

Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes

February 5, 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	X								
Dr. Hendrickson		X								
Mr. John	X	X								
Dr. Kelly		X								
Mrs. Madon	X	X								
Mr. Mueller	X									
Mr. Orlandi	X									
Mrs. Owen	X									
Mr. Bola, 1st Alternate		X								
Mr. Klotz, 2nd Alternate	X	X								

Members of the Public: Robert Becker, Lynette Skowronek. Township Mayor Jonathan Heller.

1. The Vice Chairwoman calls the meeting to order at 7:10 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. Approval of the Minutes: Mr. Klotz made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2020, meeting. It was seconded by Mr. John and passed unanimously by voice vote.
4. Community Communications:

a. Mr. Klotz announced that the February 16, 2020, hike at the Lazy Brook Greenway is on the Township website, and he will send out a reminder via email. Mrs. Allen mentioned that the March walk will be on Cole Road East because the trail in Neshanic Station in Somerset County is not yet ready. April's walk is still to be determined, while the walk in May will be on the newly-reconfigured Buell Trail on Round Mountain.

b. Mr. Klotz put a Volunteer Opportunities link on the Readington Township website, and it has resulted in 15 potential volunteers so far. Mr. Klotz and Mr. John will discuss further. This link will list volunteer opportunities for February through April and will change to list opportunities for three months out.

c. Mr. Heller discussed the events related to the annual tree seedling giveaway. On Friday, April 24, 2020, trees will be picked up then sorted and processed at the Allen farm. On Saturday, April 25, the tree giveaway will take place at the municipal building from 9:00 a.m. to noon. On Sunday, April 26, there will be a tree planting at the nursery at the Doboinski Farm Park from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The rain date for the tree planting event is May 3. Dr. Hendrickson ordered 2,500 seedlings for \$1,989, using the funds that the Readington Trail Association is donating to the OSAB. Mrs. Allen suggested we have the Township purchase tree tubes and fiberglass sticks.

5. Correspondence: None.

6. Regular Reports:

**Farmland Preservation and Green Acres Developments:** Mrs. Allen reported that the Saums property on Rockafellows Mill Road will close within the next two months. The Township Committee will consider an ordinance change to increase the membership of the Agricultural Land Advisory Committee.

**Hunterdon County Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee Updates:** Dr. Hendrickson notified members of the OSAB that he and Mr. Huelsebusch viewed two properties off Route 31 near the South Branch of the Raritan River, one of which the County is interested in, the other of which the County is not interested in.

**Environmental Commission Updates:**

a. Dr. Hendrickson apprised the Open Space Advisory Board that the Readington Township Committee approved a ban on plastic and paper bags, straws, and styrofoam beginning in January, 2021. He also mentioned that if a grant is received and if the Township can collect 500 pounds of plastic, to be placed in a bin, Township students will get a bench made of recycled plastics.

b. Mr. Becker stated that, at the County's waste management facility on Petticoat Lane in Clinton Township, the County will try to separate household recyclables from commercial. They also plan to cover the cardboard to keep it dry.

**Readington Township Updates:** None.

7. Old and Ongoing Business:

a. Trails subcommittee updates:

i. Mr. Klotz informed the Board that he has submitted a complaint to the Environmental Commission portal describing damage to the trails on the Cole Road East Greenway by the hunt club members on ATV's. There are big ruts in the mud. Mr. Klotz spoke with Municipal Clerk Vita Mekovetz regarding this issue, and she will report it to the police. Mayor Heller said that he got some calls from members of the Pine Bank Gun Club, which hunts this field. They use ATV's to get deer, and they are willing to correct the damage. Mrs. Allen pointed out that such damage done year after year will result in damage to roots. Mr. John suggested a single way in for ATV's during hunting season, perhaps with a temporary dirt road. Mr. Klotz suggested putting gravel down by the bridge, while Dr. Hendrickson mentioned that 6 inches of wood chips would be a good solution. Mr. Bola pointed out that the hunt club will need guidance as to what to do to correct the damage. This will be discussed at the next EC wildlife subcommittee meeting. Mr. Klotz made a motion that the Board refer the matter to the Mayor, who will work with the hunt club to correct the damage. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hendrickson and passed unanimously by voice vote.

ii. Mr. Klotz stated that he is updating his mowing maps to be used by an outside vendor hired by the Township for mowing eight of the Township's trails. Mayor Heller said that they will come up with a schedule for the mowing.

iii. Mr. Klotz noted that there are many nicely mowed but unmarked trails on the Lachenmeyer open space that will not be on the mowing schedule this year. Mrs. Skowronek mentioned that her husband mows some of them.

iv. Mr. Klotz also pointed out that he, Mr. Bola, and Mr. Becker are in the process of developing a format to create uniform maps for all of the trails. Mr. Bola stated that the current maps are not standardized and are difficult to change. It would be helpful for the public to have interactive maps. Mr. Bola also discussed software for doing this. The Pleasant Run trail map has a good format. Dr. Kelly pointed out that GIS software is difficult to use, and he discussed other possible ways. Raritan Valley Community College has the ability to make maps like the Pleasant Run map. Dr. Kelly, Mr. Klotz, and Mr. Bola will discuss this further.

b. Stewardship subcommittee updates:

i. Dr. Kelly said that some of his RVCC students are making Norway maple syrup at the Forest Hill Preserve.

ii. Mrs. Allen and Mr. Klotz met with Dr. Kelly regarding meadows. They will be discussing this issue further plus mowing schedules.

iii. Dr. Kelly reported that on Friday, February 21, and Friday, February 28, a deer enclosure will be erected off Dreahook Road across from the Holland Brook Headwaters. This will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 pm.

iv. Dr. Kelly informed members of the OSAB that the deer enclosure on the Reno property was vandalized. Approximately two thirds of the fence is down.

8. Comments from the Public:

a. Mayor Heller mentioned that the hand-dug well on the Gallo property needs to be closed or filled. Filling is recommended.

b. Mr. Becker documents grants and looks for opportunities for more. He has found twenty potential grants, but the Township does not have the manpower to do this.

c. Judy Tutella has resigned from the Environmental Commission, so a new leader is needed for the pollinator field seeding project.

d. Mr. Becker also pointed out that someone is needed to lead the Roots for River grant given for work on the Holland Brook-Route 523 open space.

e. Mr. Becker also stated that there are potential Sustainable New Jersey grants. Mr. Becker and Dr. Kelly will meet to discuss further.

9. Comments from the Board:

a. Mr. John said that on Thursday, June 4, Basking Ridge High School has a day of public service. Through his wife, an alumna of the school, Mr. John will have a group of 80 (divided into two groups of 40) to help in Readington Township from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Possibilities include pollinator meadows, deer enclosures, and tree plantings.

b. Mr. John informed Board members that a large paved parking lot was made and structures for training police dogs were erected in the first field of the Vislocky open space. Several OSAB members noted that this appears to be in violation of State rules regarding land preserved by Green Acres funding.

c. Mr. John also mentioned that there are many tree tubes that have been blown down in the panting area on the Lachenmeyer property off of Pine Bank Road.

10. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Hendrickson, seconded by Mr. Klotz and passed unanimously by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Sandra Madon.