

Minutes for the Open Space Committee January 14, 2020

Call to order - 7:00 pm. Urbanski asked for nominations for Chair. Cronce was elected unanimously. The Chairman then ran the meeting.

Open Public Meetings Statement – Notice of this meeting has been provided to the Hunterdon County Democrat and was posted on the bulletin board at Town Hall according to the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act. A copy of this notice is available to the public and is on file in the office of the Township Clerk.

Roll call: Cronce, Fisher, Malek, Shute, Urbanski, present. Bergenfeld (TC liaison) arrived at 7:30 pm.

Reorganization: Election of Vice-Chair (Shute), and Secretary (Urbanski). Both elected.

Approval of minutes: November 12, 2019. One correction noted.

Opportunity for Public Comment – No members of the public were present.

Business

Hunting Program – Dan had nothing new to report.

Website – Needed to be brought up to date, especially our meeting schedule. Members decided to meet monthly. Cathy will correct the website.

2020 Budget request - Hal gave an update: With the current Open Space tax minus the debt service, we will have approximately \$100,000. Hal wishes to budget \$30,000 for maintenance of preserved township owned open space and leave \$70,000 in the trust fund for open space preservation purposes. Members agreed and then discussed the following: If the money for maintenance is not completely used, where does the surplus go? Does it go into WAT surplus? John felt that it should be returned to the Trust. Hal will contact Sharon Dragan for legal advice on the subject.

Green Acres Signage – Members were provided with a November 27 communication from the NJDEP concerning Green Acres compliance. John had called Kevin Appelget twice to discuss this, but the phone calls were not returned. John subsequently emailed Maria to reach out to Kevin and assure him that the items to be addressed would be done in a timely fashion. #1 – Address the maintenance issues at Hewitt Park – The main issue was a damaged fence (car or mower). The DPW has repaired the fence. #2 Post Green Acres signs/trail signs on all Green Acres preserved properties and provide information on the public trails. Cathy will work on a map of such properties delineated in such a way as to make it readable for the DPW, who will be posting the signage, and also make a public access map. #3 – Address the dumping of branches and vegetative waste at Music Mountain Estates and post signage. Will inspect and post no dumping/GA signs. #4 – Address any private property signs at public access areas. Members decided to have a public access map available at the municipal building. #5 – Explanation of the “dug up” area on the west field on Woodens Lane. Note – this was a parking area for the hunters to have access to the property. We have two years to be compliant with all of the above, plus other DEP project compliances, since the next inspection will be in 2022, DEP requests on file.

PIG application – Hal did not resubmit an application as he deemed the original to be accurate. The two Fulper parcels will remain as is, since there is no finality of the affordable housing project at this time.

Farmland Preservation Plan – Cathy has been in touch with Joanna Slagle, Banisch Assoc. concerning this project. Joanna has provided a cost estimate of \$10,000 of which half would be covered by an SADC grant. Cathy will contact Rob Tomenchok, Planning Board Chair, for his input. Members reviewed the application and the requirements.

D&R Greenway request –Email received from Cindy Taylor. John had a conversation with her on 1/7 concerning her questions. The Wooden property - % of WAT and D&R -we have the deeds and Hal will check with Sharon Dragan, though WAT is the major owner (63% vs. 37%); driveway (for hunters) and parking area; farming: Fulper, though D&R should have these records; rugosa roses on hillside (WAT cannot do brush hogging due to possible unknown hazards); hunting reports will be provided. Cindy gave a very generous timeline to answer (6-12 months).

Farmland Preservation Projects – possible acquisitions: Barry Runkle, Hoyer - no updates.

Easement monitoring – deferred till spring 2020.

Open to members for further discussion - none

Opportunity for Public Comment - none

Next Meeting Date – February 11, 2020

Adjournment, 8:15 pm.

Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski