

Barnes Commission Agenda

February 13, 2025 in Metuchen Borough Hall at 7:00 pm

REORGANIZATION MEETING

Dorothy called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm

Roll call

Dorothy Giamboi, Walter Stochel, Tom Walsh, Ken Sammond, Charles Tomaro.

Absentees: Rob Bengivenga, Robert Spiegel.

Guests: Brian Weeks, Bruce Diamond, Pete Fairclough, Tom Dowling, Waters Salvatore, John Wiley

Reading of Sunshine Notice

Adequate Notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was published in the Home News Tribune posted in Borough Hall, and on file in the Clerk's Office. All requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied.

Approval of minutes

- Walter made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 2024. Tom seconded. All said aye.

Election of Officers

- Walter made a motion to elect Dorothy as Chair, Charles seconded. All said aye.
- Dorothy made a motion to elect Tom as Vice Chair, Walter seconded. All said aye.
- Walter made a motion to elect Ken as Secretary, Tom seconded. All said aye.
- Dorothy made a motion to elect Walter as the Treasurer, Tom seconded. All said aye.

Public Comment

- Pete Fairclough showed off his shirt which said "swamp warden" reflecting his work and interest in protecting the wildlife and lands in the preserve.

Old Business

Ken gave an update on the website, stating that the final product should be ready to go in time for Earth Day and for Pete Barnes' birthdate. He is taking pictures of the commissioners, getting some maps from Chris Cosenza, plans to create GIS maps with the county, and is updating the list of wildlife in the preserve using 2010 census information from an ecological survey and information from Audubon member, Tom Ostrand. He is finalizing copy for the webpages and uploading photographs for the web developer.

Committee reports:

a. Treasurer's Report

- The current amount in the account is \$83,276. We will update the status and account for needed expenditures at upcoming meetings.

b. Stewardship Report

- Walter stated that he and Ken went out on a hike along the southern side of the Bound Brook, starting from Woodbrook Road toward Durham Avenue. They saw two beaver dams and a lot of flooding caused by the dams. He pointed out that the sweet gum tree saplings are not being eaten by the deer.
- Brian Weeks of the Metuchen Environmental Commission stated that the Weed Warriors hosted an event along the Dismal Brook just past the Opalanie Trail, which included sixteen volunteers from SEWA and BSA Troop 66. They planted pin oak saplings and cottonwood saplings; they also picked up and hauled away twelve bags of trash.
- Ken stated that BSA Troop 17 will be conducted a clean-up along both sides of the Dismal Brook on March 15 from 9:30 AM – noon.

Agenda Resolutions

RESOLUTION 2025-01 Whereas the Peter J. Barnes III Wildlife Preserve needs to add a person to be an authorized signer on the checking account, the Commission would like to add Walter Stochel to the account. Walter Stochel will be replacing Robert (Bob) Diehl who will be removed from the account as an authorized commissioner to sign checks.

Walter made a motion to approve the resolution. Ken seconded. All commissioners present were unanimous in approval.

RESOLUTION 2025-02 Resolution authorizing the commission Secretary to request that Middlesex County assist in creating a GIS map of the Wildlife Preserve that will be posted on the website that is currently in development.

Walter made a motion to approve the resolution. Dorothy seconded. All commissioners present were unanimous in approval.

New business

- Walter stated that the Edison Greenways Group is running its 30th anniversary Eco Tours this year, including some walks in the preserve.
- Ken said that he would begin outreach to Rutgers faculty to see if the commission can get a science advisor who can provide guidance to us with ecological and/or land use, particularly as relates to endangered species habitats and/or wildlife habitats, as well as invasive species versus native species.
- Ken stated that he would be reaching out to the county planning board to discuss land stewardship agreements that can or should be created to better steward the lands and waters of the Barnes Preserve.
- Dorothy stated that Jeff Lehrer, whom we had intended to hire as our legal counsel, has retired. She will be making further inquiries to resolve this matter.
- There was discussion to create a calendar of meetings for 2025. The commissioners chose the following dates for meetings: April 10, June 12, August 14, October 9, December 11. Dorothy made a motion to approve these meeting dates and add them to our calendar. Ken seconded. All commissioners were unanimous in their approval.
- Dorothy stated that all of the municipalities and governing bodies must provide in-kind support for the work of the commission.

Adjournment

Walter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom seconded. All said aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.