approval of Minutes: President Steve Blankenship made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 6, 2024 business meeting, approved by Kevin Whitney, seconded by Tim Fisher and unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

President's Report: Steve Blankenship

- Assisted with the preparation of the YP Top Golf event.
- Assisted in arranging the location of the December business meeting.
- Assisted the Industrial Waste Committee Chair in scheduling the October 15th tour of the Oatly facility in Millville.
- Reviewed delegate list for the upcoming NJWEA Executive meeting to be held on September 20th.
- Reviewing Case Award nomination.

Vice President's Report: Kevin Whitney

Upcoming Meetings and Events

- South Section Golf Outing at Valleybrook Country Club – September 20
 - Hope to see everyone there, golfing and sponsorship opportunities still available, as well as the option this year to just join us for dinner
- WEFTEC, New Orleans – October 5-9
 - Ask for show of hands as to who is attending
- Executive Meeting, In-Person – October 3
 - Main goal to finalize the 2025 calendar and any other end of year tie-up
- South Section Fall Tech Seminar/Industrial Tour at Oatly – October 15
- South Section Fall Executive Directors Meeting – tentatively on schedule for week of October 14
- NJWEA Fall Tech Transfer at Eatontown – October 21-24
- Final Business Meeting of 2024 - O'Connor's, Easthampton Twp – December 5

2025 Calendar

- As mentioned, we have already begun to put together our 2025 Events Calendar and I am hoping we will finalize at our next Executive Meeting, for presentation at the final Business Meeting
- Some things worth noting now:
 - Steve Blankenship has suggested that our meetings be on the SECOND Thursdays of corresponding months, rather than the first Thursday, as we have it now.
 - There is the intent to move to a schedule where we have a ‘Brewery/Pub Meeting’ in March, ‘Awards Dinner Meeting’ in June, ‘Outdoor Meeting’ in July/August and a ‘End of Year Dinner Meeting’ in December.
 - Regarding this third ‘Outdoor Meeting,’ we need to go back to having it in July or August so that we can continue to suggest that families/kids attend – having it in September is too late, as school has already started.
- If anyone has any other thoughts or suggestions for the upcoming calendar, please share them with us prior to the October 3 Executive Meeting.

Treasurer’s Report: Kathy Collinge

- The South Sections Association checking account balance as of July 31, 2024 was \$55,177.67.
- The Section’s Harbor Lights Financial Group scholarship portfolio for July 31, 2024 had a closing value of \$24,839.81. This value includes (4) CDs maturing November 2024, March 2025, November 2026, and May 2027. The current market value is \$24,138.90 and the cash and sweep balance is \$700.91.
 - The most recent reconciliation, current budget vs. actual reports and profit/loss statements are submitted today for ratification. The reports are available for anyone who would like to look at them. Please motion for approval
 - Steve Blankenship made a motion to approve the reported reconciliation, current budget vs. actual report and profit/loss statement, approved by Rocco Maiellano, seconded by Blake Maloney and unanimously approved.

Secretary’s Report: Kevin O’Donnell, No report

Past President’s Report: Joe Pantalone

- During the months of July and August assisted with the preparation of the YP Top Golf event.
- August 22, 2024 attended as a South Section officer at the Top Golf event in Mt. Laurel.
- In August, participated in several email exchanges regarding future planning objectives as well as follow-up emails and reports to those sponsoring, those attending and those assisting at the YP event.

NJWEA Report: Rick Eustace

- Sign up for the NJWEA luncheon on Monday at WEFTEC.
- Award descriptions and fillable nomination forms can be found on the NJWEA website.
 - Steve Blankenship emphasized the importance of the awards and recognizing our members.
- The Fall Technology Transfer Seminar is from October 21 to 24, 2024 at the Sheraton Eatontown Hotel.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Health & Safety: Janette Kessler

- Discussed the New Jersey proposed regulations for heat related illnesses. The bill would immediately require NJ employers to offer additional protections for workers who face extreme heat. The two most significant changes are:
 - Employers must acclimate employees to work in high temperatures. Employers will be required to have a heat acclimatization plan for new workers and those returning to work after being away for fourteen days or more. When the heat index hits 90° employers will have to provide a minimum fifteen minute paid rest break every two hours.
 - Attorney fees on workers compensation complaints have increased to 25% from 15%. The Attorney fees are paid 60% by employer and 40% by employee. The rate is increasing, and Judges may begin to show favoritism to the employees. Consider this increase when doing your yearly budgets.

