



## **Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)**

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Virtual Meeting

**Members:** K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), L. Kelleher (Reading), L. Olsen (County), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp.), K. Barnhardt (County)

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

**Others attending:** A. Showers, M. Brophy, L. Kissinger, S. Rugis, F. Denbowski, R. Rock, J. Frank, L. Lloyd, B. Sheeler, C. Quandel, J. Haymaker, S. Kinkaid

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. Due to COVID-19, the MP3 is meeting being held in a virtual format. He stated that Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz will be connecting late and as there is not a quorum he suggested addressing the Reports and Actions agenda item first.

### **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 and asked them to use the Zoom raised hand feature. No one responded.

### **MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

#### **A. Deer Management at Antietam**

Mr. Barnhardt stated that several dozen deer were removed from the park and an analysis of the results will determine if further work is required.

#### **B. Coordinated Approach to Dumping RFP**

Ms. Kelleher stated that she finished the draft RFP in December. The City's Solid Waste Manager provided tweaks to the specs and the Purchasing Coordinator is reviewing the draft now. The RFP will be placed on Penn Bid through the Berks County Joint Purchasing Council. Other municipalities will be invited to join this dumping partnership.

### **C. DCNR Grant Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan**

Ms. Showers noted the need to define the next steps to get these studies completed as the DCNR Grant was not approved. She suggested paring the scope of the study down and work with Trail Solutions through the IMBA or develop a partnership with Berks Nature. Berks Nature completed studies on Neversink and it is logical to do something similar on Mt. Penn.

Mr. Barnhardt and Ms. Mallatratt suggested that seeking support letters from our local State delegation may have improved our grant application ranking.

Mr. Olsen suggested approaching Berks Nature and the IMBA about a partnership. Ms. Showers was asked to contact to Berks Nature to start this conversation.

### **D. Pagoda Trail Update**

Mr. Denbowski stated that there are a few loose ends identified by the City's Risk and Safety Coordinator that require follow-up. He suggested a meeting to review the needs that were identified.

After a discussion the following were assigned to this work group: Mr. Denbowski, Mr. Olsen, Mr. Barnhardt, Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, Mr. Kissinger, Mr. Brophy, Ms. Showers and Ms. Kelleher. Mr. Denbowski will coordinate.

### **E. MP3 Staff Update**

Mr. Barnhardt stated that the Executive Committee met in January to discuss the need to identify a funding source to add a part-time or full-time staff person to assist the MP3 to move forward more quickly. He stated that the MP3 has made progress but having a staff person dedicated only to the MP3 business would greatly improve the success of the MP3.

Ms. Showers suggested applying for DCNR Circuit Rider funding which starts with a Peer Study to determine the staffing plan and objectives. The DCNR will contribute up to \$10K, with a \$1K investment from the MP3. The DCNR selects the consultant to partner with the MP3. She expressed the belief that there is not a defined application period for this program and that she will make contact with the DCNR. The Circuit Rider funding is usually for a 3 year period, which allows the organization with the ability to identify funding to retain the staff person when the grant period ends. She noted that the City used this program to start the Rec Commission about 12 years ago.

Mr. Barnhardt and Mr. Olsen expressed the belief that this is a good investment. A motion to authorize this expense will occur when Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz connects to the meeting.

### **F. Master Plan Initiatives**

Mr. Barnhardt stated that the MP3 has made the following accomplishments without any staff assistance.

**Completed:** Pagoda Circulation Improvements  
Extend Municipal Policing across the Preserve

Provide Police with access to the security video at the Pagoda  
MP3 Branding  
Improvements to Pendora Park  
**Underway:** Repairs to the Pagoda wall  
Events on the Preserve  
Remove invasive species  
Additional clean-ups  
Trail from City Park to Pagoda

Ms. Mallatratt added that the MP3 Partnership initiative was also completed.

Ms. Kelleher reviewed the list of other available initiatives. She suggested moving forward with 6.2 and 6.3 Friends of Mt. Penn Fundraising which could assist with covering the expense of a staff person and other needs. She suggested reaching out to Ms. Aiken at the Community Foundation to see what type of back-office support can be provided.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz connected with the meeting at this time.

Mr. Barnhardt and Mr. Olsen suggested that the group hold a Strategic Planning session to define the updated work plan in March/April.

