

Readington Township Open Space Advisory Board Meeting Minutes May 7, 2025

Present:

MEMBER	JAN	FEB 4th	MAR 5th	APR 2nd	MAY 7th	JUN 4th	AUG 6th	SEP 4th	OCT 1st	NOV 5th
Juergen Huelsebusch, Chair		X	X	X	X					
Anne Owen, Vice Chair		X	X	X	X					
Emanuel Bola		X	X	X	---					
Julia Allen		X	X	X	---					
Thomas Davitt		X	X	X	X					
Christopher John		X	X	X	X					
Adam Mueller		X		X	X					
Lisa Routel		X	X	X	X					
Brian Skowronek		X	X	X	X					
Ryan Dunn, 1 st Alternate		---	N/A	---	---					
David Owen, 2nd Alternate		X	X	X	X					

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Paul Gruere, Jake Spooner

A. Chair Huelsebusch called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM announcing all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.

B. COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS:

1. An announcement went out for the May 18th hike. There is an upcoming hike at Cole Road in June.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Adam Mueller moved to approve April 2, 2025 minutes, and the motion was seconded by Lisa Routel and unanimously adopted.

D. CORRESPONDENCE:

E. REGULAR REPORTS:

Open Space Preservation: Back in 2023, Richard Dodds and Juergen Huelsebusch applied to get Readington back into Federal Highlands. In December, we were notified that we were approved. This gives us grants/funding. We met with Liz Ward, a grant administrator. Instead of going to the county for a competitive grant for money and green acres for matching, we now have a third funding source. They were interested in one of our underserved areas.

Ag/Farmland Preservation: Holland Brook Headwaters Planting: Augers are now available at the site to aid in the hole digging process. On Friday, May 16th, there is a group planting planned. A water container is on site as well as a shipping container filled with supplies for planting. Logistics for future mass plantings were discussed.

Environmental Partner/Commission Updates: Wildlife Management Report: The Deer Management Program: Adam Mueller provided an update on the Deer Management Program and stated it was approved at the Township Committee. Three properties were added to the program. Applications to participate in the program will be posted.

Readington Township Updates: Seedling giveaway – April 19, 2025 - Organization for the event was at its best. However, there was a drop in resident participation given the holiday weekend/week. Next year, a non-holiday weekend for this event will be ideal.

G: OLD AND ONGOING BUSINESS:

1. OSAB Trails Subcommittee Updates: Anne sent out an updated trail reports. Work is being done on the parking lot. The river trail is pretty dry. The catch basin needs mowing. Lazy Brook's grass looked pretty high and should be mowed before the hike. May 20th is a Trails subcommittee meeting at 7:30 pm.
2. OSAB Stewardship Updates: We requested that Doug and Sarah be part of our projects. They are both extremely knowledgeable.
3. Stream cleanup efforts: There were three clean up locations; Rockaway, about five volunteers were there, Rockefeller Mills at River Road, there were three volunteers, and Three Bridges about 15 volunteers participated. Unfortunately, the weather was cold/damp, so it made it difficult. That site cleaned up multiple tires. Steve Foster was at Pleasant Run, about seven volunteers participated there.

4. Water: Robert Lucas works for Raritan Headwaters. He and Juergen will be at Dart's Mills, and we will get an update on the dam there. Robert will assess this property and give us recommendations for better water flow. The other dam is getting closer to being transferred to the state. When we speak with someone from NOAA, we will have a better idea when this will be removed. Highgate in Bridgewater is slated to be removed as is Rockefeller Mills. There was also a bad blockage on Pleasant Run and that was what was causing all the flooding there. With the help of some heavy machinery, the blockage has been removed.
5. OSAB Volunteer Calendar/Work Sessions: Tree planting dates were discussed and how to get volunteers engaged and made aware of the sessions was a topic. Chair Huelsebusch wants to do a tour of the parks to assess what the needs are.
6. Trail needs were discussed; down trees, overly wet spots on multiple trails, and hanging trees are some of the issues that need addressing. Wood chips were a corrective suggestion for wet spots on the various trails.
7. The Kestrel program is going well. A box, located at the entranceway at Lazy Brook, contains one egg. We expect to see a total of 5 eggs in that box. The incubation period is one month. The girl scouts are monitoring the boxes as a project. Tina, a troop leader for the troop that attended last month's meeting, is currently seeking girl scout leadership approval for the wood duck project.

H. NEW BUSINESS:

I. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

J. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

ADJOURNMENT: Adam Mueller made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Lisa Routel, followed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri Russo
Advisory Board Secretary