



Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

Alsace Township Building

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

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

Others attending: A. Showers, J. Frank, R. Rock

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. He stated that a quorum is present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one attending offered public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Barnhardt asked the members to consider the minutes from the March 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 retained a balance account of \$40,369.72 with \$9,081.38 in the BCCF account. She asked the Board to consider the approval of the following bill payments:

- \$275 application fee to the IRS for 501c3 application
- \$89.05 for lunch at the Strategic Planning Meeting on Sat, April 30, 2022 at the Leiderkranz

Ms. Kelleher moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, to approve the Treasurer's Report and the payment of the bills as listed. The motion was approved unanimously.

MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Deer Management at Antietam

Mr. Barnhardt reported that the 2nd phase of deer herd control via archery at Antietam is planned for December-January. There will be outreach to local sportsman and gaming organizations to encourage the participation of local hunters. The US Department of Agriculture requires a team of 20 retained through an application process followed by mandatory training. The 1st phase removed 26 deer, leaving the deer density at 83 deer per square mile. The desired deer density for healthy forest habitat is 20-25 deer per square mile.

B. Coordinated Approach to Dumping RFP

Ms. Kelleher reported that the RFP was advertised on Penn Bid, however, there were no respondents. She stated that she and Mr. Harrity will revise the bid specs and have the RFP rebid locally.

C. Trails Feasibility & Forest Management Plan Study Next Steps

Ms. Showers stated that Mr. Olsen submitted a County ARPA application. She inquired if Mr. Olsen received an email message denying the application. Mr. Olsen stated that he does not believe he received a denial message. Mr. Barnhardt stated that the message would have arrived approximately 2 weeks ago.

Ms. Showers and Mr. Barnhardt stated that the County received 161 applications and 41 were denied as the applications did not meet the federal requirements. Mr. Barnhardt inquired if the MP3 submitted a City ARPA application. Ms. Showers stated that a City application was not submitted.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that the City has still not assembled an application review committee. She noted that a certain portion of the ARPA funding will be applied toward park improvement projects and she plans to advocate for a funding match for this important project. Ms. Showers reminded everyone that the Berks Nature has also committed funding to assist with this project.

Ms. Showers stated that Mr. Lloyd suggests forming a committee composed of Larry Lloyd Jeremy Haymaker, Brendan Lederer, and Lester Kissinger to develop objectives for the study and plan.

Ms. Kelleher moved, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to form the committee to develop objectives for the study and plan as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. Pagoda Trail Update

The signage has been installed but the Board noted that the arrow sign overpowers the trail sign. The signs at the Pagoda are positioned in an area that will include them in photographs. The need to have these signs relocated was noted.

Ms. Showers stated that the need for an arrow sign was agreed upon; however, the arrow sign was to be the same size or a smaller size than the trail sign to keep it from being distracting. The need for follow-up was noted.

Mr. Barnhardt suggested using QR codes on signs created in the future as many follow trails using their devices.

E. MP3 Staff Update – Circuit Rider Application

Ms. Showers stated that County Planning staff was first asked to support and assist the MP3 by the former Executive Director. Currently Mr. Burkovich and Ms. Showers provide support and assistance during the work day, apart from their volunteer hours. She suggested developing a precedent moving forward for the roles and expectations of County Planning staff.

Mr. Barnhardt suggested that Ms. Showers discuss this issue with the Planning Executive Director. Ms. Kelleher noted the need for the Board to understand how many hours each month are dedicated to MP3 support and assistance by Planning Staff including a list of functions so the Board and Executive Director can decide which functions should shift over to an MP3 employee. Ms. Showers stated that she will provide this analysis at the next meeting. Ms. Showers noted that the first step in the Circuit Rider program is a study to determine and define the needs.

Board members were asked to track the time they spend working on MP3 issues on a monthly basis so that information can be included in the Circuit Rider application.

F. Strategic Plan Take Aways

Mr. Barnhardt stated that the April 30th meeting was very productive and focused with the group agreeing that the following will be added to the three year work plan:

- security camera system linking the Pagoda area north to the Fire Tower and the overlook at List Rd., and
- trail improvement projects, and
- work to stop the dumping problem, and
- tree trimming at the overlooks, and
- overall landscape improvements

F. MOUs with Preserve based organizations

Mr. Barnhardt noted the need for this follow-up meeting to determine how all partner organizations can come together and begin working jointly. He stated that originally the focus was on BMR SCCA, BAMBA, Pagoda Skyline and Pagoda Foundation. He questioned including other mountain-based organizations such as Rotary Park, the Jeep group, etc. including County and City Parks.

Mr. Olsen noted the need for the MP3 Board to be a meeting participant and not take the facilitator role at this meeting. He stated that Ms. Mast attended the Strategic Planning

meeting and he is meeting with her in early June to hear her thoughts on the discussion and interactions at the Strategic Planning meeting.

Mr. Olsen was asked to develop a framework for this meeting for Board consideration at the July 27th MP3 meeting. The meeting with the Preserve organizations will be scheduled in September.

G. Ratify letter to Mt. Penn Borough officials re withdrawal

Mr. Barnhardt stated that the withdrawal request from Mt. Penn was discussed at the Strategic Planning meeting. That letter has been prepared.

