

Minutes for the Open Space Committee September 8, 2020

Call to order: Chairman Cronce called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

Open Public Meetings Statement – Chairman Cronce read the following: 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:

Present - Cronce, Fisher, Malek, Urbanski, Bergenfeld (TC liaison).

Excused - Shute

Approval of minutes: March 10, 2020. Approved.

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

Business

Hunting Program – Dan and John discussed the need to increase fees for the clubs hunting on municipal parcels. A discussion led to raise fees 10% for all parcels. This will be included in the 2021 hunting regulations.

John brought up the need to have more signs (with WAT regulations) made for posting the hunting parcels. Cathy and Dan had previously worked on this. They will check their files. John will check with Sandy to see if she has any records.

Dan reported that the harvest report for the Laravan/O'Boyle parcel was short of the quota. Club members reported that there was a serious disruption in hunting as JCP&L was doing tree maintenance and cutting on the property throughout the hunting season. Decision to waive the quota requirements for 2019.

Dan reported that all parcels have been paid for 2020, and there are no reported problems. Also, the 5-year option for all clubs is now in the regulations.

Website – Up to date as per Cathy.

Maintenance of Open Space Properties – John reported that the Township is required to maintain their properties, mostly in Music Mountain, and there are serious ruts on the properties. John suggested that we use topsoil to fill in the ruts. George suggested that disking would work better. He has a disk machine which he will provide to the township for their use. Members thanked him for his generous offer.

Farmland Preservation Plan – Cathy reported on her 7-2-20 conference call with Steve Bruder (SADC), Bob Hornby (CADB), and Joanna Slagle (Banisch). She also presented an email from Steve Bruder from 9-1-20 on the updated PIG regulations.

The new regulations require very active involvement by the AAC and submission of GIS data. Lengthy discussion as per the AAC in that they were very productive in the past (farmers market, fairs, education). The Open Space Committee did all of the submissions and PIG applications that the AAC should have been doing. The question was raised if the AAC is a viable committee. Members discussed the volume of information and work required for the PIG and questioned if we

need to pursue this. Decision that since we have already preserved approximately 6000 acres, to not apply this year. Cathy will send the updated AAC requirements to Betty Jane Hunt, Chair of AAC.

Steve commented that “We have already done our part”. Cathy mentioned that in the conference call that the State praised us for our preservation efforts, noting that out of 566 municipalities in the state, we were 48 in preservation.

Farmland Preservation Projects – possible acquisitions: Barry Runkle (no interest at this time) and Gary Hoyer (waiting for Hunterdon County contracts/option agreements.) John had spoken with Bruce (Wooden South) and he is not ready now for preservation.

Easement monitoring – Maybe this winter.

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

Adjournment – 8:05 pm. Minutes prepared by C. Urbanski