

WARREN COUNTY
BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS
500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, PO Box 179
Oxford, NJ 07863
October 11, 2022
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Fineran called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM, read the Open Public Meeting Notice, Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Members Present: John Halmi, Bill Hann, Charlie Fineran, Ray Tobaygo

Staff: Corey Tierney, Elizabeth Roy, Jennifer Kruegel

Public: Dave Detrick

MINUTES: The June 14, 2022 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Tobaygo motioned, seconded by Mr. Hann to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

Morris Canal Committee/Warren Heritage Scenic Byway

Morris Canal Committee-

Mr. Detrick reported that the last committee meeting got canceled and is rescheduled for October 17. The museums are back open again and we have a lot of work done on the parks that are canal related. Port Colden and Port Murray are getting closer to being ready for the public. We will be working on signage next.

Mr. Tierney reported that they did put the Bread Lock siding barn out to bid and we received 6 bids back. The range was significant. The lowest was \$246,000 and the highest was \$500,000. An architect working with our public works directory will review the lower bids. The timeframe discussed was to complete it before the end of the year. The lumber was very specific and there may be supply issues still.

Mr. Hann inquired if it was just siding or if it was structural too. Mr. Tierney explained that it was mostly siding and some masonry. We need to discuss some details with the architect, including soffits to keep animals out.

Mr. Tierney is hopeful they will be able to keep the animals out and that the barn will be cleaner for event prep. It could also potentially be used for nature programming, but it isn't climate controlled.

Mr. Hann inquired if it was a part of historic preservation. Mr. Tierney said that it was not on the historic registry, but that the county is still trying to maintain the historic character.

Warren Heritage Scenic Byway –

Mr. Detrick reported that the upcoming meeting was canceled because they are still waiting on a response from the state to extend it to the north and south. So no sense in having a meeting until they have that information.

Trail Committee-

Mr. Tierney reported that there was a meeting with Parks Foundation volunteers about trail maintenance. They went through the different areas. The County had a similar meeting with Mike Muckle of the Youth Corps. The Youth Corps will take on some additional sections with their equipment. There has also been discussion with the Youth Corps about resources and hiring another full-time land steward specifically for the canal properties.

Mr. Detrick, Mr. Tierney and Ms. Roy reported that the adopt-a-trail program is moving along. Ms. Roy ordered the signs and they are at Mixed Media right now being worked on. It is a good way to recognize the volunteers who maintain the trails and maybe encourage other people to get involved. Ms. Roy has had meetings with representatives with the scouts and troops who want to adopt-a-trail.

Mr. Tierney had a meeting with Dave Dech and Ryan Conklin at Planning about submitting an application for a grant for a bridge over Lopatcong Creek. It will be a multi-year project.

Ms. Roy pointed out that we now have a Port Warren sign down at the foot of Plane 9.

Mr. Hann inquired about the trail that was going to take off of the lower Ingersoll property going down to Lock Street. Mr. Tierney was not sure whatever came of that. He believes it is now under a different owner. However, across the street the county owns a portion of the canal and the Youth Corps maintains it with mowing.

Mr. Detrick stated that they are going to mark the trail Thursday night.

Ms. Roy met the new owner and he was amiable to do some of the mowings as a volunteer.

Mr. Tierney commented that it was just reported to him there was an incident with someone, maybe an owner, and a volunteer about trespassing. Additional signage should help identify it as public parkland. Mr. Tierney recommends any volunteers just refer complainants to him.

Mr. Hann inquired about Ken Miller's place.

Mr. Tierney said that there were no updates regarding Ken Miller's place. They made offers and he said he was thinking it over. He has not indicated that he wants to move forward with it.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Administrator's Report:

Mr. Tierney provided the report for review prior to the meeting. One property on the agenda to discuss is 19 Hess Road, which borders White Lake. Known as Block 103 Lot 11 in Frelinghuysen Township, it is 37.7 acres along the Paulinskill River.. This property is being preserved by the Land Conservancy of NJ and they have funding for it through Green Acres. They are interested in donating it to the state or county. Mr. Tierney inquired with the board if they want to accept the donation of the property and annex it to the White Lake Natural Resource Area. The Conservancy expects to close on it before year-end and would then deed it to the county.

Mr. Hann motioned to accept the donation for 19 Hess Road, Block 103 Lot 11 in Frelinghuysen from the Land Conservancy of NJ. Mr. Tobaygo seconded. All in favor. Motioned passed.

Mr. Tierney reported on a second property. The Sigler property, Franklin Twp. Block 9, Lots 23 and 23.02, is 175 acres and contains the Morris Canal. The property also includes the Warne Grist Mill. Mr. Tierney is looking to purchase the bulk of the property with Farmland Preservation funds. However, since it contains the Morris Canal, he would like to preserve this portion as open space. The farm was appraised and he has reached a tentative verbal agreement with the landowners. He is still waiting for an appraisal of the other lot that contains the Grist Mill. We have had previous board approval, but Mr. Tierney would like to confirm the purchasing of this property. We would look to use historic preservation funding for the Grist Mill and restore that, which is in good shape. Mr. Tierney requested a motion in preserving the property.

Mr. Hann inquired if there would be any issues with farmland preservation in dividing the property.

Mr. Tierney did not think they would have an objection since the canal is on the property.

Mr. Tobaygo motioned in favor of purchasing the Sigler property. Mr. Hann seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Mr. Tierney clarified that it was for all of the property including the Grist Mill and the board confirmed.

Hardwick Day at Vass Farmstead

Mr. Tierney reported that the Youth Corps is providing kayak rentals for Hardwick Day. Requested approval to provide overflow parking for that day at White Lake.

Mr. Halmi motioned to approve overflow parking. Mr. Fineran seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Ms. Roy said at Plane 9 they have the RFP for the turbine chamber improvements so we are waiting to hear back from contractors on that. We are also working with the engineers there on the headwall improvements. Additionally, we are going to add a kiosk at the top of Thomas Carling.

Ms. Kruegel reported on the environmental education programming that has been conducted so far. Mr. Fineran inquired if the environmental education programming will be restricted to Warren County. Ms. Kruegel said yes, as of right now. Programming has been free because she is providing a service to Warren County residents who pay taxes and she feels this is their tax dollars at work.

Mr. Tierney said that Ms. Kruegel is doing an excellent job, but that the actual challenge is she has a lot of other responsibilities in her current position too. He would like to be able to expand and offer more, but to do that we would have to create a full-time Park Naturalist position which Mr. Tierney will propose to the county commissioners and then back-fill the Community Service Aide position.

Mr. Hann recommended that Ms. Kruegel do this presentation for the commissioners.

Mr. Fineran recommended a motion be made on behalf of the Board of Recreation that they acknowledge and are impressed with Ms. Kruegel's programming. They also recommend Ms. Kruegel present to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Tobaygo motioned. Mr. Hann seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Mr. Detrick inquired if the programs Ms. Kruegel will offer will be offered to adults as well. Ms. Kruegel confirmed that her goal is to provide public programming for people of all ages, including senior citizens. Mr. Tierney confirmed that with appropriate collaborations, we could offer more to the public.

Ms. Roy said that the collaborations already in place have provided a great deal for the community, such as working with the Youth Corps on the pollinator garden at Bread Lock Park and working with John Parke at NJ Audubon to get rid of invasive species has been a great resource.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEXT MEETING - The next meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business, Mr. Tobaygo motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Fineran, to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Correa-Kruegel
Community Service Aide