

OPEN SPACE MEETING – June 8, 2026

Members Present: Messrs. Sabatini, Dlugos, Duch, Esposito

Members Absent: Messrs: Bogardus, Morytko, Mayor Rubenstein

Also present: Secretary Caitlin Phillips

Messrs. Sabatini, Dlugos, and Esposito discussed agenda topics, as there was no quorum at this time to vote on items. Mr. Sabatini said he'd recommend to the Council that the deer hunting occurs on the same parcels as previously. He noted for the grant, there's been no news, so they're waiting for a response. Mr. Dlugos said he may talk to people about this at the meeting they're having on Friday.

Regarding the trail signage, Mr. Dlugos said he sent mock-ups of the signs, and thinks the areas should be segmented on the maps. They should decide where logos will be placed and at what sites. On route signs, it may not be possible to put the logo. They may not want the Visit NJ logo for town trails, but could put it on the wayfinding map. The least expensive option is aluminum signs. There is an option called King Color that has a material like that of outdoor chairs, which is the most durable of the least expensive options. There are six signs proposed, including the Lubber's Run preserve. Mr. Sabatini said if they go above the quote threshold, they'll need 2 additional quotes. They'd give vendors the same scope of work, and if they don't respond with a quote, that would count. They should go with the better quality signs, since they're not much more expensive.

Mr. Duch entered the meeting at this time. This meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by Mr. Sabatini.

OS FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT:

Reserve for Open Space: \$420,748.57.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 11, 2026 minutes. Mr. Dlugos motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Duch. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Deer Hunting

Mr. Sabatini said he'd recommend the same parcels to the Council. All in favor. Mr. Dlugos asked if there's a way to encourage more deer hunting. Mr. Duch said maybe they could have it put in the Recreation flyers. Mr. Dlugos said he can ask Debbie to see if she can add this. Mr. Duch said the public isn't aware of process and the availability of land.

OLD BUSINESS

Trail Signage and Mapping

The group discussed their preference for the signs. Mr. Sabatini said they should get a material that's animal resistant. Mr. Dlugos said they should have the history of the property and cultural information on the signs. Some places may be okay to have one sign, and others may have interpretive information just inside the trail. Other places where there's a kiosk already, they can add information to that. Mr. Sabatini said he'd recommend the HDU material. Mr. Dlugos said they can use the Land Conservancy for the printed map. Mr. Sabatini said they can tell vendors the timeframe they want to finish this, and if the vendor can't meet that deadline, this would be considered as no quote. Mr. Dlugos said the Land Conservancy may be receptive to doing historical information. Mr. Sabatini said the Historical Society may contribute to getting the maps done. Mr. Esposito confirmed they're looking to print about 3,500 maps. Mr. Sabatini said the Open Space would fund the balance of this. He said they should get a packet ready for next OS meeting, so they can bring the scope of work to the Council after discussing.

Forestry Updates

Mr. Dlugos said they'll be doing barberry removal throughout the year. He reached out to Ms. Gracie about the Briar Ridge barberry, and she asked for aerial map. Mr. Sabatini said she should walk the property. The group discussed what chemicals to use.

MEMBER REPORTS

Mr. Dlugos said the Environmental Commission wants to give out a stewardship award, to a community member who helped encourage people to remove mustard seed. They're having a native plant event, and may be using the fire house for this. They'll have plants to give away and for sale. The Musconetcong Watershed Association is sampling water for PFAS. People may be able to request testing for free. Mr. Smith from the Environmental Commission will talk to people in Forest Lakes. They met with the Chair of the EC in Sparta, and are talking about a partnership with them, Stanhope, and Hopatcong, to help each other. Mr. Sabatini said for the Council, there are wires strung along roads, which is part of the Andover tunnel project, and they're doing a traffic study. They plan to close Route 206 for 9 months and divert traffic.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

No public was present.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE COMMITTEE DEEMS NECESSARY

Mr. Duch asked about tree removal in town. The group discussed the superfund site. Mr. Sabatini said paving started today, and will be going on for about a month. Mr. Duch asked Mr. Sabatini to talk to Mr. Orgera about the paving on Stage Coach Road; a drainage spot has a huge divot.

ADJOURN – Motion by Mr. Dlugos, second by Sabatini, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm. All members in favor. Motioned carried.