

**WARREN COUNTY  
BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS**

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

**March 9, 2021  
Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Helbing opened the meeting at 5:07 p.m., read the Open Public Meeting Notice, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Charles Fineran, Michael Helbing, David Detrick, William Hann

**Staff:** Corey Tierney, Elizabeth Roy, Matthew Duckworth

**MINUTES:** The February 9, 2021 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Hann noted that in the Next Meeting section, it should have said "March 9<sup>th</sup>". Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

**Morris Canal Committee/Warren Heritage Scenic Byway**

Mr. Detrick discussed the work being done in regards to virtual tours at Bread Lock Park. Mr. Detrick announced that he, Rich Dobbins, and the Land Preservation Department would be meeting again, this time with Rich Patricia from Warren Hills High School, on Wednesday, 3/10, at Bread Lock Park to discuss shooting the virtual tours and the equipment that would be needed.

Mr. Detrick announced that the Morris Canal Committee met on March 8<sup>th</sup> and that he would be investigating costs of publishing a coffee-table book of historic panels from the Morris Canal in memory of Myra Snook, which would double as a fundraiser for the Canal Committee. Mr. Detrick noted he will continue to do research and will update the Board moving forward.

Mr. Detrick updated the Board regarding the Canal Committee by-laws and how there was consideration in adding a non-voting membership tier, as well as some overall verbiage changes.

Plane 9 – Ms. Roy spoke with Shade Tree Electric and discussed remote lighting for the chamber. Ms. Roy also noted that the RFP was nearly completed for the additional work needed at Plane 9.

**Trail Committee**

Mr. Helbing discussed that he has spoken with Tom Lizzi about work at West Oxford Mountain, and that he was meeting with Steve Ellis at Marble Hill on Thursday, 3/11.

Mr. Helbing explained that new Warren Highlands Trail maps were sent out via email and will get in touch with the County Planner and Administrator about bridge access and trailblazing.

Mr. Helbing said that the two parking lots on Ridge Road have been filled with crushed stone and will have split rail fence installed in the near future. Mr. Helbing also noted that kiosks on Harmony Brass Castle Road and at the Fox Farm gate will have new maps.

Mr. Detrick brought up the potential logging operations at Roaring Rock Park in Washington Township.

Mr. Helbing noted that he did not think it would have an effect on the Board of Recreation but that he would abstain/recuse due to his connections to those involved with the project.

Mr. Tierney shared that the Parks Foundation agreed to have their name on a letter asking Washington Township to suspend their project until there was an opportunity to complete other environmental and impact studies. Mr. Tierney added that the County does not normally involve themselves in municipal affairs, but that Roaring Rock Park would be of interest due to the Warren Highlands Trail passing through the park in question.

Mr. Fineran noted that he was unsure whether the Board of Recreation should take a stance on the project because there could be additional information that the Board is not aware of.

Mr. Hann also noted that Washington Township has been cooperative with the Warren Highlands Trail and was not sure if the Board of Recreation should be risking that relationship by signing the letter.

Mr. Detrick motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran, to review the letter over the course of the month before making a judgement regarding Roaring Rock Park. Motion carried as Mr. Hann abstained.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Vice Chairman Vacancy – Mr. Helbing noted that he spoke with Mr. Davis and that he would not be changing his stance, so the Vice Chairman is officially vacant after tabling the letter from last meeting.

Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Detrick, to nominate Mr. Fineran as the Vice Chairman. Motion carried as Mr. Fineran abstained.

Mr. Detrick asked if the Board had any ideas for potential members interested in joining and about the possibility of having alternates. Mr. Helbing suggested that the Board should reach out to Mr. Bolevant, Mr. Apgar, Mr. Lizzi, and Ms. Bolus to gauge their interest in joining the Board.

Mr. Tierney commented on being careful about not having too many members be on both the Board of Recreation and the Parks Foundation simultaneously due to having the necessary quorum numbers if recusal were necessary. Mr. Tierney also reminded the Board that the positions are ultimately appointed by the Board of Commissioners, with recommendations from the Board of Recreation.

Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Mr. Detrick, to accept Matthew Davis' resignation letter with regret. Motion carried as Mr. Hann abstained.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

NY/NJ Trail Conference Renewal – Mr. Tierney mentioned the Trail Conference renewal, a membership which has been going on for several years.

Mr. Hann inquired about the price of membership for the Trail Conference. Mr. Tierney noted that the cost was \$50.

Mr. Helbing asked if there was a designated voter to go to Trail Conference meetings and represent the Board of Recreation. Mr. Tierney said it depends on how they vote but will look into it. Mr. Helbing expressed interest in the position if it is needed.

