

**WARREN COUNTY  
BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS**

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, PO Box 179  
Oxford, NJ 07863

**February 10, 2015  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Helbing opened the meeting at 5:01 p.m., read the Open Public Meeting Notice, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Matthew Davis, John Halmi, Raymond Tobaygo, William Hann, Michael Helbing, Charles Fineran, David Detrick

**Staff:** Corey Tierney, Christina Cortis

**MINUTES:** The January 13, 2015 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Fineran made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hann to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- Pequest Open House & Sportsmen's Flea Market
- Field Guide to the Morris Canal - Copies can be ordered using the application.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Morris Canal Committee

Mr. Detrick noted that the January meeting was canceled due to weather.

Mr. Detrick met with the Washington Township Administrator and Michael Margulies' historic architect to discuss the proposal for the Freise property on Meadow Breeze Lane. They intend to install a paved or gravel walkway (where the canal once was) to the stream, with a footbridge across the stream. Mr. Margulies is also going to propose extensive work to rehabilitate the blacksmith shop, as well.

Mr. Detrick, along with several other Board members, will be attending the Warren Heritage Scenic Byway meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup>. He will report back to the full Board.

Mr. Helbing did some more clearing at the Port Murray Preserve. He inquired about chemical application on some of the invasive plant species. Mr. Tierney stated that herbicides can be used for trail maintenance in accordance with DEP regulations. Youth Corps may have already sprayed some of it.

Mr. Detrick proposed constructing a temporary 16' footbridge which the Board and Mr. Tierney supported. A second bridge may need to be constructed and installed near the old trolley culvert. Mr. Helbing suggested that signage be installed for certain areas of the trail to show where the trail turns, and not to continue onto private property. Mr. Tierney suggested using the End of Public Access signs in storage.

Mr. Helbing and Mr. Tierney expressed support for dedicating a trail to Bob Resker. Mr. Tierney and Albert Krause from Planning will GPS the trail in the spring.

Mr. Helbing suggested that the Department look into selling memorial benches and placing them in areas of county parkland.

### Trails

Mr. Davis discussed an email from Mike Helbing regarding future ideas for trails.

Mr. Helbing stated that, in his capacity with State Parks, he is submitting an application to land management review to put a trail through Scott's Mountain and Buckhorn Creek, which would eliminate most of the road walk and would add additional parking spaces. The proposed trail goes through NJ Conservation Foundation land and state land.

Mr. Tierney will speak with Bob Shandor regarding the trail through his property.

Mr. Helbing has had difficulty contacting Harkers Hollow management. Mr. Hann suggested he try in spring after the family returns from Florida.

Oxford Township - Mr. Tierney and Mr. Helbing will meet with Oxford Township officials in February to discuss future intentions for the property.

### **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

Mr. Davis has not heard back from Cycle Fanatics in Phillipsburg. He may reach out to the bike shop in Easton, PA.

Mr. Fineran suggested that the Board reach out to Todd Tersigni from the Phillipsburg Town Council to see if he has any interest in serving on the Board. It would be advantageous since the canal and railroads both go through Phillipsburg.

Mr. Tierney noted that he would like to revisit the Open Space Rules and Regulations and update them. He is also looking into liability issues. He explained that he previously provided the Board with proposed revisions and asked that the Board designate a working group to review the proposals and update the rules.

Preservation Day - There was discussion on potential attendees and participants for Preservation Day. Mr. Fineran will contact Raptor Trust or similar group regarding a presentation. WRNJ will also be contacted to see if they want to do a live broadcast. Mr. Helbing also suggested contacting WCCC to see if their hiking group would be interested in attending.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **ACQUISITION UPDATES**

Lock Street Associates, Lopatcong & Pohatcong Twps. - Appraisals were sent to Green Acres for CMV. The appraisal values came back lower than the landowners were expecting. Once the CMV is back, Mr. Tierney will make a formal offer. He will also reach out again to neighboring landowners.

Mann/Barringer, Lopatcong Twp. - Closed on easement last month.

O'Dowd, Franklin & Greenwich Twp. - Met with Rio Tinto and their attorneys last week. Everything is moving forward.

North Central Realco - We should hear from landowners this month, what the decision will be regarding the solar project.

Crouse Farm - No updates.

White/Woo, Washington Twp. - Mr. Tierney found a nursery that specialized in native plants. He has a conference call with them to discuss the vegetative buffer for this property, as well as Plane 9.

Handlos, Mansfield Twp. - No updates.

