

**MINUTES  
MORRIS COUNTY  
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION TRUST FUND COMMITTEE  
30 Schuyler Place, Second Floor, Morristown, New Jersey  
March 19, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 by Christine Marion.

Members present:

George Coogan, Region VII – Morris Plains  
Nita Galate, Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund Review Board and Morris County Planning Board  
Robin Jones, Region VI - Pequannock  
Joyce Kanigel, Region IV – Rockaway Borough  
Joseph Nametko, Region III – Netcong  
Casey Parikh, At-Large  
Don Richardson, Region VIII – Long Hill  
Elliott Ruga, Region V – Town of Boonton  
Mohamed Seyam, At-Large  
David Sprandel, Region II – Mendham Borough  
Laura Szwak, Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority  
Matthew Tal, Morris County Park Commission  
Jay Thomson, Morris County Agriculture Development Board

Members with excused absence:

Marcia Asdal, Region I – Chester Twp.

Also attending:

Freeholder Stephen Shaw, Liaison, Morris County Office of Planning & Preservation  
John Napolitano, Esq., Morris County Counsel  
Christine Marion, Director, Morris County Office of Planning & Preservation  
Barbara Murray, Open Space Program Coordinator, Morris County Office of Planning & Preservation

Members of the Public:

None

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT**

Christine Marion 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.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Freeholder Shaw introduced himself as liaison to the committee. He welcomed the membership and thanked them for their volunteer service on the committee. All members and staff introduced themselves.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Ms. Christine Marion served as temporary Chairperson and took nominations for the position of Chairperson for 2019.

On a motion by George Coogan, seconded by Laura Szwak, Jay Thomson was nominated for the position of Chairperson. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. Aye: Coogan, Galate, Jones, Kanigel, Namteko, Parikh, Richardson, Ruga, Seyam, Sprandel, Szwak, Tal, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None  
Jay Thomson was elected Chairperson and chaired the meeting from this point forward.

On a motion by Elliott Ruga, seconded by George Coogan, Laura Szwak was nominated for the position of Vice-Chairperson. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. Aye: Coogan, Galate, Jones, Kanigel, Nametko, Parikh, Richardson, Ruga, Seyam, Sprandel, Szwak, Tal, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None  
Laura Szwak was elected Vice-Chairperson.

On a motion by Laura Szwak, seconded by Joseph Nametko, Elliott Ruga was nominated for the position of Secretary. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. Aye: Coogan, Galate, Jones, Kanigel, Nametko, Parikh, Richardson, Ruga, Szwak, Seyam, Sprandel, Tal, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None  
Elliott Ruga was elected Secretary.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion by Laura Szwak, second by Nita Galate, the committee approved the regular and closed session minutes of the December 5, 2018 minutes. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Jones, Kanigel, Richardson, Ruga, Szwak, Thomson Nay: None  
Abstain: Coogan, Nametko, Parikh, Seyam, Sprandel, Tal

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Ms. Barbara Murray stated the 2019 open space application form was released earlier in the month and is available on the program website.
2. Timeline for Grant Round - Ms. Murray reviewed the grant timeline and process with the Committee. Both applications and appraisals will be due on Friday, June 14. A licensed appraiser will review each appraisal submitted and resolve any discrepancies with the applicants prior to the Committee's review at the September meeting. This will be the eighth year of formal appraisal review by the licensed appraiser for all applications. In August, staff prepares materials for an application summary booklet for members to use on the site visits, which are scheduled for September. Final presentations by the applicants will occur in October, as will the committee's final deliberations on grant recommendations. Ms. Murray stated the recommendations of the Committee will be presented to the Board of Chosen Freeholders at their work session on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Action on the awards will occur at the second Freeholder meeting that month on November 25<sup>th</sup>.

3. Open Space Workshop – Ms. Murray stated the recent rule change allowing a portion of demolition and restoration of the property to a natural state as eligible expenses under the program will be addressed at an open space workshop to be held March 28 from 7-8:30 PM at the Cultural Center.

### **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 George Coogan, seconded by Nita Galate, the committee entered into executive session at 7:46 P.M.

### **RETURN TO MEETING**

The meeting reopened to the public at 8:21 P.M.

#### Actions as a Result of Closed Session -

1. Protect our Wetlands, Waters & Woods (POWWW)/“Jonathan’s Woods Extension (Donaldson)” – On a motion by Joseph Nametko, seconded by Elliott Ruga, the committee voted to approve a first six month grant extension for the project, to expire October 1, 2019. Aye: Coogan, Galate, Jones, Kanigel, Nametko, Parikh, Richardson, Ruga, Seyam, Sprandel, Szwak, Tal, Thomson  
Nay: None Abstain: None
2. Borough of Lincoln Park/“Midwood Flood Storage Area Addition” – On a motion by George Coogan, seconded by David Sprandel, the committee voted to approve a first six month grant extension for the project, to expire October 1, 2019. Aye: Coogan, Galate, Jones, Kanigel, Nametko, Parikh, Richardson, Ruga, Seyam, Sprandel, Szwak, Tal, Thomson Nay: None Abstain: None
3. Township of Hanover/“Whippany River Blueway” – On a motion by Robin Jones, seconded by Casey Parikh, the committee voted to approve a first six month grant extension for the project, to expire October 1, 2019. Aye: Coogan, Galate, Jones, Kanigel, Nametko, Parikh, Richardson, Ruga, Seyam, Sprandel, Szwak, Thomson  
Nay: None Abstain: Tal

### **STAFF REPORT**

1. Ms. Murray reviewed the County’s policies governing conflict of interest and attendance at meetings with the committee.
2. 2019 Preservation Trust Tax Rate - Ms. Murray stated that the Board of Chosen Freeholders on February 13 set the 2019 tax used to fund all Preservation Trust programs at 3/4 cent. Of this amount, the municipal/non-profit grant program was allocated 1/10 cent.

3. Morris County Trail Construction Grant Program – Ms. Murray provided a presentation on the status of the Morris County Trail Construction grant program. The third year of the program was completed in 2018. The program operates as a collaborative effort of the Morris County Park Commission and Office of Planning & Preservation. Grants are awarded for the construction of trails on permanently preserved public parkland or private land with dedicated recreational trail easements. Applications are reviewed by the County’s Trail Program Advisory Committee based on criteria including connectivity, constructability, access, and demand; construction documents and cost estimates are also evaluated. All projects require a 20% match and the average award for 2018 was approximately \$132,952. Ms. Murray highlighted features from the applications from Florham Park, Hanover and Mount Arlington. A total of six applications from six municipalities were awarded grants totaling approximately \$797,713 with a total of 3.38 miles of proposed new recreational trails of various surface and user types. Program statistics to date: 25 grants awarded totaling \$2,041,876.77 in grant funds to construct 13.668 miles of new recreational trails.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 4, 2019 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, located at 30 Schuyler Place, Schuyler Annex Building, in Morristown, New Jersey at 7:00 P.M.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Nita Galate, seconded by Robin Jones, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:46 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Murray