

BYRAM TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MINUTES, FEBRUARY 12, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Members present: Chairman Ray Bonker, Eric Duch, Scott Olson, Joe Sabatini, John Morytko, and Andy Kimm. Ron Farr and Ben Spinelli were also in attendance. Alex Rubenstein was present from the public.

Ron Farr stated that he hasn't been out in the woods for the past 2 months because of the weather and therefore there hasn't been any billing.

Sussex County Grant Status – Ben has not found about the process yet. Ray wants to get an application going with the County. There was discussion on the items we want to submit on an application

- Eric Duch asked if we could get a parking lot by the trail on Andover/Mohawk Road. Scott and Ray said that we tried but we can't because it is a County road. The County will not support a curb cut.
- We can ask for tree maintenance and additional trail maintenance.
- Ray also asked about alternative funding that was available. Ben said there was NJDEP stewardship funds of \$100,000 spread over multiple years. We could plan out \$20,000/year for 5 years. We could put traditional trail activities, invasive species, deer fencing and tree maintenance or other things that we want. We could go to the County and to NJDEP with this plan and see what we get. This would help tremendously with our cash flow if we got help from both the County and NJDEP, and we could get a lot of work done that has been mentioned for the last several years. We could also add a deer hunting program.
- Ron Farr should price out the 10-year plan outlined in the stewardship plan. The tasks are associated with each stand. The update to the Forest Stewardship Plan should also be included with the Johnson, Gamski and Forest South property. Ron should work on this proposal.

Ben will forward Joe the RFP and responses to it for the Randolph trails master plan.

Deer Management – No reports of any deer taken out.

Scott reported that there are some Chestnut trees growing at the bottom of C. O. Johnson Trail. Ron will monitor them.

Ron Farr left the meeting.

Ben Spinelli gave an update:

Johnson – Highlands Council needs a Forest Steward Statement on the Johnson parcel. We do have the Forest Management Plan on the Johnson Plan. There was discussion among the members, and it was decided that we would prepare a Resolution that states that we are annexing the Forest Management Plan on the Johnson parcel to the existing Forest Stewardship Plan and in the future it will be formally updated.

Ben has the Planning Board Application prepared and will be getting Carl to sign off on it. Ray asked how long will it take to get through the Planning Board. Ben let the committee know that there were some things

questioned by Larry Fink, such as the 100 x 100 lease area and roadway. It was a recorded lease that expired in 1995, and was prepared for a prior cell tower application that was withdrawn. It is not an issue. Highlands Council needs a copy of the real estate contract, because they will be paying ½ of the contract amount. Ben stated that we should take the money from OSI first and then if there is anything left it can come from the PIG money. We can also use the PIG money for reimbursement of the soft costs.

LLIC parcel – LLIC is not interested in selling the lot to open space.

Larry Johnson Parcel – The Committee discussed the best time to approach the new owners of the lot across from the Johnson parcel. Ben thought it best to wait until Johnson closed. This may be done by next meeting, at which time the committee will authorize Ben to get in contact with order to see if they are willing to sell a small section of their land to the Township.

Forest South – Finishing up on a few minor items and it should close shortly.

There are owners of 2 lots in the Cranberry Ledge section working with Green Acres to sell/donate their land.

The Committee discussed parcels that the OS committee would be interested in purchasing. Properties listed on the ROSI can be purchased with the PIG money. The Open Space plan will need to be updated soon, and Ray asked if Ben Spinelli's firm is capable of doing that. Ben said yes.

Approval of December 11, 2017 minutes both regular and closed session: Scott made a motion, seconded by John to approve the closed and open minutes. All in favor.

Open Space Financial Report – Joe reported that there is \$470,546.41 in the local open space trust fund. We have not encumbered anything for the Johnson property yet. In the reserve for debt service there is \$276,054.90. The outstanding Debt Service balance is \$409,950.

Activities since Last Meeting – Township Reorganization meeting and Alex and Harvey were sworn in.

Professional Appointments – All professionals were appointed for 3 months. Alex stated that the Labor Attorney and Auditor interviews are underway. The Planning Board has requested RFP for Attorney, Planner and Engineer.

Committee Appointments – Bob Brady from the Recreation Committee will be appointed as the Open Space representative at the next Council meeting. Ray and John got reappointed.

Tamarack Park Update

- Joe discussed the field irrigation system that Cory Stoner has recommended and the reasons why this is desired over a water cannon. He asked the Committee to recommend this system, which is estimated to cost \$50,000. Joe asked the Committee if they were in favor of going forward with the paving of the parking lot.
- Ray asked the Committee if they were in favor of recommending that the Council authorize the field irrigation system for \$50,000 and paving the parking lot for \$50,000 out of the Open Space funds. All members were in favor.

- There was a discussion on the possibility of erecting a pavilion at Tamarack Park. Joe will also talk to the Recreation Committee about this. It should be a joint recommendation. There will be further discussion at the next meeting and Bob Brady will be present to discuss the feedback from the Recreation Committee.

Alex asked if anyone has looked at the Strada Heat App. The committee had a brief discussion about it.

Ben stated that when you do a trails plan, you do a survey and have direct outreach to the residents, and use this information to assist in preparing the trails plan. Joe stated that if the committees and the Council wants to move in the direction of having a thorough trails plan, and make the appropriate investment. Look at what we have and see where we want to go. Ben commented on the Randolph's trail system. Eric stated that when he was doing research on Strada, Eric spoke to JORBA, Jersey Off Road Bicycle Association, who said they said they would like to volunteer with municipalities and help with trails. This could be something the Township would like to be involved with. There will be future discussion at the EC and Rec Committee, and they may have a joint discussion with the Open Space and invite JORBA to come and speak about what they can offer Byram.

Other Business - Ray asked to add an Open Space write up to the Annual Report, which Ray drafted and Doris edited. It was noted that Open Space meetings needed to get added to the website.

Open to the Public : No comments

Closed Session: The Committee went into closed session at 9:10 p.m.

Return to Open Session and Adjourn: 9:43 p.m. Motion by Scott Olson, second by Joe to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.