Motion by Mr. Fineran, seconded by Mr. Hann, to renew the NY/NJ Trail Conference membership. Motion carried.

### **Administrator's Report**

Memorial Benches at White Lake – Mr. Helbing said he would like to see the interpretive signage and memorial benches not be “in each other's way” when then are installed.

Mr. Hann inquired about the previous request for a bench for the Shandor family on the Warren Highlands Trail in the area of Fox Farm Road. Mr. Helbing explained that the bench is on the State's property and is in a location marked on the map as “Shandor's Summit”.

Mr. Tierney suggested to the Board that they should approve the Warren County Parks Foundation to install the benches, have the Board of Recreation approve each bench requested, and have some form of limitations on plaque dedications (mentioned in Terms & Conditions, Contract, and Application forms.

Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran, to agree to the Terms & Conditions, Contract, and Application forms being used for the requests for memorial benches. Motion carried as Mr. Detrick abstained due to his connection with the Warren County Parks Foundation.

Memorial Bench Approval at White Lake – Mr. Tierney explained and noted on the map where the Dipalma Family was requesting to have their bench placed (location on map shown with Administrators Report).

Motion by Mr. Fineran, seconded by Mr. Hann, to approve the location of the Dipalma Family's bench pending Mr. Helbing's confirmation of bench placement when installed. Motion carried.

Special Use Permit – Mr. Tierney announced that the Blirstown Methodist Church was requesting to use White Lake for an Easter Service on Sunday, April 4, at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Tierney noted that the Church said there would be less than 30 people and that would be worn while at the service. Mr. Helbing expressed his concern over Executive Orders that may still ban gatherings of more than 25 people at County and State Parks. Mr. Tierney acknowledged the concern and will look into it deeper.

Mr. Detrick motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran, to approve the Special Use Permit for the Blirstown Methodist Church for their Easter Sunday service pending it is allowed according to the Executive Orders. Motion carried.

Potential Reforestation at Mt. Rascal (HMUA Property) – Mr. Tierney reiterated the plan for the HMUA to relocate their water holding tank on Mt. Rascal to a lower elevation off the mountain. Mr. Tierney noted that the HMUA would like to sell the 6 acre parcel to the County for preservation (appraisal average was \$68,500). Mr. Tierney explained that mitigation tree plantings to cover the area where the tank will be removed from would be estimated at around \$40,000.

Mr. Fineran asked why the County should be considering paying for the forest mitigation just to help the HMUA be compliant with their tank.

Mr. Tierney explained that the acquisition would allow for a potential parking area and that reforestation would be better than allowing a bare spot being overtaken by invasive and other non-desirable vegetation.

Mr. Detrick considered a cost-share with the HMUA for the \$40,000 reforestation project.

Motioned by Mr. Fineran, seconded by Mr. Detrick, reaffirming the board's stance on the Mt. Rascal project and declining the offer from the HMUA to pay for the \$40,000 reforestation project in full. Motion carried.

Skip Smith Property – Mr. Tierney shared that Warren County Habitat for Humanity inquired with the Land Preservation Department about acquiring the 20 acre parcel for open space. Mr. Tierney noted that the Smith property does adjoin the Singley property, which is in the process of being preserved.

Mr. Tierney asked the Board if they would like to proceed in pursuing the acquisition.

Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran, to investigate the property for purposes of acquisition. Motion carried as Mr. Detrick abstained due to his connections with the Warren County Habitat for Humanity.

Janecko Property – Mr. Tierney asked the Board if they agreed how the lines were drawn from the area where the Morris Canal cut through the property up toward the edge of the Merrill Creek Reservoir property, which would leave the edge along Route 57 not purchased.

Mr. Detrick asked about the natural spring that was located on site. Mr. Tierney noted that an easement could be made to allow access to the spring.

Mr. Hann noted that the abandoned vehicles on the property would likely need to be moved to receive support from Green Acres.

Mr. Tierney stated that he will continue with the appraisal for the property as it has been mapped out.


Dias Property – Mr. Tierney said that the property was under contract and that an oil tank was previously removed by Sellers; the rest of the site will be searched via radar to ensure there are no other underground tanks. Mr. Tierney explained that testing will need to be done in regards to the well and water quality. Mr. Tierney also explained the potential to subdivide the house and a ¼ acre and resell it.

Bridge Development Partners Property – Mr. Tierney announced that the environmental reports for the site came back and there were no issues.

**NEXT MEETING** - The next meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2021.

**ADJOURNMENT** - There being no further business, Mr. Hann motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Matthew B. Duckworth  
Community Service Aide