



Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Members: K. Barnhardt (County), K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), L. Kelleher (Reading), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Reading), L. Olsen (County), T. Goodman (Mt. Penn)

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

Others attending: B. Burkovich, A. Showers, M. Brophy, K. Osterhoudt, T. Good

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:02 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 March 24th meeting and the agenda for this meeting. No modifications were made and the minutes and agenda were approved by acclamation.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Mallatratt, MP3 COG Treasurer, called attention to the reports distributed electronically and attached to the agenda showing deposits of \$915 (DoubleTree sponsorship for the Pagoda Trail signs) and expenses of \$74.36 (For GoDaddy domain name fee) creating a balance of \$29,921.13. She noted the need for the board to ratify the purchase of the Pagoda Trail signage.

The Treasurer's Report and ratification of the Pagoda Trail sign purchase was approved on motion of Ms. Kelleher, second by Mr. Goodman, and approved unanimously.

MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Traffic Shift at the Pagoda Parking Lot

Ms. Kelleher reported that this construction project is out to bid. The project will eliminate the south bound flow of traffic through the Pagoda parking lot, shift it to the eastern side of the rock island, creating two-way traffic. Three gates will be installed to secure the parking lot. The island at the Duryea Drive/ Shearer's Road intersection will be removed and some storm water corrections will occur to shift rain away from the Pagoda building. Public Works hopes to have the project completed by the end of summer 2021.

Mr. Barnhardt inquired if the project will disrupt the races organized by Mr. Rock. Ms. Kelleher stated that Public Works is coordinating with Mr. Rock to avoid conflicts with the planned races.

B. Update on Coordinated Approach to Dumping

Mr. Pottiger was not present to provide an update. The March meeting minutes report that Mr. Pottiger expected to complete the draft RFP by the end of April 2021.

C. DCNR Grant Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan

Ms. Showers reported that the DCNR confirmed receipt of the grant application and no questions or additional information were requested to date. She noted that the strong partnership around this project along with the generous contribution from Berks Nature should provide a strong position for the grant application.

Mr. Barnhardt thanked Mr. Lloyd and Berks Nature for their generous contribution to support this important project.

D. Pagoda Trail Update

Mr. Brophy was authorized to order the signage, sponsored by the \$915 donation from the DoubleTree. Ms. Showers stated the next step is to meet with Public Works representatives to determine the proper location for the signs.

Mr. Olsen suggested working on an event/announcement to publicize the public/private partnership between the DoubleTree and the MP3 to get this project funded. The Promotions and Marketing Committee was asked to assist in this effort.

E. Albright Intern for the MP3 & County Planning

Ms. Showers introduced new intern Katelyn Osterhoudt. Ms. Osterhoudt stated that she is a junior student at Albright College with a major in education and business administration. She stated that although at first glance her majors may not seem a likely fit for the needs of the organizations; however, her life experiences more than make up that apparent gap. She stated that she is excited to begin assisting with managing the social media, blog and website content, along with other tasks.

Ms. Burkovich explained that although the internship is through the County Planning Department, this will be a virtual internship through August and possibly beyond if schedules permit.

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 stated that the interns work plan is included with the report. She asked MP3 members to review and suggest modifications.

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. Mr. Brophy stated that recent cleanups show the need for a more frequent effort in the Preserve area. He inquired about the proper City office to contact.

Ms. Kelleher stated that Steve Harray can assist with supplies and collection of debris.

Ms. Mallatratt suggested contacting organizations that are required to perform community service projects. Mr. Goodman suggested outreach to local Jr ROTCs and Mr. Barnhardt stated that he will inquire with County Adult Probation.

Ms. Showers noted the need for the cleanup efforts to reach across the five MP3 areas, rather than only Skyline.

Mr. Barnhardt asked Mr. Brophy to be the point person for the expanded cleanup efforts.

Mr. Good, from BAMBA, stated that he will seek additional assistance from the BAMBA organization.

Future Meetings

Mr. Barnhardt suggested beginning hybrid meetings at the July 28th meeting, so those who are uncomfortable attending in person can participate. Ms. Mallatratt offered meeting

space at the Alsace Township building at 65 Woodside Ave., Temple, 19560. The group agreed to return to holding the meetings at 7 pm.

Locations for future meetings will be discussed at the July meeting.

Public Comment

None.

Other

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the ongoing behavioral problems at the Pagoda and other areas across Skyline. She asked the MP3 to consider the need to address the entire expanse of Skyline as a park/preserve. Mr. Barnhardt assigned the matter to the Public Safety and Public Services Committee.

There was a brief discussion about the need for coordinated enforcement and coordinated signage.

Ms. Showers noted the opening of the Bingaman Nature Center on June 4th and the opportunity for the employment of youth at the center. She also noted the upcoming event on the Colebrookdale Railroad to discuss hot community topics (\$20 fee - registration is open until June 3rd).

Mr. Brophy suggested offering permitted events at the Pagoda to offset the current gatherings. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the activities planned were disrupted by the pandemic. She added that due to the need for repair work at the Pagoda, it would be best to hold the events at the Fire Tower lot until repairs are made.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the Pagoda flagpole has been repaired and that a flag raising ceremony will be held on June 13th.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:41 pm.

The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be on July 28 2021 at 7 pm utilizing a hybrid platform.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary

Action Items:

1. Don to finalize the RFP re Dumping w/ assistance from Steve Harrity and Kim by the end of April & advertise
2. City Public Works to work with Rick Rock to avoid disruptions with Pagoda Hillclimb scheduled for June 26-27 and Duryea Hillclimb for August 21-22 re the traffic shift at the Pagoda Parking Lot

3. City Public Works to send Beth & Linda cleanups and other volunteer projects scheduled for the preserve area so they can be added to the online calendar
4. Linda & Kim to finalize the 501c3 application
5. Reminder for City, Alsace & Lower Alsace Twps to coordinate the event permitting process and reporting events to Beth & Linda so they can be added to the online calendar
6. Matt take on point person to expand volunteer cleanups on the Preserve.