

**MINUTES
MORRIS COUNTY
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION TRUST FUND COMMITTEE**

March 9, 2023

Held remotely via WebEx:

<https://morriscountynj.webex.com/morriscountynj/j.php?MTID=m8fe8bb48a535991774732b18cbd2b67c>

Phone In: 1-408-418-9388

Access Code: 234 127 63927

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Director Joe Barilla.

Members present:

Patrick Antonetti, Region VI – Lincoln Park
Astri Baillie, Region VIII – Madison
Betty Cass-Schmidt, Morris County Park Commission
Jennifer Cooper, At-Large
Nita Galate, Region III – Mount Arlington
Thomas Galfo, Morris County Agriculture Development Board
Larry Gindoff, Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority
Tom Malinousky, Morris County Trail Program Advisory Committee
Suzanne McCluskey, At-Large
Adam Salberg, Region IV – Rockaway Township
Laura Szwak, Region I – Mount Olive
Jay Thomson, Region II - Randolph

Members with excused absence:

Thomas “Ace” Gallagher, Region VII – Hanover
David Kaplan, Region V – Parsippany-Troy Hills
Everton Scott, Morris County Planning Board

Also attending:

Commissioner Director Stephen Shaw, Liaison, Morris County Office of Planning & Preservation (left meeting at 7:11 PM)
John Napolitano, Esq., Morris County Counsel
William Johnson, Esq., Special Counsel, Morris County Preservation Trust Fund
Joe Barilla, Director, Morris County Office of Planning & Preservation

Members of the Public:

None

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Chairman Thomson stated that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of the meeting had been provided and filed with the Town of Morristown, the Morris County Clerk, the Daily Record and the Star Ledger.

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

After Joe Barilla introduced himself, Commissioner Stephen Shaw introduced himself as liaison to the Office of Planning and Preservation, and the committee. He welcomed the membership and thanked them for their volunteer service on the committee. All members of the 2023 committee introduced themselves.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Barilla served as temporary Chairperson and took nominations for the position of Chairperson for 2023.

On a motion by Nita Galate, seconded by Astri Baillie, Jay Thomson was nominated for the position of Chairperson. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. Aye: Antonetti, Baillie, Cass-Schmidt, Cooper, Galate, Galfo, Gindoff, Malinousky, McCluskey, Salberg, Szwak, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None
Jay Thomson was elected Chairperson and chaired the meeting from this point forward.

On a motion by Suzanne McCluskey, seconded by Astri Baillie, Laura Szwak was nominated for the position of Vice-Chairperson. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. Aye: Antonetti, Baillie, Cass-Schmidt, Cooper, Galate, Galfo, Gindoff, Malinousky, McCluskey, Salberg, Szwak, Thomson Nay: None
Abstain: None
Laura Szwak was elected Vice-Chairperson.

On a motion by Laura Szwak, seconded by Astri Baillie, Jennifer Cooper was nominated for the position of Secretary. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. Aye: Antonetti, Baillie, Cass-Schmidt, Cooper, Galate, Galfo, Gindoff, Malinousky, McCluskey, Salberg, Szwak, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None
Jennifer Cooper was elected Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of December 15, 2022 meeting - On a motion by Nita Galate, second by Suzanne McCluskey, the committee approved the minutes of the December 15, 2022 meeting. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Baillie, Cass-Schmidt, Cooper, Galate, Gindoff, McCluskey, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: Galfo, Malinousky, Salberg, Szwak

STAFF REPORT

- 1) Morris County Policies and Procedures – Mr. Barilla reviewed the Conflict of Interest policy for members. Members residing in or representing the municipality in which an application is located should recuse themselves.
- 2) 2023 Preservation Trust Fund Tax Rate – Mr. Barilla stated the overall tax rate was set by the Board of County Commissioners at 5/8 cent, with the Municipal/Non-Profit grant program being allocated 1/8 cent.

In addition, the Commissioners approved by Resolution 2023-152 at their January 25 meeting this year to move \$750,000 from the Ancillary Account to the Municipal/Non-Profit Account of the trust fund, therefore increasing the amount available for projects this year. In addition, there was interest that was added to this

program. This translates into approximately \$2.5 M available for grants this year.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) 2023 Open Space Application – Mr. Barilla stated the application was just released on the county website and a press release would be issued this week.

- 2) Timeline for Grant Round – Mr. Barilla reviewed the grant timeline and process with the Committee. Applications and appraisals will be due on June 9. Mr. Barilla said application summary books would be mailed to members in advance of the September 6 meeting. He stated it may be in hybrid format. Site visits will tentatively occur in person on September 30. Should conditions warrant a remote meeting, they would occur utilizing a video submitted by applicants, with the in person WebEx “site visit” conference with the committee on September 30 during which members can ask questions on the video or any application materials. All applicants will be required to submit videos for their site visits, regardless of hybrid or in person meeting. Final presentations by the applicants, and the committee’s deliberations on grant recommendations, will occur on October 17. Mr. Barilla stated the recommendations of the Committee would be presented to the Board of County Commissioners at their work session on November 8th. Action on the awards will occur at the second Commissioner meeting that month on November 20th. The Committee’s last meeting of the year will be December 13th.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, pursuant to P.L. 1975 Ch. 231, the Open Public Meetings Act, the Open Space Trust Fund Committee may exclude the public to discuss matters as are provided under the Act; and

WHEREAS, said Act provided that this Committee may exclude the public from the discussion of such matters,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Open Space Trust Fund Committee hereby excludes the public in order to discuss such matters. The general nature of the subject to be discussed is as follows: Purchase, lease or acquisition of real property. On a motion by Larry Gindoff, seconded by Jennifer Cooper, the committee closed the open portion of the meeting and voted to conduct a closed session at 7:27 PM.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The meeting reopened to the public at 7:35 PM

Action as a Result of Closed Session-

On a motion by Suzanne McCluskey, seconded by Tom Malinousky, the committee recommended approval of a first grant extension for the following projects:

1. Trust for Public Land (Twp. of Chatham) “McDon Fen”
2. Township of Montville – Jean Drive Preserve
3. Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills – “Kosut Property”

A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Antonetti, Baillie, Cass-Schmidt, Cooper, Galate, Galfo, Gindoff, Malinousky, McCluskey, Salberg, Szwak, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 7:00 PM for

the committee's review of the 2023 applications.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Larry Gindoff, seconded by Astri Baillie, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Murray