

Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2020

Attendance:

| Member | JAN 8 | FEB 5 | MAR 4 | APR 1 | MAY 6 | JUN 3 | AUG 5 | SEP 2 | OCT 7 | NOV 4 |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Mr. Huelsebusch, Chair | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Mrs. Allen, Vice Chair | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Dr. Hendrickson | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mr. John | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Dr. Kelly | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mrs. Madon | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Mr. Mueller | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Mr. Orlandi | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Mrs. Owen | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Mr. Bola, 1st Alternate | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mr. Klotz, 2nd Alternate | X | | | | | | | | | |

Members of the Public: Jerry Cook, Sue Hyland, Lori Lane. Township Committeeman Jonathan Heller.

1. The Chairman calls the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., announcing that all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.
2. Attendance: As noted above.
3. Reorganization and 2020 Meeting Dates: The Chairman welcomed Mario Orlandi, who has been appointed to the Board. The Chairman also welcomed John Klotz to his new position as an alternate Board member. Mr. Klotz was previously a regular Board member. Mr. Klotz made a motion that the 2020 dates are January 8, February 5, March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3, August 5, September 2, October 7, and November 4. Mr. Orlandi seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

4. Approval of the Minutes: Mr. Mueller made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2019, meeting. It was seconded by Mrs. Owen and passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Community Communications:

a. Mr. Huelsebusch stated that any newly-acquired open space in the Township will be put on the Readington Township website. There will be an article or news of the acquisition. This will include information on the property and how it was acquired. Four properties were acquired in 2018, and 3 in 2019.

b. Mr. Huelsebusch informed the OSAB that the Chambers Brook Greenway (Gallo property) on Ridge Road closed at the end of December, 2019. It was a donation.

c. A public meeting regarding the Saums property, 100 acres on Rockafellows Mill Road, was held in December.

d. Mr. Klotz mentioned that the January 19 walk will take place at the Wittemore Nature Preserve just over the border in Tewksbury Township. The walk on February 16 will be on the Lazy Brook Greenway, where those attending will see the new picnic area. The March 15 walk will potentially occur in Neshanic Station, Branchburg Township, where there's a new trailhead near Woodfern Road. It is located adjacent to the Woodfern Section of Hunterdon County's South Branch Preserve in Readington Township. Somerset County hopes to develop a trail along the South Branch, which would connect with the Woodfern Section.

6. Correspondence: Nothing.

7. Regular Reports:

Farmland Preservation and Green Acres Developments: Mrs. Allen reported the purchase of the Saums property on Rockafellows Mill Road soon. After the closing, the open space will be divided from the farmland, after which applications will be made to State and County funding programs; and the preserved farm will be auctioned, all to achieve 100% reimbursement of the costs.

Hunterdon County Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee Updates: Mr. Huelsebusch said that the first meeting of 2020 will take place on January 27. On January 31 Mr. Huelsebusch will meet with Dan Bush, the County parks director, regarding properties along the South Branch. The Brokaw property is moving forward. This is a property along the South Branch that the County will purchase.

Environmental Commission Updates: Mr. Heller pointed out that Judy Tutella of the EC would like help to finalize selection of wild flowers and locations for pollinator gardens.

Possible locations include Summer Road Park and Lazy Brook Greenway near the parking lot. Mr. Heller also mentioned that the Silver Bit & Spur Farm is a point source of pollution. Perhaps the Agricultural Land Committee can meet with them and discuss good practices. Mr. Huelsebusch also pointed out that the OSAB needs to have a space marked so as to know where to put a kiosk and parking.

Readington Township Updates: Nothing to report.

8. Old and Ongoing Business:

a. Trails subcommittee updates:

- i. Mr. John plans to hold 2 trail work sessions in February.
- ii. Mr. Klotz handed out a mock-up of volunteer opportunities for trails, open space and natural areas that will eventually be posted on the Township website. This is another way to reach Township residents in addition to emails.
- iii. Mr. Klotz suggested other possible opportunities for volunteers, such as “Adopt a Trail” or asking for specific skills, such as carpentry, for example.
- iv. Mr. Heller suggested mentioning in Readington News that there is information on volunteer opportunities on the Township website.
- v. Mrs. Owen discussed the trail report from Readington Trail Association and OSAB. The Do Not Block Gate sign has not yet been installed at Cole Road West. She and her husband opened the two County trails from Deer Path Park to the power lines using a chain saw. There is a large tree down by the culvert that needs to be removed. Mrs. Owen also reported dumping on the trail behind houses and sent photos to Daniel Bush, Hunterdon County Parks director. She put up a No Horses on Bridge sign on the Doboinski Farm. She also reported a tree down on the Vislocky Trail, which was subsequently removed by the Department of Public Works. RTA spent 17.5 hours mowing and 155 hours trail clearing in 2019. OSAB spent 9 hours mowing and 206 hours trail clearing in 2019.

b. Stewardship: Nothing to report.

9. New Business:

- a. Mr. Heller pointed out that seedlings need to be ordered soon from the State program. The cost is 55-85 cents per tree. The OSAB will use donated funds held by Readington Trail Association for the purchase of these seedlings. Approximately 35% of the saplings should be ones that grow in wetlands, such as river birch, sycamores, and swamp oak. Approximately 300 trees will be set aside for third grade students.
- b. Mr. Huelsebusch informed the Board that we need new kiosks to replace ones in deteriorating condition as well as ones in new locations.
- c. Mr. Mueller informed the OSAB that Boy Scout Thomas Rottner (Troop 186) completed his project on the Lazy Brook Greenway.

d. Mr. Klotz handed out Budget Estimate for Proposed 2020 Trail Mowing/Clearing Contract, which was discussed. Mr. Klotz made a motion to send it to the Township Committee as a recommendation. It was seconded by Mr. John and passed unanimously by voice vote.

10. Comments from the Public: None.

11. Comments from the Board: None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.
Minutes prepared by Sandra Madon.