

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

**March 11, 2024**

**MINUTES**

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

**Roll Call:**

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

**Members Absent:** Randy Piazza Sr.

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

**Minutes:** Mr. Fineran motioned to approve the 2/5/24 meeting minutes as is. Mr. Roth seconded. All in favor. Motion passed, minutes accepted.

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

**Correspondence/Communication:** None

**Bills & Budget:** No bills. The full 2024 budget of \$5,300.00 is still available.

**Land Preservation Project Updates:**

**Phillipsburg:**

Mr. Detrick gave an update on the possible kiosk on Canal Way. He has been in contact with the business manager of the school board as the kiosk would be on school board property. Mr. Lee Jr said he now has a picture of the Schisler painting called Gordon's Store, which was at Bread Lock. That will be the backdrop for the kiosk. He has been working with MaryAnn from Steve's Café to determine what verbiage will go on the panels.

**Pohatcong:**

Ms. Roy contacted Ingrid Gray for help with the placement of the Lock 8 panel. Ms. Gray reached out to some people who have not responded yet – she will follow up with them.

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

Mr. Lee Jr reported there is a lot of brush to clear at the bottom of Plane 10. Ms. Roy said it is on the Youth Corp's list for this week or next. Mr. Detrick and Mr. Lee Jr are going to walk Plane 10 to see how it can be developed.

**Strykers Road:**

Ms. Roy said the NJ Youth Corps completed some work in the prism although the prolonged wet, above freezing weather limited what could be done.

Mr. Roth and Mr. Detrick moved the interpretative sign at the waste weir. Mr. Detrick needs to pick up some materials for the mostly cosmetic remaining work that needs to be done to complete the job.

**Port Warren/Plane 9 West:**

Ms. Roy said the archaeological study is scheduled for 3/18-4/12 for the bridge at the bottom of Plane 9. Because of the historic factor and FEMA funds, the project will take time to complete.

Ms. Roy reported that she and the project engineer from Colliers met with staff from SHPO to review the concept plan for the tailrace project. They had no concerns with the concept plan. The use of existing on-site stones for the low wing walls was discussed as was the proposed split rail fence at the top of the tailrace headwall. They requested that Mr. Lee III be on-site monitoring the project particularly when the grading is being done. The Project Authorization can now be finalized and submitted. Ms. Roy confirmed she would be preparing this document. Mr. Lee III said the Morris Canal Committee still has a grant from the historic trust that is going to help fund this. Ms. Roy confirmed it is still active.

The project authorization for the turbine timber is good through November. Ms. Roy sent her documents to the Public Works Dept. for help with the RFP. She is waiting to hear that the document is ready to go. The electric will be done separately after the new timber is put in.

There is no update on the trail project.

Ms. Roy reported the chain on the gate had to be adjusted so no one can move it without authorization. Mr. Lee III noticed a new sign that was put up by someone who is not a county employee telling people to slow down.

Mr. Roth asked if we are allowing people to go to Plane 9 West by foot. Ms. Roy replied that we are not encouraging this. There should not be extra traffic in the Thomas Carling Drive area due to visitors driving there to walk in to Port Warren.

**Bread Lock Park:**

The museum was inspected today for the mold in the basement. We should get a preliminary report on the findings next week. Ms. Roy said two of the things that will be in the report include removal of the sheetrock and the old linoleum floor. Ms. Roy shared her screen to show a photo of the mold.

There is an ash tree down between the museum and Route 57. It was already marked for Tree King to take it down because it was dead.

Mr. Detrick said the Parks Foundation is planning a park clean-up day on 5/11 at Bread Lock Park (painting, repairs, clean signs, etc.).

Ms. Roy reported that FoodShed Alliance has assured us that the SAgE plot in the back is still active.

The Warren County Bicentennial Summer Concert will be held at BLP on Saturday, 7/13. The Morris Canal Committee can set up a table for it and interpret the canal boat. If any groups who participated in past events are interested in setting up a table, they can be referred to Ms. Roy.

Mr. Detrick asked about 1) the canal books that were stored in the basement at BLP (*Tales the Boatmen Told*, *The Morris Canal: A Photographic History*, and *Historic Preservation Survey of the Morris Canal in Warren County, NJ*) and 2) the Schisler paintings from the eastern portion of the canal that are rarely displayed.

Mr. Lee III said the books could easily be sold at the Jim & Mary Lee Museum when the bridge is repaired and the museum reopens. Ms. Roy has a list of the painting from years ago that Myra Snook had created. There was discussion on making an updated list and continue to keep up with the inventory and whereabouts of the Schisler paintings. They could possibly be loaned out to other museums or offices. Good, digital pictures should be taken of each with a description. In preparation for cleaning the paintings, work lights that sit on tripods were purchased in last year's budget, which would help set lighting for the pictures.

Ms. Roy reminded the group that Myra Snook's records that pertain to Warren County have been stored at BLP. Mr. Lee III will try to go through the records on one of the days the Jim & Mary Lee Museum was supposed to be open but cannot be until the bridge is repaired.

#### **Port Colden:**

Ms. Roy wants to recover the property corners before the regrowth so we know where they are.

#### **Port Murray:**

The new interpretative signs are still with Joe. Mr. Detrick said Joe sent him and Mr. Tarlowe some partial panels. They need to tweak some of the text that was already done and more text still needs to be completed. Ms. Roy reminded the group that all work needs to stay on schedule so that 2024 projects can be completed in time to process all vouchers this calendar year. There was a discussion about the need to have high-resolution, print ready files when the work is done (current and past jobs).

Last month's Board of Recreation Commissioners meeting was cancelled, so the memorial bench for Stan Cohen will be brought up at the meeting tomorrow.

#### **Florence Kuipers:**

Mr. Roth said they had a light workday last week, picking up sticks, but overall the trails look good.

Park naturalist Jennifer Correa-Kruegel held her first Wellness Walk at Florence Kuipers last month. There were only two or three people due to the weather and the extremely muddy conditions.

**Bilby Road:**

Nothing new to report.

**Reports of Officers and Committees:**

**Projects:**

Mr. Lee III stated he still has not contacted the webmaster to review what can be done with the current website ([exploremorriscanal.org](http://exploremorriscanal.org)) for the Myra Snook tribute and other expanded virtual content.

**Events/Education/Public Awareness:**

Bread Lock Park is open, but the museum is closed until the mold is removed. The Jim & Mary Lee Museum remains closed until the bridge is repaired.

Mr. Lee III said it might be a good idea to do the tour of Lock Street that Mr. Detrick and Mr. Lee Jr. have discussed on one of the days the museums would have been open.

The MCC is invited to set up a table for Shippen Manor's opening day on Sunday 5/5 celebrating its 270<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Mr. Fineran said he could set up his tent and bring brochures. Mr. Lee III said he could probably go. Mr. Roth suggested combining a table for MCC and the Parks Foundation since they hand out many of the same brochures.

**Public Comment:** None

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held virtually on April 8, 2024 at 5:30PM.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Mr. Fineran made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Roth. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:39PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Barnes

Staff Representative