

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

**January 8, 2024**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** Ms. Roy opened the meeting at 5:32 PM.

**Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Tim Roth, Charles Fineran, Paul Tarlowe, David Detrick, James Lee Jr, James Lee III

**Members Absent:** Randy Piazza Sr.

**Staff Present:** Elizabeth Roy, Kim Barnes

**Reorganization:** Mr. Detrick nominated Mr. Lee III to continue as Chair in 2024. Mr. Fineran seconded the nomination. Mr. Lee III accepted the nomination. All voted in favor. Ms. Roy turned the meeting over to Mr. Lee. Mr. Detrick nominated Mr. Roth to continue as Vice Chair in 2024. Mr. Fineran seconded the nomination. Mr. Roth accepted the nomination. All voted in favor. Officer positions are the same in 2024 as they were in 2023. Mr. Lee III is the Chair, Mr. Roth is the Vice Chair, and the Secretary position is open.

**Minutes:** Mr. Roth motioned to approve the 12/11/23 meeting minutes as is. Mr. Tarlowe seconded. All in favor. Motion passed, minutes accepted.

**Public Comment (on agenda items):** None

**Correspondence:** None

**Communication:** None

**Bills & Budget:** Ms. Roy stated she was able to spend down the 2023 budget as agreed. The last of the cleaning supplies ordered to clean the paintings was delivered today. Ms. Barnes reported the payments for the shipping of the panels (\$51.57) and the shipping of the flags (\$19.68) will come out of the 2023 funds. The 2024 budget is the same as last year at \$5,300.00.

Ms. Roy listed previously discussed, possible projects for 2024, including the carryover for the website project, the Myra Snook tribute, the panel compilation, fabrication of the Port Murray panels, the Greenway brochure edits and printing. Mr. Detrick suggested panels for Plane 10, and ask Joe to fabricate a couple panels for Plane 9 (the bridge

area and the Brakeman's House) if the MCC provides the design (pictures and information). Mr. Detrick also suggested fabricating a small panel for Steve's Café (the old Morris House) on South Main Street in Phillipsburg to commemorate the connection with the Morris Canal there. Mr. Lee III asked if there is a spot that is public land to put the sign on. The town owns the field in the back. If not on public land, there would have to be a special agreement with the landowner.

### **Land Preservation Project Updates:**

#### **Phillipsburg:**

Mr. Detrick and Mr. Lee Jr. will work on meeting with the owner of Steve's Cafe for the panel there.

Mr. Lee III said he still has not heard from Mike Margulies as to whom the best person is to contact at Pohatcong Twp., but will reach out again for help with the placement of the Lock 8 panel.

#### **Plane 10 West/Lock Street:**

Plane 10 currently has a kiosk and some QR codes. The locations of the QR codes may be good locations to put new pedestal signs. Mr. Lee Jr. said parking is an issue at Plane 10. Pohatcong has a parking area on Lock St by the ballfield.

#### **Strykers Road:**

Ms. Roy said Jonathan with NJ Youth Corps is thinking it will most likely be a modified staircase they'll put in to drop down off the towpath trail down into the field. They were also working on trimming back in the prism, but they had equipment problems, so it is still on their task list.

Mr. Detrick, Mr. Roth, and Mr. Piazza have not yet set a date to move the kiosk. Mr. Roth said the current kiosk is worn looking. Repainting it may be a temporary fix. It may need to be replaced. Mr. Detrick will inspect it.

#### **Port Warren/Plane 9 West:**

Ms. Roy said there are 2 kiosks at the bottom of Plane 9. One is an interpretive panel for the site. Ms. Roy said Corey Tierney suggested that one should be up by the main parking area. The welcome kiosk needs to be updated. Ms. Roy and Mr. Tierney will set up a time walk the area with Mr. Lee III.

There is no update on the bridge. Ms. Roy sent an email to the Dept. of Public Works to set up a meeting to coordinate the timber replacement and tailrace projects.

The bridge keeps being damaged from the storms. One piling was washed away.

#### **Bread Lock Park:**

Mr. Detrick reported the contractor has started making some improvements on the small barn, mostly cosmetic. A group from the Parks Foundation removed the debris from the bottom of the barn and from the basement of the museum.

Mr. Lee III asked about the supplies ordered to clean the paintings. Ms. Roy reported the last of the supplies ordered was delivered today. After Sunday when the museum is open, she would like to set up a work area in the Edison room in the museum. She will send out an email to see who is available. It can be set up for 3 weeks (until the museum is open again), and people can come in to clean the paintings as their schedule allows.

