



Warren County Environmental Advisory Committee
165 County Route 519 South, Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 pm

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by forwarding a notice of the date, time and location of the meeting to The Star-Ledger, The Daily Record and the Warren County Clerk and by posting a copy thereof on the bulletin board of the Warren County Courthouse and Administration Building. Public participation is encouraged. In order to assure full public participation, those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the meeting should submit any requests for special accommodations one week in advance.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Clairanne Arcaro, Michael Byrnes, Sasha Fernandes, Audra Frank, Josephine Noone, Matt Polsky

Absent: Kerry Pflugh

SALUTE TO FLAG

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes from **October 15, 2025**, motion to approve by Audra Frank, 2nd Michael Byrnes, approved by acclamation with Sasha Fernandes abstaining.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Warren County Pollinator Protectors Year End Party will be on December 15 at 5:30 pm. Please save the date.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michelle St. Andre, Knowlton:

- In 2026, Knowlton Township will establish an Environmental Committee and Green Team and will be working toward their Sustainable Jersey Certification.
- She also reported that on her property she is switching over from Farmland Assessment to Woodland Stewardship through planting native trees and removing invasive species. They are also fencing in 6 acres to keep out deer. She got a grant through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Jennifer Correa-Kruegel, Warren County Park Naturalist, gave a summary of programs presented and program attendees in 2024 & 2025.

- 2024: Total of 1367 participants and 64 programs
- 2025: so far increase of 260 participants to 1627 total participants and 59 programs.
She has been doing many programs at Warren County public libraries.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPORTS:

Michael Byrnes:

- He attended the North Jersey Rivers Conference on October 17. One of the speakers on the Plenary Discussion Panel, Ben Dziobek, is Executive Director of *NJ Climate Revolution*. Michael would like to look at what this group is doing with a focus on engaging young people.

- Michael spoke to Dr. Warriach, Warren County Agricultural Extension Agent, as a follow up to his presentation to us in October. Michael shared a summary of their conversation. Dr. Warriach would like to work with a broad range of farmers on areas such as soil health, water retention, cover crops/cash crops, etc. in order to demonstrate that sustainable practices are good for business too. Dr. Warriach will be looking for grant funding and is interested in building coalition to support future research. Michael invited anyone of us who is interested to a between-meetings presentation by Dr. Warriach to better understand what he has in mind. (Clairanne Arcaro noted that this is a long-term goal as Dr. Warriach is still gathering information to become familiar with the farmers/stakeholders and their needs.)
- Michael will reach out to see if we could take a field trip to Four Fields Farm to see sustainable practices in action. We could work with them to create materials on rotational planting, cover crops, raising livestock sustainably, etc.

Sasha Fernandes:

- She asked if we have a current list of Sustainable Farms in New Jersey.
- The DEP has a new online tool to identify climate mitigation funding opportunities. Sasha attended a training session on using the tool.
- She also attended the DEP PFAS Summit. There was an update on the funding for home owners.

Audra Frank:

Audra Frank will meet with the Mayor of Phillipsburg, Randy Piazza, to assist with the process of achieving Sustainable Jersey Certification for Phillipsburg. They will create a list of action items to move forward.

Josephine Noone:

Josephine Noone, Washington Borough Green Team, and Environmental Educator Diana Dove will present a program at the Washington Public Library on Dec. 13 from 11:00am to 12:15pm for K to Gr. 6 children, entitled *Where Wild Animal Garden Visitors go in Winter*. The program will include making wildlife and nature-themed ornaments, songs, a story, and we will go outside to see the NWF-certified wildlife habitat pollinator garden preparing for winter. This program is sponsored by Washington Borough Clean Communities who thanks you for not littering.

Matt Polsky:

He went to the North Jersey Rivers Conference on October 17. There was a session on *Deer Impacts on Forest Ecology* by Joseph Basralian, a consultant to the NJ Conservation Foundation. He has written a proposal on deer management and would like to come and present his proposal to WCEAC.

Clairanne Arcaro:

- She suggested that for the 2026 Warren County Farmers Fair, we could create materials focused on sustainable farming using the ideas presented by Michael Byrnes this evening.
- The Pollinator Protectors have finished fall cleanups and saved/shared seeds from their garden beds.
- She spoke with Allamuchy Township School and sent them information on Sustainable Jersey for Schools. The new superintendent is very interested in moving forward.

CHAIR REPORT: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

It was noted that members are interested in attending the Board of Agriculture meetings which take place at the same time as our meetings.

Clairanne Arcaro made a motion that we have a workshop meeting in December, 2nd Sasha Fernandes. Approved by Acclamation. The public will not be present at the December meeting.

Please review the By-laws of the Warren County Environmental Advisory Committee in preparation for our workshop meeting.

At our December meeting we will be setting meeting dates for 2026-check your calendars to see what days of the week you are available.

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 8:12 pm by Audra Frank, 2nd Sasha Fernandes, approved by acclamation.

Submitted by Josephine Noone