

WARREN COUNTY MORRIS CANAL COMMITTEE
c/o Warren County Department of Land Preservation
500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, PO Box 179
Oxford, NJ 07863

December 11, 2023

MINUTES

Call to Order: Mr. Lee III opened the meeting at 5:33 PM.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Tim Roth, Charles Fineran, James Lee Jr, James Lee III, Paul Tarlowe, David Detrick, Randy Piazza Sr.

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Elizabeth Roy, Kim Barnes

Minutes: Mr. Roth motioned to approve the 11/13/23 meeting minutes as is. Mr. Fineran seconded. All members were in favor, except for Mr. Piazza, who abstained, as he did not attend that meeting. Motion passed, minutes accepted.

Public Comment: None

Correspondence: None

Communication: None

Bills & Budget: The balance in the budget as of last month to be spent by the end of the year was approximately \$1,977.

Ms. Roy was able to spend the funds, which included paying for the *design* of the Port Murray panels. We do not yet have possession of the panels. She informed the committee that it is county policy not to pay any invoices until material is received. Moving forward, nothing can be paid for unless items are finished and in hand, no pre-paying. Available funds should really be spent by November.

Ms. Roy shared a screenshot showing what the funds were spent on this past month (shipping of panels, design of panels, cleaning supplies for paintings, panel revisions and file prep, flags, grinding tool, vacuum and supplies, and fabrication of panels).

Ms. Roy reminded the committee that interpretative panel files provided to the County are not illustrator/print-ready files. The committee may want to consider asking for the illustrator/print-ready files for the future.

Land Preservation Project Updates:

Ms. Roy suggested that as in past months, the Committee review the Greenway corridor. She will provide Land Preservation updates as appropriate.

Phillipsburg:

Mr. Piazza said there are some people expressing interest in the Phillipsburg trails, but we will have to wait another month or two to see if there is anything updated.

Mr. Lee III said he reached out to Mike Margulies regarding Pohatcong Twp., but has not heard back yet. If he does not hear from Mr. Margulies, he will contact him again.

Plane 10 West/Lock Street:

Ms. Roy never received photos of the washout from the Lees. She asked that those photos be forwarded to her. More investigation is needed to figure out what process would be appropriate for a repair.

Strykers Road:

Ms. Roy reported that the loop trail is in progress, but she is not sure how far the Youth Corps got. The trail markers were made. They need to figure out how to create a step down from the existing greenway towpath trail down into the field, as it is a steep drop-off. Mr. Lee III brought up the damaged field lane. It is not clear who is responsible for the lane. The County has a pedestrian easement only for the meadow.

Ms. Roy asked the Youth Corps to add working the prism to the winter task list.

Ms. Roy stated there were questions emailed about redesigning or relocating the panel at the weir. Mr. Roth's thinks that if you look at the direction the canal runs, from Strykers Rd it goes east and at the bend (the right side of the map) it turns in a mostly northern direction. Mr. Roth suggest placing the kiosk 90 degrees so that as you look at the kiosk you are facing Route 519. He also recommended that seeing it on-site, in person, is advisable to better visualize the images. Mr. Detrick said they would have to dig it up or cut it off. Mr. Lee III said the panel should be reprinted anyway because it is worn. Mr. Fineran made a motion to move the kiosk. Mr. Roth seconded the motion. All in favor. The subcommittee (to move the kiosk) will consist of Mr. Roth, Mr. Detrick, and Mr. Piazza

Port Warren/Plane 9 West:

No official update on the bridge. Ms. Roy heard the gas line was marked out, but Mr. Lee III said that was done for the archaeology.

Mr. Lee III asked about the projects at Plane 9W (the light work, timber replacement and the tailrace projects). Ms. Roy said a meeting will be set up after the new year with the Public Works Dept.

Ms. Roy reported that she did not proceed with fabricating the QR codes for Planes 9 and 10. Ms. Roy had questions and thinks they will need some graphic art work. She will start working on them in January with Mr. Lee III's help.

Mr. Lee III asked if the committee would get a presentation on the archaeological study and the design plans that were done for the pathway and new ramp. Ms. Roy reported the draft design/plans were previously shared with the committee; the TAP Grant proposal is still stalled in the state.

The gate remaining open is still an issue with neighbors. Debris was deliberately placed in the way.

Ms. Roy shared that the Youth Corps farm has a new roof and a new driveway, as both were in poor shape.

The trails in Stewartsville on the way to Bread Lock Park had some debris and trees down, but the Youth Corps cleared it the next day.

Ms. Roy also said there are some tires in the weeds just off the field road off Richline Road and that she was waiting until winter to remove.

Bread Lock Park:

Ms. Roy reported that we are still waiting on the extension repairs to continue. The dumpster was ordered today to put by the barn. Most fire code violations have been addressed. We will ask for a re-inspection as soon as the last item is done.

There are now 3 completed Eagle Scout projects at Bread Lock Park: What is Your Wingspan?, Bat Boxes, and How Far Can You Jump?

Mr. Detrick said there were about 6-8 people at the museum yesterday.

Washington:

The Campbell House panel has been fabricated. Ms. Roy also got a full-size print made for the group, which they picked up. Mr. Lee III said he is waiting on some answers regarding lead abatement they had asked for help with. Patricia Benton is also interested in applying for the larger MCCT grants next year. Mr. Detrick said when we get the fabricated panel and go to put it in the kiosk, he will need to use the new grinder tool to get the lock off the kiosk.

Port Colden:

Nothing new to report.

Port Murray:

Mr. Detrick said as soon as we get Joe's product, we could move forward with making the pedestals. We have to wait to see which orientation they are, horizontal or vertical.

Some signs have been fabricated to place around the park to help direct visitors a little more.

Florence Kuipers:

Ms. Roy said the Parks Foundation is doing a good job keeping it maintained. Mr. Roth noticed there is a kiosk at the Grand Ave. entrance with a map that is really faded, so Ms. Roy will have it reprinted.

Bilby Road:

Nothing new to report.

Report of Officers and Committees:

Projects:

Mr. Lee III stated he would contact the webmaster in 2024 to review what can be done with the current website (exploremorriscanal.org) for the Myra Snook tribute.

Events/Education/Public Awareness:

The museum at Bread Lock Park will remain open year-round on the second Sunday of each month.

Mr. Lee III said the Youth Corps wanted a tour but everything is put away right now, so it will be scheduled for the spring. Mr. Lee III told the Archaeological Society of NJ that he would like to host a society meeting, but it will be dependent on getting things open and the repairs completed. He also thought of going to the county library near him to do a couple different canal talks followed by a tour of the inclined plane.

Mr. Piazza shared that a book is being created for the county bicentennial. As a Bicentennial Cultural and Heritage Advisory Board member, he is working on the Phillipsburg chapter. It will include “then & now” pictures of areas with historical significance. He is thinking of taking pictures of the old canal bed, along with the cemetery and the Roseberry House.

Meeting Schedule: The next meeting will be held virtually on January 8, 2024 at 5:30PM. It will be a reorganization meeting. Right now, Mr. Lee III is the Chair, Mr. Roth is the Vice Chair, and the Secretary position is open.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Mr. Fineran made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Piazza. All in favor. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 6:21PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Barnes

Staff Representative