

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

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Tierney opened the meeting at 5:01 p.m., read the Open Public Meeting Notice

REORGANIZATION MEETING:

Mr. Hann nominated Mr. Helbing for Chair, Mr. Fineran seconded. All voting members present agreed. Motion carried.

Mr. Helbing, accepting the nomination for Chair, opened up for nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Hann nominated Mr. Fineran for Vice Chair. Mr. Halmi seconded. All voting members present agreed. Mr. Fineran abstained. Motion carried.

Mr. Helbing opened the nominations for Secretary. Mr. Hann nominated Mr. Halmi for Secretary. Mr. Fineran seconded. All voting members present agreed. Mr. Halmi abstained. Motion carried.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: John Halmi, Michael Helbing, Charles Fineran, William Hann Jr.,

Morris Canal Committee Liasion: Dave Detrick

Staff: Corey Tierney, Elizabeth Roy, Jennifer Kruegel

MINUTES: The November 9, 2021 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Mr. Hann to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

Morris Canal Committee/Warren Heritage Scenic Byway

Morris Canal –

Mr. Detrick reported they had their reorganization meeting and that Jim Lee III is the Chair and Tim Roth is the Vice Chair. They defined their goals for 2022 and the projects that need to be done sooner than later. The road that goes back to the turbine chamber at Port Murray needs to be cleared out so Ms. Roy can get back there with a contractor to get fencing put around it. There was some additional discussion about Saxton falls, end of the Bilby Rd. trail as there was interest in get a set of stairs and a kiosk and Ms. Roy has reached out to State Parks to get approval for that. There were several projects that can be done in the Spring once the weather gets a little warmer they can do some painting and so forth. Ongoing projects reported to the board and are still in the works.

Mr. Fineran mentioned the smaller signs that were discussed at the meeting out along the trails instead of full-size kiosks. Mr. Detrick elaborated on the use of pedestals signs, similar to the story signs used at Bread Lock Park. They have had success with Mixed Media's panel signs. Simpler and lesser costs.

The larger kiosks would be reserved for the larger trailheads. Five small interpretive panels that are being developed for interpreting Port Holden site along with a large kiosk with a site map.

Mr. Detrick was looking forward to finding out about the adopt-a-trail program and the status of that so they can move forward.

Mr. Detrick also discussed that the committee would like to create a boat silhouette similar to the one at Waterloo Village and in Phillipsburg off Stryker Road. Mr. Detrick said he would reach out to Mr. Tierney regarding that.

Trail Committee:

Mr. Helbing reported that he had forwarded a webinar invitation for this Thursday evening to Mr. Tierney about trail and transportation grants and be prepared for application. Mr. Helbing read the introduction information about that and is planning to attend. It looks like some opportunities or ideas to work on in Warren County along the canal and ridge and valley.

Mr. Helbing reported they had an excellent First Day hike with 13 participants on the Warren Highlands trail hike. Spent time knocking out trail work before the hike. Mr. Helbing sent some pictures of a new switch-back along the trail and spoke with Mr. Dech regarding putting a cross-walk along 519. They built switch-backs down into the new state property along the Buckhorn Creek so now it is a nice section that eliminates about .3 miles of road walking and puts them on Hutchinson Station Rd. which is much less busy. Recut some area and adds a half mile of new trail that is all marked up. The new Superintendent at Jenny Jump will provide a Youth Corps group to tackle some trail projects in the Spring.

Mr. Helbing met with Tanya Sulikowski at Merrill Creek and provided a map to the board. The discussion was to connect Conservation Foundation land, state and county trails and Merrill Creek Property creating an additional 8 miles. It will be a good collaboration and would like to get her to come to the board meetings.

Mr. Helbing reported on connecting state properties to county properties.

Mr. Helbing inquired as the kiosk for Marble Hill on Belvidere Rd. The superintendent is allowing him to put it in so Mr. Helbing wanted to know how to get the kiosk and if there was anyone to help him put it in place on a warmer day.