Reed - Mr. Tierney will contact landowner again.

Hills at Independence - Has not heard back.

Independence Land Holdings, Independence Twp. - Surveyed the property. Identified wells that landowner needs to cap.

Jonestown Road, Oxford - Township indicated it is still interested in selling. The mines will need to be fenced.

Terhune, Washington Twp. - The landowner would like to keep an additional five acres of the property. The Department requested letters from appraisers to determine if this will affect the per-acre value of the property.

Svenningson - Landowners have been unresponsive.

### **New Proposed Acquisitions**

The first property is an island in the Delaware River that is a proposed donation from the Phillipsburg Riverfront Organization to the County. Mr. Tierney asked if the Board is interested in acquiring this piece of land. He asked the board to consider: (1) Whether it has sufficient legal access, (2) whether it will benefit the public, (3) whether the benefit will be worth the additional maintenance costs and liability exposure? Mr. Helbing suggested not pursuing this property because the rock island is so highly used impermissibly, that the town has had issues with its use that he is afraid it will reflect poorly on the County, and that will be too much of a liability. Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fineran not to pursue this piece of land. Motion carried.

The second property is in Mansfield Township that has a portion of intact canal and nearly connects to Rockport Pheasant Farm. The only issue is that it does not connect to anything on the west side. Mr. Helbing stated that this would be a great place to install an additional canal greenway parking area. Mr. Tierney stated that the state may be interested in partnering with the County to acquire the land. Mr. Fineran made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis for Mr. Tierney to contact the state to see if they are interested in partnering with the County on this acquisition. Motion carried.

### **MAINTENANCE**

Stryker's Road/Port Warren - New sign has been ordered. Mr. Tierney is working with a contractor for the installation of the fence. He will also be meeting with the township to discuss the parking area so the Roads Division can begin working on it.

Plane 9 - Mr. Tierney will be meeting Audubon and North Jersey RC&D regarding William Penn Foundation funding for habitat restoration.

Port Murray (Brick Yard) - The parking plan still needs to be completed. The Nature Conservancy will begin the ecological restoration in the spring.

Florence Kuipers - Mr. Tierney sent the Memorandum of Understanding to the Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife for legal review and approval of the Rockport WMA Trail.

Bilby Road - No updates. Mr. Tierney will see if there is anything he can do to speed up the process. Mr. Helbing would like Mr. Tierney to get the Warren Highlands Trail through land management review before Mr. Olsen retires. Mr. Helbing will provide Mr. Tierney a detailed map of the trail.

New Alarm System - New security alarm systems will be installed at Bread Lock Park, the Stine House, and the White Lake House.

Old Mine Road - There is a small sinkhole and an old collapsed structure that appears to be on cinder blocks. If it is not historic, Mr. Tierney said it should be removed. Mr. Detrick recommended that Mr. Tierney contact Mr. Andrew Drysdale regarding its historic significance.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **DESIGNATE WORKING GROUPS**

- Trails - Mr. Davis and Mr. Helbing will discuss trail recommendations and email ideas to the Department and the Board members for their review and any actions can be presented at regular Board meetings.

Park Rules - Mr. Fineran made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis for Mr. Tierney to email all of the Board members current and proposed park rules for the Board to review and provide recommendations. Motion carried. Some rules may be countywide and some may be park-specific. For certain activities, permission may be requested from the Board and a permit may be issued. There was discussion regarding various suggestions to include in the revised Park rules. After the Board approves them, the newly revised rules would then be sent to the Freeholders for their review and approval before they are enacted.

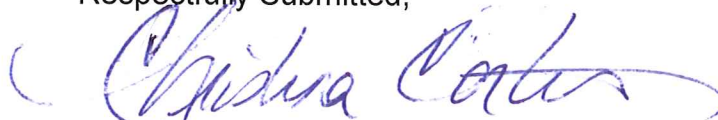
- Acquisition Updates - Mr. Detrick suggested that Mr. Tierney send out the acquisition updates with meeting packets and then provide updates that occurred after being sent or answer any questions at the meeting.
- The Working Groups will be revisited once Board members identify their interest in certain areas.

**Bread Lock Park Picnic Tables - Eagle Scout Project** - Mr. Tierney suggested that the Boy Scouts submit a formal letter with a description of their project (and possibly a map) to be presented to the Board for their review. Grills should be included in the plan. Several ideas for the project and location were discussed.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held on March 10, 2015.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, Mr. Detrick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tobaygo to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christina Cortis  
Administrative Clerk