

WARREN COUNTY
BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS
500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, PO Box 179
Oxford, NJ 07863

June 9, 2015
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Helbing opened the meeting at 4:55 p.m., read the Open Public Meeting Notice, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Michael Helbing, William Hann, Jr., John Halmi, Raymond Tobaygo, David Detrick

Members Absent: Matthew Davis, Charles Fineran

Guests: Elizabeth Roy, Gregg Hudis

Staff: Corey Tierney, Christina Roberts

MINUTES: The May 12, 2015 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Tobaygo made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hann to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Morris Canal Committee

A company was selected to develop a plan to restore the turbine chamber at Plane 9. The award resolution is on the June 10th Freeholder meeting agenda.

The Bread Lock Park Museum is open this Sunday.

Mike Helbing visited a canal site in Pennsylvania that was displayed beautifully and thinks Warren County could achieve something like this at Bread Lock Park. He will forward photos to Board members for their feedback.

Trails

National Trails Day, June 6th

- Matt Davis led a hike at Florence Kuipers to Buck Hill and back.
- Mike Helbing's friend and MetroTrails member, Dan Laurie, led a hike from Stanhope to Hackettstown.
- Liz Roy from the Planning Department attended a hike, along with members of the Lopatcong Environmental Commission at Marble Hill to provide some information about the trail.
- The NJ Youth Corps blazed a trail around the field at Plane 9.

Stryker's Road - Department may obtain a Permit by Rule from the DEP to get stone down to prevent erosion of the canal at this location.

A kiosk inventory was distributed from Dave Detrick. There was discussion as to where the kiosk should be installed off Belvidere Road. Board members can volunteer to help keep the various

locations stocked with brochures and rack cards. The new brochures for White Lake, Bread Lock Park, Florence Kuipers Park, and Shippen Manor were distributed. More brochures and rack cards will be created as parks and trails become further along in their development.

Mr. Helbing inquired where the eastern terminus of the Warren Highlands Trail should be; either Saxton Falls or near Elsie's Restaurant. Mr. Hann suggested the Board visit each section before making a decision.

Mr. Helbing met with Washington Township officials. The township would like a PowerPoint presentation for the next meeting before they approve the kiosk and trail.

Mr. Hann noted that he walked Sycamore Lane, off Lock Street and it looks great. He asked where the county section ends and if the Department is doing anything to connect the properties. Mr. Tierney has mailed outreach letters, but has not received a response from the landowner.

Geiger Tract - No one is maintaining a portion of the trail; possibly have it as part of the farmer's lease agreement to keep this section clear. It needs to be brush-hogged and sprayed to keep weeds down. Mr. Helbing inquired about parking; Mr. Tierney will check on the easement language. The Department could apply for a trail grant next year to either have weed guard or mulch put down to keep it from growing over.

Public Awareness

Preservation Day - The event was very successful. Stephen Ellis, Freeholder Ed Smith, and Guy Rutherford spoke at the event. Several hundred people attended. Rutherford Hall gave a record-breaking number of mansion tours that day (120 tours). Other locations for future Preservation Day events were discussed.

NJ Perimeter Hike - Mr. Helbing will be on the Fox News "Chasing News" segment to talk about his NJ Perimeter Hike and other various projects he is working on with the Board and his MetroTrails group. The interview was filmed on the Old Warren Railroad.

OLD BUSINESS

Acquisition Updates

O'Dowd - Still in negotiation, but moving forward. The agreement with USEPA should be ready for signature by the June 24th Freeholder meeting.

White/Woo Property - Landowners are very happy with the vegetative buffer plan. Mr. Tierney will include it as an addendum to their agreement and we will hopefully close on this property by the end of this year or the beginning of 2016.

Jonestown Road - Met with Oxford Township; they are eager to close. Just awaiting signed agreement.

NEW BUSINESS

June is National Great Outdoors Month - The Department prepared a proclamation for the June 10th Freeholder meeting and will issue a press release.

Department Website - Mr. Tierney has engaged a local website designer to build an interactive website for the Department. The community will have easier access to all of the County Park

information, brochures, events, trails, park rules, permit applications, etc. Mr. Detrick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tobaygo to support the independent website for the Department. Motion carried.

Ridge and Valley Conservancy White Lake Management Plan Agreement - The Nature Conservancy had expressed interest in discontinuing the land management of White Lake Natural Resource Area and the Ridge and Valley Conservancy (RVC) will be taking over at the end of summer. A copy of the draft agreement was sent out with the minutes for the Board to review. RVC is working with the Student Conservation Association to hire a paid intern to serve as the on-site, year-round land steward. The agreement will also offer the intern the ability to work with the Department on other off-site projects, which will benefit the Department and enhance their internship experience. The Board's only concern was alteration of trails, which Mr. Tierney assured them that any changes or alterations must be approved by the Department. Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Halmi to approve the proposed agreement with the Ridge and Valley Conservancy for land management of White Lake Natural Resource Area. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on July 14, 2015.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Mr. Tobaygo made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hann to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christina Roberts
Administrative Clerk