



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

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

**Members:** K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp.) – virtually and K. Barnhardt (County), L. Kelleher (Reading), L. Olsen (County), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Reading) – in person

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

**Others attending:** B. Burkovich - virtually

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He noted that a quorum is present.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for public comment. No one present stepped forward to speak and the public comment period was closed.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA**

Mr. Barnhardt asked the members to consider the minutes from the March meeting and the agenda for this meeting. No modifications were made to the minutes. The minutes and agenda were approved by acclimation.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Ms. Mallatratt, MP3 COG Treasurer, stated that the MP3 bank account has a balance of \$47,641.83 after the deposit of \$105. There were no expenses and there are no outstanding bills.

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

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

**A. Modification of MP3 Agreement** re Membership Amendment via Resolution to allow elected officials to select a non-elected representative and replacing "executive committee" to "board". Reading and Berks have adopted the modification

Ms. Mallatratt stated that the Alsace Township Supervisors approved the modified agreement.

Mr. Pottiger stated that approval of the modification by Lower Alsace Supervisors should take place in June.

### **B. Natural Lands Stewardship Plan and Trails Feasibility Study**

Ms. Kelleher stated that the Natural Lands team toured the area in early May.

### **C. Closure of Skyline – Duryea Dr to List Road**

Mr. Barnhardt distributed the draft resolution stating:

Due to the ongoing vandalism, dumping and quality of life problems on Mount Penn, the Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership Board recommends the closure of Skyline Drive from List Road to Duryea Drive during the hours the park is closed to the public, in compliance with the City Park Code, and encouraging Lower Alsace Township and the City of Reading to perform the required work.

Mr. Pottiger stated that Lower Alsace Supervisor Oswald does not support this initiative and requested that the resolution be tabled until additional details are available.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that the closure is under consideration due to the continued vandalism, dumping and quasi-illegal activities on the mountain. The List Road Overlook is located within Central Berks Police jurisdiction and the remaining 2 overlooks on the south side are in the Reading Police Department's jurisdiction. These locations are very disjointed making it difficult for both departments to regularly patrol the area, leaving it exposed to problems and threats.

Mr. Pottiger again requested that the issue be tabled until additional information is available on the closure.

In response to a question about closing the overlooks, Ms. Kelleher stated that the closure of the overlooks was explored, discussed, and dismissed due to the cost and the manpower required. She noted that currently Public Works is working with BAMBA on a joint solution for the ongoing vandalism and dumping.

Mr. Barnhardt noted that the proposed resolution is not providing direction to the City or the Township. Ms. Kelleher agreed that the COG cannot provide direction to the municipalities.

Ms. Mallatratt agreed with the need for additional information such as how the closure would impact events that occur on Mt. Penn.

Mr. Pottiger suggested providing time for Lower Alsace and Reading officials, including both police chiefs, to meet and discuss the proposed closure of Skyline Drive.

Mr. Barnhardt instructed Mr. Pottiger to arrange the meeting within the next month so the results are available at the MP3 July 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Pottiger agreed to do so.

Mr. Pottiger stated that Lower Alsace recently completed the repair work on a large section of the Skyline wall which was promptly vandalized with graffiti. He stated that he called Mr. Harrity seeking advice on the removal process and Mr. Harrity promptly deployed a City team to remove the graffiti. He thanked Mr. Harrity and his team for their assistance.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about the status of the most recent event damaging the fencing surrounding the Fire Tower. Mr. Pottiger reported that Central Berks received good footage of the event, they identified the owner of the car; however, the owner was not in the car at the time of the event. The investigation continues.

#### **D. Installation of EV Stations**

Mr. Barnhardt stated that he received an email from the City seeking a letter of support for the installation of EV stations on the preserve. He stated that he didn't receive a response when he requested additional information.

Ms. Kelleher recalled that the City is applying for a grant to install the stations and they plan to install a station at [the](#) trailhead area located at 14<sup>th</sup> and Walnut (the old recycling building above City Park) with 8 parking spaces that can service 16 cars.

Mr. Olsen inquired about the power source for the stations and how the City will fund them going forward.

Mr. Barnhardt stated that he will seek additional information for consideration at the July meeting.

#### **E. Update Meeting with Preserve Partners - framework**

No update.

#### **F. Events**

Mr. Olsen stated that he and the events committee are working to organize the following events between 2023 and the end of 2024:

- Fall 2023 - Authorization to proceed with Berks Arts for this years' Blues Fest @ the Liederkrantz
- 2024 - Authorization to proceed planning music events on the Mountain:
  - 1 Jazz event @ Liederkrantz
  - 2 Bluegrass event @ Fire Tower
  - 3 Salsa event @ the City Park Band Shell
  - 4 Blues event @ Liederkrantz

Mr. Olsen stated that receiving authorization for this advanced event schedule will provide

time for ample planning and marketing. He noted that the success of the Blues event exceeded that of the Jazz event as there was a much tighter timeline for the Jazz event.

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, to authorize the 2023 Blues Fest event. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt, to authorize the events planned for 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Ms. Mallatratt inquired if any non-musical events are planned.

Mr. Olsen noted that he recently learned that Dave Kline is working with Ms. Kelleher on a citizens bike race on Mt. Penn on August 27<sup>th</sup>, with permits issued by the City and Lower Alsace.

- Pagoda Fest

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is working to plan a Pagoda Fest on August 5<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with a Soap Box derby race, organized by John King. This is to be an annual event. She asked if the MP3 Marketing Committee could assist with promoting the event. Ms. Mallatratt agreed but noted the need to have the marketing materials to the committee no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in June.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that NBC10 recently filmed a piece about the Pagoda. She stated that she will send the link to the Marketing Committee when it is made available. She highlighted the next phase of work at the Pagoda to determine the repairs that are required and predicted that the scope of the repairs will require the Pagoda to remain closed for the next 2-3 years.

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

- Finance & Capital
- Promotions & Marketing
- Public Safety & Public Services
- Environmental & Land Use Committees

#### **WRITTEN REPORTS FROM PRESERVE STAKEHOLDERS**

None received.

#### **Other Business**

Ms. Burkovich reported that she is very pleased with the volunteer work of the Marketing Committee.

#### **Public Comment**

None.

**Adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:55 pm on motion of Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Mr. Olsen, respectively.**

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary*

**Action Items:**

1. Lester & Larry - Update from Stewardship Plan Work Group at the July meeting
2. Don – schedule meeting to discuss the closure of Skyline Drive with City and Lower Alsace officials, including the police chiefs.

Kevin – obtain additional information on the proposed EV station planned for the 14<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Trailhead area