

Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2021

PRESENT (via teleconference):

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

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Sean Jerzewski

Chair Huelsebusch called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM announcing all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.

COMMUNITY:

- 1) **Website:** John Klotz stated that a new email has been created for trails updates and information – trails@readingtontwp-nj.org.
- 2) **Tree Seedling Giveaway:** Neil Hendrickson stated that the 2021 Tree Seedling Giveaway is scheduled for Sat., April 24. Neil stated that he will be picking up the seedlings on April 22 with prep and bundling scheduled for April 23. Neil stated that volunteers are needed for both April 24 and 25. The tree giveaway will be conducted as a drive thru event at the municipal building.
- 3) **Monthly Trail Walks:** John Klotz stated that there no walks scheduled at this time due to the pandemic, however, walks may resume in May.
- 4) **Volunteer Sessions:** Chris John shared the work schedule for March noting that there is an open work session hopefully planned for March 27.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Adam Mueller made a motion to approve the February minutes, with Anne Owen seconding the motion. Motion was approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: Chair Huelsebusch updated the board on his recent letter to US Fish & Game concerning upcoming dam removal projects on the Raritan River and the impact to local waterways.

REPORTS:

- 1) **Farmland Preservation:** Julia Allen stated that the Saums farm application has been approved by the CADB (County Agriculture Development Board) and will now go to the County Commissioners and SADC (State Agriculture Development Committee) for cost share approval. Julia stated that closing is anticipated for early summer.
- 2) **Hunterdon County Parks / OSAB Update:** Chair Huelsebusch stated that the next monthly meetings are scheduled for March 22 and May 24.
- 3) **Environmental Commission Update:**
 - a. **Adopt a Road:** Neil Hendrickson asked the board if there is any interest in this program. Neil has been in contact with Raritan Township and reported on their success. Will revisit at a future board meeting.
 - b. **Plastics Ban:** Neil Hendrickson urged members of the board to speak with merchants who are currently using plastic bags.
 - c. **Deer Management:** Adam Mueller stated the 2020/21 deer season is now closed and a record number of deer were killed. Adam stated that he has data that was submitted by hunters and hunting clubs and will present the final report to the board after the Deer Management Committee meets.

Mario Orlandi stated that despite impediments/constraints and delays from the Township Committee on decisions in relationship to the hunting season, the Deer Management Committee was still able to have a successful season. Mario stated that going forward he hopes that there is more cooperation and more timely decisions made in the future. Mario thanked Adam Mueller for his hard work.

- 4) **WaterWatch:** Mario Orlandi stated that there are several activities planned in the future, such as: annual well testing, stream clean-up and septic awareness programs. Mario also stated that WaterWatch is planning an educational fishing program. Mario stated that WaterWatch is working on a grant proposal in collaboration with Readington schools to develop an interactive map depicting all the streams and waterways in the Township.

UPDATES:

Chair Huelsebusch stated that the owners of a ½ acre corner triangle piece of land at the intersection of Locust and Barley Sheaf roads have donated the parcel to the Township.

ONGOING BUSINESS:

- 1) **Memorial Bench:** Sean Jerzewski spoke about a memorial bench that his family is donating in memory of this brother who recently passed away. John Klotz will work with Sean on placement, location, and style of the memorial bench on the Vislocky property. Adam Mueller made a motion to accept the donation of the memorial bench, Julia seconded the motion, all in favor.
- 2) **Trails:** Chris John stated that the next trails session is scheduled for March 25 at 7:00 pm.
- 3) **Stewardship:**
 - a. **Meadow Management:** Dr. Kelly presented updates and recommendations to the Meadow Management Plan which will help support multiple grassland birds. The plan also included recommendations for alternating mowing and maintenance schedules as well as meadow burns. Julia Allen made a motion to present the Meadow Management Plan to the Township Committee, Neil Hendrickson seconded the motion, all in favor.
 - b. **Stewardship Personnel:** Dr. Kelly spoke about the future possibility of hiring a dedicated person helping with Open Space, Meadow Management, trail maps, outreach, etc. Dr. Kelly stated that if Raritan Valley Community College is a sponsor for this position, it opens up more grant opportunities for the Township. Jonathan Heller will speak with the Township Committee.
 - c. **Cornhuskers Park:** Chair Huelsebusch stated that Readington Recreation and the Township Committee asked Van Cleef Engineering to submit a plan for updates and improvements to Cornhuskers Park. Juergen asked Dr. Kelly to submit a list of non-infrastructure alternatives and natural recommendations for consideration by the Township Committee. The board will conduct a sight visit after March 15.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: Sean Jerzewski expressed his appreciation to the board.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD: Sandra Madon expressed her interest in coordinating projects and activities with local Girl Scouts and schools and volunteered to be the contact person.

ADJOURN: Mario Orlandi made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Chris John, followed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg A. Slutter