

01/22/2024 – 5:15 pm – Virtual Only Meeting

Attendees: Tim O'Brien, Kyle Ropski, Felice Cragin, Lacey Pasco, Reanna Schober, Maria Ocasio, Jennifer Swann, Jeremy Taylor, Santo Napoli, Julie Thomases, Jessica Armbruster, Molly Bilinski, Maddie Davidson+Jess Rosen+Harli+Ryan (enACT team).

Old Business

1. Approval of November Minutes (no meeting in December)

The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Status updates on goals from leads

a. Working with LCA and US Water Alliance on water equity (Tinku)

Lehigh County Authority continues to indicate their focus is on affordability and that it is their main priority. Tinku is continuing to have conversations with them and US Water Alliance regarding water equity as a whole. She is additionally working on a potential strategy with Jennie and Brian from the City's compliance department. There are having a monthly meeting (unspecified date/time), and there is also no specific deadline on this initiative right now.

b. Bird Town -- Allentown Public Library Children's education (Tinku and Maria)

In an effort to improve community relations and engagement, the AEAC is holding their meetings as well as monthly educational sessions associated with the Bird town grant award at the Allentown Public Library. These sessions are intended to be fun and interactive with environmental oriented educational material that relates to birds in some way. Maria had a successful session in January and noted that the both the kids and parents are excited about it. The logistics for this initiative are going to be handled by the EAC's newest intern, Felice. The AEAC is looking for additional volunteers to participate as well. Felice will be developing a graphic and sign up for those who may be interested. This is open to enACT students and fellow Muhlenberg students on the education track. Councilman Santo Napoli noted on the potential partnership between one of the elementary schools that uses an owl for their mascot. Jess from the city could participate as well, potentially on Dieters month as it relates to waste.

c. Muhlenberg internships (Tinku)

Felice Cragin is the newest EAC intern who will be leading the library programs for the next three months (ending in April). Focuses are working on communications and getting the word out about the

program and other city sponsored opportunities (ex bike works). Also interested in finding transportation for children that can't actually get to the library.

Maddie Davidson is excited to be on the team with the rest of the enACT. Maddie is also interning with the Monocacy farm project in Bethlehem. Maddie will be bringing ideas and connections and energy. Woo. Mayor Tuerk hung out with the enACT board the other day and suggested an enACT board member become a permanent seat on the EAC to continue the relationship. Ordinance/Bylaws require that they have to be residents of the COA. Technically they are if they use their Muhlenberg address, but this still doesn't solve the contingency issue. To be investigated further. Maybe an honorary seat?

d. Air Monitor Project (Maria)

Maria is looking to host a community event operating with a "town hall" format. It will include representatives from CALV, Lehigh Valley Breathes, and Congresswoman Susan Wild. It will also cover information associated with the Inflation reduction act such as available tax credits and include other community groups who would like to table and provide resources. This event is in coordination with her current job, outside of EAC. She will share the link around when it is available, shooting to run the program some time in April 2024.

e. City updates (group discussion)

Jess from the City spoke briefly about the approaching trash/recycling contract termination. The city is interested in what the community members input is on this. What do they find important when it comes to their trash and recycling? The City has a survey that Jess will provide us the link for that Tinku indicated she will share through our network. Muhlenberg students who live in off-campus MILE houses participate in the city's trash and recycling, so they should complete the survey as well.

The EAC has been desperately trying to get Tim officially added to the EAC for months and months. Many emails and applications have been submitted, to no avail. Personal conversations with the Mayor have also amounted to nothing. Councilman Santo Napoli indicated that candidates will only come before council for final approval after the city has done their work vetting and approving. Santo noted he will reach out on Tim and the EAC's behalf to the administration.

f. Allentown EAC 2023 Accomplishments update (Maria)

Document with accomplishments was unable to be approved due to attendance issues. It will be voted on via email by EAC members and posted to the City's website.

New Business

1. 2024 Goals

We discussed each of the goals briefly and goal Leads outlined key strategies and intentions. Time concerns limited this portion of the meeting. We will be removing the RecycleMania initiative and need to revamp/edit what the warehouse initiative is. Similar to the 2023 accomplishments, the 2024 goals document could not be approved due to attendance issues.

2. Filling Vacancy

The EAC members put full support behind the nomination of Santo Napoli by City Council President Cynthia Mota to be the EAC City Councilmember liaison. It is included in the charter that a member must attend the meetings, so this is a necessity.