Mr. Tierney inquired with Mr. Detrick if he still had the kiosk in storage and thought it might be something Steve Ellis could help with as well. Mr. Detrick confirmed that they have the kiosk in the shop. Mr. Detrick inquired about the accuracy of the map but Mr. Helbing confirmed that the state created a new one that includes county sections of trails. The map on the Spruce Run, Voorhees and Hacklebarney State Park website shows this information and available to general public. It can be printed out and laminated and placed on the kiosk. Mr. Detrick noted that the kiosk size is 46 x 34. Mr. Detrick offered to meet-up with Mr. Helbing at Bread Lock Park regarding the kiosk.

Mr. Helbing went up to the Stine Farm and thought that Mike Muckle had cleaned up all the scrap he was planning on using but it was just covered with stilt grass. He was able to use some of it for trail maintenance.

Mr. Hann inquired about the property by the fairgrounds along Geiger Rd and if it was possible to request that the farmer that leases the property stay back about 10-20 ft. to allow trail access. Mr. Tierney did not currently have an answer for that at the moment. Farm leases have always gone through the purchasing department and he has not received copies of all the leases. He will try to get his hands on all the farm leases to review them. From there he can try and incorporate something in them about

trails. He is concerned whether or not that term of the lease will be followed but agrees it should be something added to the leases.

Mr. Helbing noted that Laurie Jo Jamison has property to Rob lane and part of the volunteer network and allow the purchase of the easement and have another option for possibility of making trails and neighboring farmlands work together.

Mr. Detrick encouraged the board to consider to make one of the goals for 2022 to preserve the pedestrian bridge across the stream at the base of Plane 9. Even simpler installation than the Bilby Rd bridge by the Stine property.

Mr. Detrick inquired about the rails to trails with the state and developing it. Mr. Helbing reported that there has been progress in Sussex County but is not sure about the administrative part.

Mr. Fineran reported that they are paying their open space grant for Allamuchy. Seven parcels were used with Green Acre money. The council is interested in making the connection from Independence to Allamuchy up into Green to the actual cutoff by the Sussex Branch trail.

Old Business:

Nothing to report

New Business:

Mr. Tierney inquired about the appraisal of the Rosenthal Property, a residential property in Independence Township near Florence Kuiper's Park. Mr. Tierney brought up a map for those online. Block 1 lot 50, corner of Harvey St and Roosevelt St. and joins county property. The property owner is amenable to accepting an offer. Mr. Tierney discussed a possible partial land acquisition of about half an acre with maybe a parking easement on the property along 46. It may offer better accessibility to continuing the trail across 46. It would be one small step in connecting Florence Kuiper's to Mt. Rascal.

Mr. Tierney's requested the board allow permission to pursue the appraisal on the Rosenthal Property. Mr. Hann motioned that we attempt to acquire Block 1 lot 50 from Roosevelt Ave to the eastern portion of the property and to investigate Block 1 lot 47 for possible through trail access. Mr. Fineran seconded. Motion carried.

Administrator's Report:

Mr. Tierney provided the report for review and is in the process of completing a 2021 annual report. Once that is completed he will share that with the board as well. In the interim there are two projects close to closing under contract, the Singley (95 acres in Franklin) and True (112 acres in Oxford) properties in addition to the farmland preservation projects of Noel, Sierra and Pear Tree and hopes to get them closed in the next few months.

Mr. Hann inquired about the Janecko property. Mr. Tierney explained he was in the process of reviewing the appraisal reports. He offered the approximate value to Janecko and they rejected that offer. He is going to go back and investigate the appraisal value and see if they can make another offer in the future. It will take time though. The values may be different due to previous appraisals in the past so it is something that needs to be dug into more.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEXT MEETING - The next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business, Mr. Fineran motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hann, to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Correa-Kruegel
Community Service Aide