SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – SEPTEMBER 15, 2026 AT 7:00PM

A Regular Meeting of the Smithfield Township Environment Advisory Council was held on September 15, 2026, at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, and via Zoom.

Present were Chairman Eric White and Vice Chairman Mitch Bowyer, Dr. Mike Iovacchini, Kati Machovsky, Dr. Ken LeSure, and Conservation & Recreation Director Dr. Alex Jackson. Absent were Councilors Todd Dailey and Commissioner Chris Bowers.

Also present were members of the public.

1. **Chairman Eric White called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.**
2. **The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**
3. **Minutes:**
   a. **August 18, 2026 Meeting.** Kati Machovsky motioned to approve the minutes, Dr. Mike Iovacchini seconded. Discussion: Dr. Ken LeSure noted that the change in the format for the Dr. salutation should be acknowledged in the minutes heading, but that in the minutes themselves each person should be referred to by their whole name without a salutation, so everyone can appear to be equal during discussion and certain members don't stand out. Dr. Mike Iovacchini said he is indifferent and understands the intent of equal footing, which led to a discussion on that subject. Dr. Alex Jackson said this would create a trend change for those who read the minutes, so the record should clearly reflect that the Council is moving in a new direction. Eric White said if you take specific blurbs out for discussion purposes, you should keep them as is. Dr. Mike Iovacchini said the record should reflect that we all consider ourselves on equal footing, and Eric White said we could revisit this policy towards the end of the year. Vote: all in favor; motion carried.
4. **Old Business:**
   a. **Reminder: Annual 2026 EAC Network Fall Gathering on October 24, 2026.**

      Four Council members confirmed their participation; Mitch Bowyer and Todd Dailey would not be able to attend. Dr. Mike Iovacchini discussed the list of educational programs, and Dr. Alex Jackson noted the field-trip sign-ups were completed but that that they're pretty flexible on the educational program section choices, which led to a discussion on this subject and on the EAC meetings.

   b. **Single-Use Plastics Ordinances.**

      Eric White said that one goal on this subject is education, he noted that grocery stores and restaurants tend to use a lot of single-use plastics. Mitch Bowyer asked if businesses

could be regulated on single-use plastics; he said he'd be in favor of this because that's where most of the plastics that enter homes originate, noted that businesses will also charge for reusable bags if you don't have something to put your items in, and thought this was a good idea. Dr. Alex Jackson said that other second class townships in the Commonwealth have adopted ordinances regulating this subject. Eric White said that other states have more widespread legislation on this subject; he also suggested that the EAC highlight the risks from plastics like microplastics, and use the newsletter to discuss this subject.

Mitch Bowyer suggested moving forward in parallel: make a recommendation to the Supervisors on ordinance development and at the same time proceed with the communication aspects, which led to a lengthy discussion on this subject. Dr. Alex Jackson noted how the preambles in some ordinances on this subject highlight the Environmental Rights Amendment, and also microplastic contamination in every waterway in certain watersheds. He also indicated the ordinances have a 180-day grace period to help businesses. Kati Machovsky said the education can help the community understand the why of this type of action, which led to a discussion on this subject and on the EPA. Council discussed reaching out to the townships that adopted ordinances on this subject to see how this is working for those communities. Dr. Mike Iovacchini said it would be a long process to adopt these policies; the obvious first step is education, and it takes years to change behaviors in a community setting.

Mitch Bowyer motioned to recommend to the Supervisors that an ordinance on single-use plastics be developed and, as part of that, that there be an educational program, and to ask for their support, yes or no, Eric White seconded. Discussion: Dr. Ken LeSure said clear wording on this should be relayed to the Board, and Mitch Bowyer deferred to Dr. Alex Jackson. Mitch Bowyer complimented Eric White on this subject and believes this is a very appropriate subject for an EAC to take on. Dr. Mike Iovacchini noted that single-use plastics are on the priority list. Vote: all in favor; motion carried.

c. Discuss: Timber Harvesting Ordinances.

Kati Machovsky said that of the two ordinances she reviewed, the Caln Township ordinance is her preferred model for this subject. Dr. Alex Jackson said there isn't a standalone ordinance regulating this activity in the current Smithfield Township code, but it is referenced in other chapters, and Eric White recalled the uncontrolled logging of Minisink Hills, which resulted in sediment pollution into the local creeks. Eric White asked if this has been discussed by the Board of Supervisors, but it was clarified that this discussion has only occurred at the EAC to date. Dr. Alex Jackson said there are statewide regulations and limits on what local townships can regulate, so it should be a straightforward process, as the Township's ability to regulate this activity is relatively thin. Council continued to discuss these subjects at length.

Kati Machovsky moved to present both timber harvesting ordinances and have the Supervisors look this subject over and to get their feedback, Eric White seconded. Discussion: Dr. Alex Jackson suggested drafting the letter and presenting it to the Board of Supervisors. Dr. Mike Iovacchini thanked Council for their research on this subject. Vote: all in favor; motion carried.

d. Discuss: EAC Educational Priorities.

Eric White asked about the newsletter, and Council suggested the following topics: single-use plastics; timber harvesting; single-use plastics, microplastics; environmental issues (water, soil, and air); a couple of other topics; and a note that the EAC is working with the Board of Supervisors on these initiatives. Dr. Mike Iovacchini said a national news article reported concerningly high levels of microplastics across the US in the places tested, and many water supplies had these microplastics present. Eric White said that Smithfield Township sits in an area with a convergence of a lot of fresh water, and there is a new focus on things like data centers and how the same water is being impacted by microplastics and timbering operations. Council also suggested before-and-after photos of the EAC plot in the community garden.

5. New Business: None.

6. Council Member Comment:

a. Mitch Bowyer asked how many resident emails are in the Township's e-newsletter, and asked about reaching the other 80% of residents that the newsletter isn't currently reaching, and Kati Machovsky said the Township events allows direct engagement. Mitch Bowyer suggested sending a physical newsletter to each individual resident, and pointed to Middle Smithfield Township's newsletter. Dr. Mike Iovacchini and Mitch Bowyer said it's worth suggesting that the Board of Supervisors re-engage with Middle Smithfield Township about the joint effort for a newsletter, or even a one-page flier, or a trifold.

b. Eric White said the EAC is waiting on the trifolds; Kati Machovsky said she asks about this subject at every meeting, and Eric White said he would reach out to Jacob Pride to get an update.

c. Dr. Mike Iovacchini commented on the moving dates of the data center hearings, which were pushed based on the application process; it's a high-interest subject. Council discussed the importance of paying close attention to Julia's emails. Dr. Mike Iovacchini said the EAC encourages community participation at every level.

d. Kati Machovsky said it's important to show up in person or watch the data center-related Supervisor meetings online, and that there are a lot of good community ideas being communicated at these meetings. Council discussed how some ordinances require data centers to be completely self-managed and privately maintained without the use of the generalized utilities, which led to a lengthy discussion on data centers and agenda items. Council noted that data centers are an important part of the generalized environmental discussion, but that it would be best not to have this as a standalone agenda item for general discussion right now, and to table it until a better time.

7. **Public Comment: None.**

8. **Adjournment:** Dr. Ken LeSure motioned to adjourn, Kati Machovksy seconded. Vote: all in favor; meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Minutes Recorded by Dr. Alex Jackson

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Heilakka
Township Secretary