Memberships: Rocco Maiellano

- Working with Jim DeBlock to establish WEF membership link to identify new South Section members.

Sick & Welfare: Rocco Maiellano

- Passing of Bob Grodeska 86 on August 8, 2024, and Mark Gulbinsky 73 July 29, 2024, husband of Ellen.
- John Reardon mentioned the passing of CMCMUA Retiree Steve Coney.

Nominating & Awards: Rocco Maiellano

- Prepared 2025 South Jersey awards package with awards descriptions, nomination form and awards submittal schedule. Packages are available today.

Affiliates: Bill LaPorte, No Report

Industrial: Chris Jepson

- We have a seminar on October 15, 2024 at Oatly and lunch at the Elks Club in Millville offering two TCH's.

Legislative Report: Dennis W. Palmer

- The legislature has been on summer break after passing the budget and numerous other bills on June 28. The first day back is Sept 12, with only Quorum calls noted on the calendar. However, the Governor or Acting Governor have been signing bill that were passed prior to the summer break. These bills have been signed into law as of Aug 28:
Bill A4360 "New Jersey Design Professional Self-Certification Act"; requires DCA to establish design professional self-certification program. This should greatly speed up any building permits required for our projects. . This certification enables the person to take responsibility for a construction project's compliance with the State Uniform Construction Code (UCC), and to self-certify that an application for a construction permit, and the plans and specifications submitted therewith, comply with the UCC and other applicable laws. This should move project along faster. The bill requires an enforcing agency to accept a self-certified permit application and accompanying documents; conduct a supervisory check acknowledging the enforcing agency's receipt of all materials required under the UCC; and issue a permit within one to five calendar days following receipt of a submission, depending on the scope of the project.

Bill A4425 Authorizes NJ Infrastructure Bank to expend certain sums to make loans for environmental infrastructure projects for FY2025. This bill would authorize the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (NJIB) to expend up to \$2.73 billion to provide loans to local governments and privately-owned water companies (project sponsors) for a portion of the costs of water infrastructure projects, for the purpose of implementing the State fiscal year 2025 New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Financing Program (NJEIFP). A companion bill, Assembly Bill No. 4426 of this session, would appropriate certain federal and State moneys to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the purpose of partially funding the costs of the clean water and drinking water projects enumerated by the bill.

Bill A4478 Authorizes NJ Infrastructure Bank to expend certain sums to make loans for transportation infrastructure projects for FY2025; makes appropriation. As reported, this bill authorizes the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (NJIB) to expend up to \$53,883,706 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 to provide low-interest loans to certain local government units that undertake one of fourteen eligible transportation infrastructure projects set forth in the bill.

Bill A4581 Authorizes NJ Infrastructure Bank to expend certain sums to make loans for Community Hazard Assistance Mitigation Program projects for FY 2025. This bill would authorize the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (NJIB) to expend up to \$7,198,045 to provide low-interest loans to local government units that undertake one of six eligible hazard mitigation and resilience projects listed in the bill.

Bill S3384/A4426 Appropriates funds to DEP for environmental infrastructure projects for FY2025. This bill appropriates certain federal and State moneys to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the purpose of implementing the State Fiscal Year 2025 New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Financing Program (NJEIFP). The bill would appropriate these funds for the purpose of making loans to local governments and privately-owned water companies (project sponsors) for a portion of the costs of water infrastructure projects. A companion bill, Senate Bill No. 3383 of this session, would authorize the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (NJIB) to execute loans using the funds appropriated to the DEP by this bill to finance a portion of the costs of the clean water and drinking water projects enumerated by the bill.