Mr. Rock inquired about the rationale of Mt. Penn. Mr. Barnhardt stated that he was told that Mt. Penn officials object to paying \$2,000 in annual dues, question the value of belonging and they object to funding capital improvements.

Mr. Barnhardt recalled that Mt. Penn hesitated approving the agreement for almost a year. He stated that a portion of Mt. Penn is located within the Preserve and the businesses located in Mt. Penn will benefit from the work to make the Preserve a destination. He stated that all five partners are legally bound to this 10 year partnership. He added that the executed agreement clearly makes the Preserves capital needs the responsibility of the landowners – the City and County - not the member organizations who are not landowners.

Ms. Kelleher noted that Mt. Penn also insisted on making modifications to the agreement before executing it, which required the originating four partners to readopt the modified agreement. She added that at no time did the Mt. Penn officials object to the payment of annual dues or to the 10 year partnership, with the pre-withdrawal terms.

The letter outlines the need for the Borough to pay annual dues for the next seven years annually or pay a total of \$14,000 for 2023-28 plus the delinquent the \$2,000 for 2022.

Ms. Kelleher moved, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to ratify and send the letter to the Mt. Penn Borough Council. The motion was approved unanimously.

H. Create Events Committee

Mr. Olsen and Ms. Showers stated that the Marketing Committee currently includes work to create mountain based events; however, that work is becoming overwhelming. At the last Marketing meeting, Ms. Burkovich suggested creating a separate Events Committee.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the agenda includes a framework description that can be used as a starting point.

Events Committee Key Roles & Responsibilities:

- To develop a yearly calendar of events-including, but not limited to, an annual evening event, a compensation-focused event, and networking events.
- Work with the Marketing Committee to attract an event audience

- To select speakers, locations, and topics for events
- To work with the Finance Committee to identify potential sponsors for events and cover upfront costs

Time Commitment: This committee will meet approximately 4-6 times a year to develop topics, confirm program details, and evaluate the progress and eventual success of programs. Annually, this committee will meet to set the calendar for the following year, and evaluate the committee’s needs. Each committee member will be expected to help organize at least one event.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, to create the Events Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed her desire to be on this committee. Mr. Olsen was asked to identify additional members.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS – submission in written form only

- Finance & Capital –report attached to the agenda
- Promotions & Marketing – report attached to the agenda

Ms. Mallatratt stated that the Committee needs to know how the member names should appear on the website. After discussion the Board asked that the website include a listing of the member municipalities, and the names of those on the Board using the MP3 contact information and social media links.

Ms. Mallatratt stated that the Committee would like to purchase drone footage of the Pagoda area in the Spring and Fall at a total cost of \$500. She noted that the footage created becomes the property of the MP3 and the member municipalities.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher, to approve the purchase of the drone footage at the total cost of \$500. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Mallatratt stated that work continues to migrate the MP3 website to its own domain. She inquired if the Board preferred using “.com” or “.org”. She noted the oddity that purchasing the domain name for 5 years is cumulatively more expensive than paying the \$9.99 fee annually. Mr. Barnhardt suggested using “.org” as the MP3 is applying for 501c3 status and purchasing the domain name annually until better terms are available.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt, to purchase the domain name with 1st preference for the use of “.org” for a 1 year period at the cost of \$9.99. The motion was approved unanimously.

- Public Safety - report attached to the agenda
- Environmental

Mr. Frank noted the need to replace Ms. Quandel with another BAMBA representative as she relocated to Vermont. He stated that he is currently working with Congresswoman Houlahan's staff to identify federal grants for trails, etc. He also noted the need for the committee to organize regular clean-ups on the Preserve with assistance from the City.

Other

Mr. Olsen described his work with Mr. Barnhardt and Mr. Ernesto to plan a kickoff to the Blues Fest concert by Clarence Spady and the Electric City Band on November 17th at the Liederkrantz. This will be the MP3's first ticketed event. He stated that tickets will be sold for \$15 to Liederkrantz members and \$25 to non-members.

Mr. Barnhardt explained how that will work as the 17th is Wing Night at the facility.

Mr. Olsen stated that the event has a budget of \$5K and each Preserve based organization will be asked to obtain sponsorships for \$1K each. The newly created marketing committee will organize a meeting with Preserve organizations to discuss the sponsorship outreach so different groups can avoid calling the same potential sponsors.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher, to authorize this event. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that an event is planned for the Pagoda parking lot area on June 12th. The parking lot will be gated with parking available at the Tower. She stated that the event will begin with a flag raising and will include food vendors and music.

Mr. Rock noted the Hill Climb scheduled for June 25-26.

Mr. Barnhardt adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:25 pm. The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be held on July 27, 2022 at 6 pm. at the Alsace Twp Building.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary

Action Items:

1. Linda - update the RFP re Dumping and send out through City Purchasing office locally
2. Linda – draft security camera RFP for Skyline – List Rd Overlook to Pagoda
3. Ashley - MP3 staffing – application for DCNR Peer Study/Circuit Rider program
 - a. Planning Staff monthly time and activities
 - b. Board members monthly time and activities
4. Linda – contact Preserve stakeholders re providing written reports on activities
5. Lee/Linda – follow-up on Pagoda Trail arrow signs
6. Lee organize Events Committee
7. Lee prepare framework for Sept. meeting with Preserve Partners w/ facilitator
8. Environmental Committee – develop monthly clean-up schedule in coordination with City Solid Waste manager