#### **H. MOUs with preserve based organizations**

Mr. Olsen stated that this need was identified by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz to help organizations affiliated with the preserve understand their roles and define a partnership.

Mr. Barnhardt suggested including the preserve-based organizations as a separate component with the Strategic Planning session. He suggested that Mr. Olsen and Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz meet to define a game plan for this session.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested forming a work group to draft MOUs after the meeting with the preserve based organizations – Pagoda Skyline and the Pagoda Foundation.

Mr. Olsen suggested adding BAMBA and Berks Nature. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed noting the need to understand the roles and activities of each organization.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS – submission in written form only**

- Finance & Capital – no report
- Promotions & Marketing – report attached to the agenda

Ms. Mallatratt stressed the need for the MP3 to have a physical mailing address, rather than a PO Box. She stated that as she is the Treasurer all banking documents use the Alsace Township address.

Mr. Barnhardt stated that as Ms. Kelleher is the Secretary, he suggested utilizing the City Hall mailing address. Ms. Kelleher will follow-up with the City Solicitor.

- Public Safety & Public Services – Dumping RFP being reviewed
- Environmental & Land Use Committees – no report

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Barnhardt asked the members to consider the minutes from the December 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, stated that the MP3 has a balance of \$36,369.72 after the deposit of \$4,000 in annual member dues. She stated that the BCCF account has a balance of \$9080.26

**The Treasurer's Report was approved on motion by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, second by Mr. Olsen and approved unanimously.**

**Mr. Olsen moved, second by Ms. Mallatratt to authorize the expense of up to \$1,000 for the DCNR Peer Study program. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Chair. Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt to nominate Mr. Barnhardt as Chair. No other nominations were made from the floor and the nominations were closed. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair. Ms. Mallatratt moved, seconded by Mr. Barnhardt to nominate Mr. Olsen as Vice-Chair. No other nominations were made from the floor and the nominations were closed. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Treasurer. Ms. Kelleher moved, seconded by Mr. Olsen to nominate Ms. Mallatratt as Treasurer. No other nominations were made from the floor and the nominations were closed. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for nominations for Secretary. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Mr. Barnhardt to nominate Ms. Kelleher as Secretary. No other nominations were made from the floor and the nominations were closed. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Other Business**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz asked Mr. Rock to describe the problem at the Fire Tower over New Year's weekend. Mr. Rock stated that a person cut through the gate chains used to

secure the Fire Tower parking lot, which was reported to Central Berks Police, to Pagoda Skyline and to the Pagoda Foundation.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that there is video footage available to assist the police. Mr. Rock described the video footage obtained from an on-site security camera.

Mr. Kissinger noted that all the trails that are secured with chained gates were also removed by this individual. He stated that the trails were re-secured on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. He expressed the belief that this was a random act of violence.

Mr. Barnhardt stressed the need for a unified security camera system across Skyline beginning with a system that links the Pagoda and the Tower. He asked the Public Safety Committee to take up this issue again.

Mr. Barnhardt stated that there are new Council members on the Mt. Penn Borough Council. One of the new members expressed his desire for the Council to reconsider their withdrawal from the MP3. Mr. Barnhardt will follow up after the Borough Council makes appointments to fill the vacant Council seats.

#### **Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Barnhardt adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:25 pm.**

**The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be held virtually on March 23, 2022 at 6 pm.**

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary*

#### **Action Items:**

1. Linda to finalize the RFP re Dumping and send out through City Purchasing office to Penn Bid
2. 501c3 application – does the MP3 need this designation or are we exempt as a governmental organization
3. Linda – follow-up on the use of the City Hall mailing address
4. Marcia & Lee to meet and define work plan/goals for Strategic Planning meeting with partner organizations and schedule combo session MP3 Strategic Planning with a separate segment for roles or partner organizations
5. MP3 staffing – Ashley to apply for DCNR Peer Study/Circuit Rider program
6. Frank Denbowski to organize Pagoda Trail Meeting with Mr. Olsen, Mr. Barnhardt, Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, Mr. Kissinger, Mr. Brophy, Ms. Showers and Ms. Kelleher
7. Ashley to organize planning meeting with Berks Nature re Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan
8. Kevin to follow-up with Mt. Penn re withdrawal from the MP3 after the vacant Council seat appointments are made.