Mr. Detrick shared they are working on having a special feature when the museum is open, if not every month, then every other month. On January 14, Chris Magnus will be demonstrating baking bread in a Dutch oven over an open campfire. He also does various presentations at Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm. A fire permit has been obtained.

Ms. Roy said the new museum flag should be delivered to BLP tomorrow. Ms. Roy will also bring the panel for the Campbell House. Mr. Detrick can use the new grinder to cut the old lock off so he can install that panel. Tom Lizzi had replaced some old, faded "Canal Crossed Here" signs, and the grinder can be used for that, too. Ms. Roy said new road signs can also be slated as a 2024 project.

The dumpster at BLP was originally ordered for a duration of 2-3 weeks, but will be there until Ms. Barnes calls to request a pick up. Mr. Detrick said the bulk of the debris is in it and it is pretty full.

#### **Port Colden:**

Mr. Detrick said a pile of scrap metal was removed last week.

#### **Port Murray:**

Mr. Tarlowe will contact Joe to check on the progress of the panel designs. Mr. Tarlowe asked about the brochures for Port Murray as the one online is not accurate. Ms. Roy stated there is a meeting next week and she should have updates on all the trail maps by next month. Mr. Detrick said there are five new way-finding signs to be installed. Mr. Roth said the path to the Power House does need mowing, but it can wait until spring.

Mr. Roth asked if there is an informal easement with the industrial lot at this site for times when they have to bring equipment in. Ms. Roy said that volunteers do have the right to use the lane but asked to be notified beforehand because sometimes the landowner questions it. Ms. Roy said we do issue parking permits from the county for the volunteers to display in their vehicles when they are working on a trail.

#### **Florence Kuipers:**

Ms. Roy was informed that the Hackettstown High School's Clean Community Club went in and cleaned up the park. The student who contacted her is president of the club. He said they were told it was all county land, but it is actually almost all state land. They had stockpiled about sixty tires found on the land. They meant well and Ms. Roy will coordinate removing the tires. Jennifer Correa-Kruegel, our Park Naturalist, suggested using the tires as a planter project. Ms. Roy is looking into this.

Mr. Roth asked if this was the same group that left a pile of trash at Grand Avenue trailhead. The Youth Corps picked up that trash the next day. It was probably not that club because the student did not mention it to Ms. Roy.

### **Bilby Road:**

Nothing new to report.

### **Report of Officers and Committees:**

#### **Projects:**

Mr. Lee III said the upper driveway Plane 9, which is being used until the bridge is repaired, is wearing down.

Mr. Lee III stated he would contact the webmaster to review what can be done with the current website ([exploremorriscanal.org](http://exploremorriscanal.org)) for the Myra Snook tribute.

#### **Events/Education/Public Awareness:**

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

Mr. Lee III said a tour for the Youth Corps would be scheduled for late winter/early spring.

Mr. Lee Jr. and Mr. Detrick have talked about a hike on Lock St. when the weather warms up. Mr. Detrick wasn't sure if they should wait until signs are installed for Plane 10 and Lock 8 before doing the hike. Mr. Roth said if it were an interpretive hike, you'd be talking about the same information that will be on the signs, so it would be a precursor. Mr. Lee III mentioned that brochures for Lock St. are available.

Ms. Roy said that if the intent is use the ballfield's parking lot, permission must be obtained from Pohatcong. Mr. Lee III volunteered to call Mike Margulies again to ask about a contact and he has to ask him about a lead abatement contact for the Campbell House.

Mr. Lee III asked if there would be a Park Fest in 2024. Mr. Roth explained the Parks Foundation is going to focus on several smaller events throughout the year rather than one large event.

Mr. Lee Jr. asked how Jennifer's First Day Hikes at White Lake went. There were sixteen people in the morning hike and six in the afternoon hike. She felt it was a good

amount and was able to interact with everyone. Mr. Roth attended the morning hike and said there was a lot of interaction and questions and everyone enjoyed it.

The Nature Center at Bread Lock Park is still in the planning stages.

**2024 Calendar/Schedule:**

The normal meeting dates are the first Monday of each month. There are a couple months where the first Monday falls on a county holiday. The following dates were agreed upon:

2024: January 8, February 5, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 8, August 12, September 9, October 7, November 4, December 9; and 2025: January 13

Ms. Roy shared her screen to show how Art Charlton put together a 2024 Explore Warren history calendar featuring Warren County historical sites, information, and important dates. It includes the dates and times the museums are open, and one of the month's photos is the Jim and Mary Lee Museum.

**Public Comment:** None

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held virtually on February 5, 2024 at 5:30PM.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Mr. Fineran made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Tarlowe. All in favor. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 6:28PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Barnes

Staff Representative