



Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Members: K. Barnhardt (County), K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), L. Kelleher (Reading), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp.), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Reading), L. Olsen (County)

Members absent: B. Petrov (Mt. Penn), Council Rep (Mt. Penn), D. Barth (Alsace Twp), J. Oswald (Lower Alsace)

Others attending: B. Burkovich, A. Showers, M. Brophy, D. Hunter, L. Kissinger, A. Amoros, A. Sellers, J. Pacharis

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and stated that a quorum is present. Due to the COVID-19 Declaration of Emergency, the MP3 is meeting virtually with public comment invited in writing via email or through registration via Zoom.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Barnhardt inquired if Ms. Kelleher received any written public comment. Ms. Kelleher replied in the negative. He asked if members of the public present wished to comment. None of the attendees present offered comment at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Barnhardt asked the members to consider the minutes from the December 9th meeting and the agenda for this meeting.

The December minutes and the agenda were approved by acclimation with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Mallatratt, MP3COG Treasurer, called attention to the reports distributed electronically and attached to the agenda showing no expenses and deposits of \$6000 (dues from Mt. Penn, Alsace and Lower Alsace) creating a balance of \$25,952.83. The Berks County Community Foundation (BCCF) account shows the receipt of \$2.21 in interest creating a balance of \$9,072.29.

Ms. Mallatratt reported that she is currently working to set up the PayPal account that will enable online sales when the MP3 website moves from the County website to Go Daddy.

The Treasurer's Report was approved via acclimation.

MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Payment of Bills

Ms. Mallatratt stated that a bill is due to **SOS Copy Center for the printing of the brochures** created by the Marketing Committee. Mr. Olsen's firm offered to cover half the cost of the copying charge, requiring an MP3 payment of \$153.83, which was moved by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and with a second from Ms. Mallatratt. The motion was approved unanimously. Everyone thanked Olsen Design Group for their generosity.

2. Election of Officers

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Chair. Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz to nominate Mr. Barnhardt as chair. As no other nominations were made from the floor, the nominations were closed.

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair. Ms. Mallatratt moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher to nominate Mr. Olsen as vice-chair. As no other nominations were made from the floor, the nominations were closed.

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Treasurer. Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher to nominate Ms. Mallatratt as treasurer. As no other nominations were made from the floor, the nominations were closed.

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Secretary. Ms. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt to nominate Ms. Kelleher as secretary. As no other nominations were made from the floor, the nominations were closed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz moves, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to elect the slate of officers nominated above. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Traffic Shift at the Pagoda Parking Lot

Mr. Kissinger stated that the RFP for the project is being drafted. Public Works has started grubbing the rock and removing vegetation, which included the removal of three pine trees around the island. He stated that construction is planned over the summer.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that the Pagoda Foundation is planning outdoor events over the summer and there are two annual hillclimbs over the summer. She inquired if construction could be planned around the planned events. She also noted that Mr. Rock, organizer of the climbs, is concerned that the installation of speed bumps would create problems for the cars used for the hillclimbs.

Mr. Kissinger stated that speed bumps are not included in the project. Mr. Amoros stated that if he could be provided with event dates he will attempt to coordinate the construction schedule.

4. Update on Coordinated Approach to Dumping

Ms. Showers stated that Ms. Kelleher and Mr. Janssen provided draft RFPs to assist with the development of an RFP for this project. She stated that Mr. Pottiger was asked to work with Ms. Mallatratt on drafting the RFP.

Mr. Pottiger asked Ms. Showers to resend the draft RFPs so the work can begin.

5. DCNR Grant Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan

Ms. Showers stated that she is working with a representative from the DCNR to determine which type of grant applications should be submitted for these projects. The applications are due on April 14th. She noted the need for a working committee to be formed to assist with the grant application so the draft can be reviewed at the March MP3 meeting. She noted the need to define the scope of the project to determine the cost of the 20% matching funds.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt, to authorize Ms. Showers to create a work group to complete the grant applications and to chair the group. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Olsen stated that if he can be provided with the project scope, he can reach out to some planning consultants to obtain a cost estimate.

6. Pagoda Trail

Ms. Showers stated that she met with Ms. Burkovich and Mr. Brophy about the signage needed for this trail, not to exceed \$1,500. Mr. Brophy stated that the first estimate came in at \$9 per sign with a minimum order of 30 signs plus a \$75 design fee which will cost approximately \$350, leaving room to purchase materials for the installation and an additional sign at the DoubleTree

Mr. Olsen suggested meeting with Mr. Poole after the 2nd estimate is obtained regarding his willingness to sponsor the signs for the trail.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: reports from the committees are included with the agenda.

1. Finance & Capital

No report; currently working with Public Safety & Environmental on a trail assessment study. County Planning will submit a DCNR grant application to assist with the funding for the trail assessment.

