

MORRIS COUNTY TRAIL CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY BOOK REVIEW MEETING MINUTES

October 1, 2025

In-Person with Livestream Via Webex:

Betty Cass-Schmidt, Committee Chair; Morris County Park Commissioner - Pequannock
Doug Gable, Morris County Park Commissioner – Denville
Nita Galate, Committee Vice Chair; Morris County Planning Board Member – Mount Arlington
Stuart Lasser, Morris County Park Commissioner President – Morris Township – **Left Meeting at 5:51 p.m.**

Tom Malinousky, Member-at-Large – Long Hill
Isobel Olcott, Morris County Planning Board Member – Harding
Richard Seabury, Morris County Park Commissioner – Montville
Kevin Sullivan, Member-at-Large – Chatham Township – **Joined Meeting at 5:12 p.m.**
Leigh Ann Von Hagen, Member-at-Large – Netcong – via Webex

Members Absent:

None

Also Attending:

Joe Barilla, Director, Morris County Planning & Preservation
Ed Confair, AKRF Consulting Engineer
Dave Helmer, Morris County Park Commission Executive Director
Bill Johnson, Morris County Counsel
Karl Klingener, Morris County Park Commission Special Projects Manager
Christopher Statile, Consulting Engineer
Courtney Wilk, AKRF Consulting Engineer

Members of the Public Attending:

None

CALL TO ORDER

Chair of the Grant Program Advisory Committee, Betty Cass-Schmidt, called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and requested a roll call.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting held on the 1st day of October, 2025 was posted on the bulletin board of the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners and electronically mailed to the Morris County Daily Record and Star Ledger, and filed with the Morris County Clerk and the Municipal Clerk of the Town of Morristown on September 10, 2025 in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act. The above complies with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 10:4-10(A).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Being that there were no members of the public present, Chair Cass-Schmidt requested a motion to open and close the meeting to public comment. The motion was made by Ms. Olcott. Mr. Gabel seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous consent.

MORRIS COUNTY TRAIL CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON'S STATEMENT

Chair Cass-Schmidt informed the committee that this would be Isobel Olcott's "farewell tour" on the Trail Construction Grant Program Advisory Committee. Isobel has been a part of the program since it launched in 2016. Prior to that, she was instrumental in the process to develop the program. Anyone who has been involved, will find that she is a dedicated and valuable contributor, so we thank her for all of her years of service. Ms. Olcott thanked everyone for their kind comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Olcott moved to approve the Minutes of the Morris County Trail Construction Grant Program Advisory Committee, Re-Organization Meeting of February 13, 2025. Mr. Gabel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous consent, with Commissioner Lasser abstaining and Mr. Sullivan absent.

COMMITTEE RE-APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Klingener stated that we have the following changes to the Advisory Committee:

Ms. Olcott will not seek another term as one of the Planning Board representatives, and Mr. Greg Johnson will replace her.

Ms. Galate is our second Planning Board representative and she is up for re-appointment to the Planning Board.

Ms. VonHagen is one of our At-Large members and is also up for re-appointment. Ms. VonHagen stated that after re-consideration of her schedule and work commitments, she would not be able to accept re-appointment to the committee.

Informational only. There were no actions taken.

CONFIDENTIALITY & CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the County's Policy on Confidentiality and Conflict of interest.

With respect to confidentiality, it is important to note that you are making recommendations with the use of public funds and applicants are making application for those funds in a confidential manor. Everything that you learn in this process, whether through the receipt of the summary book, or what we learn in closed sessions, or discussions with staff, is to be held in the strictest of confidence, up through and including the point in time when the Commissioners make a decision based on your final recommendations. So please keep that in mind as we go forward.

With respect to conflict of interest, the County has a policy for conflict of interest. If you have a personal or business relationship with any of the applicants, or the professionals that are associated with the applicants, or are a member of a town council or other body with reference to any of the applicants, you would want to make that known to staff or myself and, in all likelihood, you would be recused of that particular application. If you think you may have a conflict, you probably have a conflict. So, if you think you may have a conflict, the best thing to do is bring it to someone's attention and we will figure it out.

Informational only. There were no actions taken.

GRANT PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Klingener stated that a full program update would be provided at the Post Award Meeting.

Informational only, no action taken.

MORRIS COUNTY TRAIL CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ALTERNATE CONSULTANT

Mr. Klingener stated that the Borough of Netcong has hired AKRF to be their Design Engineer on the application before us this evening. This has created a conflict with our Primary Consulting Engineer and we put out a "Request for Proposal" for an Alternate Consulting Engineer. Mr. Christopher Statile was selected from the respondents to that request and is with us tonight to present the review of the Netcong Application.

EXECUTIVE SESSION STATEMENT

Mr. Klingener read the following executive session statement:

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, the Morris County Trails Construction Grant Advisory Committee of the County of Morris in the State of New Jersey may exclude the public to discuss matters as are provided under the Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Committee hereby excludes the public in order to discuss such matters:

1. As it pertains to pending contract negotiation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(7)
The Committee reserves the right, as the Committee exchanges ideas related to the above matters and attempts to develop appropriate plans of action as it may be suggested by individual committee members or staff members, to broaden discussion and to attempt to arrive at a nonbinding consensus provided such broadening of discussion continues within the limits set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(1) through (9). Matters discussed in Executive Session will be made public at the earliest point in time that the need for confidentiality for each such matter shall no longer be necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately and be in full force from and after its passage.

Chair Cass-Schmidt requested a motion to enter executive session. Ms. Olcott made the motion to close the open portion of the meeting and conduct an executive session. Mr. Gabel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous consent. The committee entered executive session at 5:12 p.m.

Mr. Sullivan joined the meeting at 5:12 p.m.

Mr. Lasser left the meeting at 5:51 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Meeting returned to open session at 6:34 p.m. Those present were: Chair Cass-Schmidt; Vice Chair Galate; Morris County Park Commissioners Gabel, and Seabury; Morris County Planning Board Member Olcott; Members-at-Large Malinousky, Sullivan, and VonHagen; Director Barilla, Executive Director Helmer; County Council Johnson; Special Projects Manager Klingener; Mr. Confair, Ms. Wilk, and Mr. Statile.

There were no members of the public present.

MOTION TO PROCEED

Chair Cass-Schmidt requested a motion to authorize the Chair to present to the County Commissioners, the eight (8) funding recommendations of this committee, as decided in Executive Session.

Mr. Gabel made the motion. Ms. Olcott seconded, and a roll call vote was taken.

Aye: Cass-Schmidt, Gabel, Galate, Malinousky, Olcott, Seabury, Sullivan, and VonHagen

Nay: None Abstain: None Absent: Lasser

The Motion Passes 8 Aye, 0 Abstention, 1 Absent.

MORRIS COUNTY TRAIL CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

POST AWARD MEETING

Mr. Klingener stated that he would be sending out dates for the Post Award Meeting to be held in December.

Informational only. There were no actions taken.


ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cass-Schmidt requested a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Seabury made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gabel seconded and the motion was passed by unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karl Klingener
Special Projects Manager
Morris County Park Commission