

**WARREN COUNTY
BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS**

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

**October 8, 2019
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER: Michael Helbing opened the meeting at 5:09 p.m., read the Open Public Meeting Notice, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

Guests: Eldon Allen

Staff: Corey Tierney, Christina Roberts

MINUTES: The September 10, 2019 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Hann noted that under page 2 - NY/NJ Trails Conference, "Motion carried" was missing after the Board voted to apply for NY/NJ Trails Conference Membership. On page 3, under Administrator's Report, "Farmland Preservation Easements", the property names (Stull, Noel, Pierra, Saqa) weren't included. Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran to approve the minutes, as revised. Motion carried.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Morris Canal Committee

- Canal Trail Mowing - Mr. Detrick expressed concern regarding canal trail mowing. Areas include Strykers Road, Route 22, O'Dowd, Bread Lock Park, Port Murray, and portions of Florence Kuipers. Mr. Tierney inquired with the Road Department, but being several miles of trail, they would not be able to take that project on. Mr. Helbing suggested renting the equipment or possibly getting a trails grant to cover expenses. If NJ Youth Corps had the equipment, they could do it and it would be operated under their insurance. Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Mr. Tobaygo for Mr. Helbing to check into equipment rental costs (skid steer, Bomford, MT55) and purchase prices of the various options from the store in Califon and compare expenses to report back to the Board. Motion carried. Mr. Tierney is currently preparing the annual budget request, so if the Board feels this is a worthwhile expense, it can be included in the 2020 budget.
- Mr. Davis met a property owner that lives on a farm next to Cole Road in Franklin Twp. that owns a portion of the canal. Mr. Davis will have him contact the Department to possibly look into conveying an easement on the canal.
- Mr. Davis also met a property owner that lives in Washington at the base of Plane Hill Road near the aqueduct. He is an engineer, a den leader with Boy Scouts, and has an interest in history; he may be interested in becoming a Parks Foundation or Canal Committee member.
- Don Mayberry cleared the towpath at Saxton Falls and the section near the Pool property.
- The fall bus tour being held October 26th is full. Mr. Davis will be helping with the tour.

Trails

- Warren Highlands Trail - Ragged Ridge is cleared and open down to Van-Nest Hoff-Vannatta; trail just needs to be blazed. Mr. Hann will repaint the blazes on the section of the trail near Harker's Hollow.
- Geiger - Mr. Tierney will check into when farm lease is set to expire.

- Marble Hill - Mr. Helbing cleared most of Marble Hill. The yellow trail still has trees that need chainsaw work. ATVs are accessing the county property from the state property.
- Oxford Furnace Lake - A short section of trail was named Cannonball Road by a scout troop.
- Florence Kuipers - There has been ATV use at Florence Kuipers. Mr. Tierney informed him the individual that ATVs and chainsaw use is prohibited on county parkland. The individual has been charged for violations on state property. Mr. Tierney will forward a copy of the letter to the Board that was sent to the individual. The County has an issue with enforcement; if these problems continue, Mr. Tierney can revisit the request to hire a park ranger.
- Ridge & Valley Trail - Mr. Tierney walked the trail on Preservation Day and said it looks great.

NEW BUSINESS

Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee - Mr. Fineran reported on the MCCTFC grant awards. Three historic and two open space projects were awarded funding.

- Van-Nest Hoff-Vannatta - \$75,000 (fully funded)
- Shimer Mansion - \$75,000 (fully funded)
- Alpha Parkland East Addition - \$25,000 (fully funded)
- Ramsaysburg Homestead - \$225,000 (partially funded; \$365,725 was requested)
- Yards Creek Preserve - \$100,000 (partially funded; \$111,500 was requested)

Mr. Fineran noted that Yards Creek is an important open space project in Blairstown and if The Land Conservancy of NJ is unable to obtain the remaining \$11,500 to close, he requests that the Board consider contributing the remaining funds. Mr. Tierney will recommend that TLC contact The Nature Conservancy or Ridge & Valley Conservancy for the balance. The Yards Creek pumping station will be closing down; Mr. Tierney will ask Mr. Osborn at Green Acres about the pumping station. Mr. Davis motioned, seconded by Mr. Tobaygo that the County will provide the balance in funding needed to close the Yards Creek project, if all other options fall through. Motion carried.

Lee Farm - Greenwich Township found a piece of property on their ROSI that is co-owned with the county. The county was supposed to convey their interest in the property, but it was never done. Mr. Tierney asked if the Board had any interested in retaining interest in the property. Mr. Hann suggested that Mr. Tierney inquire about a land swap with the township for a portion of property near the rescue squad to use for a parking lot.

Apple Mountain Golf Course - Property is being sold and asked if the county was interested in purchasing it. The property is located in the Highlands Preservation Area and contains Mount No More. Mr. Helbing and Mr. Davis said it would be great for a section of the Warren Highlands Trail. The Freeholders aren't interested owning or running a golf course, but Mr. Tierney will inquire about purchasing just the mountain and woodlands.

Executive Session

Mr. Tobaygo motioned, seconded by Mr. Davis to enter Executive Session at 6:27 pm to discuss the counter-offer for the True property. Motion carried.

Mr. Tobaygo motioned, seconded by Mr. Hann to exit Executive Session at 6:38 pm. Motion carried.

Mr. Tierney will contact the property owner and schedule an informal walk-through with several Board members prior to accepting the counter-offer. If there is nothing alarming found, an environmental inspection will be ordered on the property.

Administrator's Report

Singley - working out minor issues with attorney.

HMUA - special counsel working on contract.

Albulescu - access agreement is being signed and returned.

Benbrook II - map being made by Mr. Krause; appraisal will be requested.

Barbieri - nearing closing; seller working on title issues.

Cacciapaglia - signed amended agreement is in the mail.

CADB/BORC Meeting - A joint informal subcommittee meeting will be scheduled with Joel Schnetzer and Jason Menegus from the CADB. Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Tobaygo to appoint Mr. Helbing and Mr. Davis as representatives from the BORC to meet with Mr. Schnetzer and Mr. Menegus. Motion carried.

Historic Document Donation - Mr. Helbing's grandfather, Eldon Allen attended the meeting to convey a historic map of Oxford Township that was given to him by Arthur Alexander in September 1994. Mr. Allen read a brief statement to the Board. The map was made by the Empire Steel and Iron Company and it contains Oxford Township's lands and mineral reservations. It was requested by Mr. Alexander that Mr. Allen transfer the document to the Cultural & Heritage Commission, but since the Commission was since disbanded, Mr. Allen is donating it to the Board of Recreation Commissioners.

NEXT MEETING - The next meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business, Mr. Davis motioned, seconded by Mr. Hann to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christina Roberts
Administrative Clerk