2. Marketing & Promotions

Attached to the agenda.

Ms. Burkovich reported that the printing of the brochure is in progress along with the migration of the website from the County Planning website to Go Daddy and have the addition of PayPal.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about tying the Pagoda Foundation website with the MP3 site. Ms. Burkovich stated that links can be posted on the two websites. There was also discussion about the need to add the Pagoda Skyline and Antietam Park links.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher, to collaborate with the Pagoda Foundation, Pagoda Skyline and Antietam Park on website integration, marketing, events, etc. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Burkovich and Ms. Mallatratt noted the need for the need for the MP3 to have a phone number and mailing address. Both agreed that the MP3 should not use a PO Box as a mailing address.

Ms. Burkovich stated that she has obtained a free phone number on Google Voice that can be forwarded to someone's phone. Ms. Mallatratt stated that currently the bank and BCCF use her Alsace Township mailing address and she noted the need to have online access to the bank accounts to manage the PayPal account.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher, to authorize the Treasurer to establish online access to the bank accounts. The motion was approved unanimously.

After discussion about the need for a mailing address, the group decided to consider the issue again at a future meeting.

3. Public Safety Committee

No report. Currently working with Finance & Environmental on a trail assessment study. County Planning will submit a DCNR grant application to assist with the funding for the trail assessment.

4. Environmental Committee

See Pagoda Trail and Feasibility Study above.

OTHER MATTERS

Ms. Kelleher reported that Albright College contacted her about arranging a partnership with the MP3 regarding internships for marketing and environmental issues. A meeting is scheduled next week with County Planning staff and Albright to further discuss the partnership.

Mr. Brophy inquired about the availability of special event permits from the City. Ms. Kelleher expressed the belief that event permits are not being issued and she stated that she would contact the Traffic Sergeant in the morning to get an update. (Note Sgt.

Dougherty informed Ms. Kelleher that the City is not yet issuing special event permits and he is unsure when that restriction will be lifted)

Mr. Brophy inquired about the tree removal on Oak Lane. Mr. Kissinger explained that he removed some trees at the Alsace Rd-Oak Lane intersection to allow a loader to gain entry to the area adjacent to the ballfield. He explained that the Shade Tree Commission also funded a project to remove trees that are located in a three foot buffer along Oak Lane or are leaning toward Oak Lane to eliminate potential property damage to the residential properties across the street.

Mr. Kissinger stated that he and Central Berks Police recently caught a non-City resident harvesting live trees from Mt. Penn. He stated that the individual was informed that his activities were illegal and that while they were not going to prosecute this time, charges would be made in the future. The individual admitted to selling the wood for lumber.

Mr. Kissinger noted that people can legally only remove downed wood. He stated that when trees are removed, he usually has the wood cut for use as firewood for people who want it.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about the health of the cherry tree located near the bottom steps at the Pagoda and she noted the need for the landscaping to be reinvigorated. Mr. Kissinger stated that he will check on the cherry tree.

Mr. Kissinger explained that the pulley for the flag pole at the Pagoda was damaged due to normal wear and tear due to the wind, which generally happens every four years. A new pulley is being ordered along with new rope. When the materials are received the Fire Department will assist with the replacement of the flag.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested a flag raising event in the spring.

Mr. Brophy noted that the trail head parking areas are overcrowded and he inquired about the opening of the Fire Tower and Egleman's Park parking areas. Mr. Kissinger stated that due to past problems with security, Egleman's will not be opened for parking; however, the Fire Tower can be considered by the administration.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that although Pagoda Skyline has an agreement with the City, they cannot make alterations to the property without permission from the City. She noted that the group was recently stopped from installing a new gate at the entry point. Mr. Kissinger agreed, noting that the County and RAWA have equipment on the Fire Tower site and they need access.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Barnhardt inquired if any of the attendees' present wish to comment.

Ann Sellers suggested that the MP3 or the City consider purchasing a woodland mower to eliminate the need to down trees when the loader is needed to provide maintenance.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:57 pm.

The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be on March 24th 2021 via Zoom at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary

Action Items:

1. Don to develop RFP re Dumping w/ assistance from Steve Harrity and Kim
2. Ashley to coordinate the completion of the DCNR Grant re Trail Feasibility and Forest Management with MOA partners (MP3 Application review March mtg and application due April 14th)
3. Design the Pagoda Trail signs, determine the number of signs required and prepare an estimate (to be shared with Lee and the DoubleTree)
4. Lee to speak with Craig Poole re shuttle service for the Pagoda Trail
5. City Public Works update on the RFP for the redesign of the Pagoda parking lot & timing to avoid disruptions with Pagoda Hillclimb scheduled for June 26-27 and Duryea Hillclimb for August 21-22