Golf Outing: Joe Rizzuto

- Golf outing will take place on Friday, September 20, 2024 at Valleybrook Country Club.
- Golf Committee meeting was held on June 18, 2024.
- Fifty golfers have signed up as of September 4th, totaling \$6,000.
- Twenty-one sponsorships as of September 4th, totaling \$3,360.
- Registration email will be sent out again on Monday September 9, 2024.
- Final count due to Valleybrook on Thursday, September 12th.
- Get the word out!

Scholarship Awards: Kevin Whitney

- I have shared proposed edits to the Scholarship Application twice, on July 17 and August 15 – currently only Kathy and Rocco have commented on the proposed changes.
- Therefore, I am under the assumption that no one else has any notes to share and the proposed changes shall be implemented and included on the next Scholarship Application, to be posted online and dispersed in December 2024, with a due date of March 15, 2025.

Seminar & Technology: Andrew Lieb

- Presently working on our first one this year.

Young Professionals: Kevin Whitney

- On August 22, we held our inaugural YP Networking Event at TopGolf in Mount Laurel, and it was a huge success
- Overall, we had 25 YP attendees, 5 South Section Reps and ten vendor sponsors at the event, where we had five bays of golfing, and a buffet dinner served.
- Thanks to our sponsors, we were able to greatly reduce the attendance fee to our YP's and ultimately, the entire event cost the South Section less than \$150.
- Nearly everyone showed up early to hang out at the bar and network beforehand, and while golfing/eating everyone moved around between bays and met people there. The TopGolf staff was excellent as well.
- I had several people, attendees and sponsors, tell me how great an event it was and that we should be doing more events like this in the future – many sponsors expressed interest in continuing to sponsor any events like this as well, where it got likeminded, industry people together in a fun setting
- I am greatly looking forward to continuing this new tradition in the future!

Archives: Kathy Collinge

- Please submit any photos, articles or items.

Publications:

- SCAN and Effluents publications are accepting articles or ideas.

Program: Ray Longo, No Report

- See Kevin Whitney's report.

New Business:

- Steve Blankenship will suggest at the next state meeting to increase the age to forty and under and/or change the term "Young Professionals" to "Young Leaders" or as suggested by Dennis Palmer "Developing Professionals."
- Steve Blankenship named the following members as Delegates and Alternates this year. The list will be updated at the end of the year.
 - Delegates: Blake Maloney, Bill Cathcart, Chris Jepson, Dave Kennedy, Bill LaPorte, Rocco Maiellano, Jeanne Maiellano, Dennis Palmer, Josh Palombo and Steve Watson
 - Alternates: Kevin O'Donnell, Frank Deyhle, Rick Eustace, Danielle Farrell, Tim Fisher, Samantha Liccketto, Kathy Collinge, Joe Rizzuto, Jeff Rollins and Kevin Whitney.

Old Business:

- Rocco presented the Raymond G. Case Award to John Reardon. The Raymond G. Case Award is for distinguished executive service to the SJWEA in promoting public education for Excellence in Water/Wastewater Profession.

Operations Challenge:

- Josh Palombo mentions we are struggling to get a team together. If anyone is interested, step forward and they will be supported by CMCMUA and the NJWEA.
- NJ is an Operations Challenge national known entity with much support and Josh does not want to let it die, as well as John Reardon, Tim Fisher and Kathy Collinge.
- New Jersey was one of the most respected teams at WEFTEC.

Good of the Membership:

- The CMCMUA has agreed to continue to support Operations Challenge.
- We are struggling with ideas of helping young operators, there is not a better way to do that than to get involved with Operations Challenge. Weaknesses become strengths together as a team. As managers we are obligated to bring our people up. Everyone who has been involved with a team have licensed up and this story is over and over from state to state. Teams can consist of two neighboring towns. Teams travel and form new friendships and networking tools. Invest in yourself and the utility by promoting Operations Challenge and the teams.
- When Hurricane Sandy hit, the first to call was our Texas team to come and help.
- The State is committed to two teams going to WEFTEC. Team members need to be resolute. Tim Fisher and John Reardon will help.

Adjournment / Time:

President Steve Blankenship made a motion to adjourn the meeting, approved by Dennis Palmer, seconded by George Manganaro and unanimously approved at 13:43 hours.