



Barnes Wildlife Preserve Commission

216 Amboy Avenue, Metuchen NJ 08840

Meeting – October 19, 2023

Commissioners in attendance: Dorothy Giamboi, Chair; Walter Stochel, Vice Chair; Ken Sammond, Secretary; Bob Diehl, Treasurer; Rob Bengivenga, Commissioner.

Absent are Bob Spiegel, Charles Tomaro, Tom Walsh, Robert Seader, and John Wiley, legal counsel.

Guests: Peter Fairclough, Metuchen Resident; Carmella Seslar, Associate at CSG Law, PC.

Dorothy opened the meeting at 7:06 PM with a reading of the Sunshine Law and the OPMA. There is no quorum. However, Rob Bengivenga called and stated he would arrive soon.

Farmers Market - Metuchen

Plan is to be at the market from 9-12 PM. The market will provide tent and table. We will hand out fliers and do Q & A. Bob Diehl may attend.

Get our message out. Hand out.

Updated Barnes Preserve Signage

Two signs were placed on Talmadge, one on Coolidge, and one on Metuchen Road. Each sign has been placed on county property.

Bob Diehl asked what happened to the old signs?

Walter stated that Bob Spiegel wanted them. He also mentioned that Spiegel is working on the front of Triple C Ranch to get it open and that he is concerned about renewing the land lease with Edison. Spiegel stated that he needs equipment to remove trees downed by storms.

Dorothy presented the banner to all of us. All approved of its look.

County Updates

Walter stated that the county has hired CME to design the trailhead park in Metuchen and perhaps to do work at the Gulton site (where the county acquired property for the Barnes Preserve). We hope for an update from the county regarding any work they are doing in the preserve.

Klein is the developer of Gulton and they own the section being renovated/developed, especially if any of the engineering plans include the preserve. There were some concerns aired about the fact that we have had no reports or updates regarding the clean-up at the county-owned portion of the Gulton site.

7:33 Rob Bengivenga arrived. At this point, there is a quorum.

County Signage and Payment

Dorothy made a motion to pay the updated bill to JJ Ryan for producing the signs, adding \$86 to the total. Bob Diehl seconded. All said aye to accept resolution via roll call: Rob, Dorothy, Walter, Bob, Ken
Ken read the resolution.

Subcommittee Regarding Ordinances

There was discussion of the need to form a subcommittee to create ordinances for the Barnes Commission, now that the Master Plan is in force and we are taking on the responsibilities of a planning board. Walter, Ken and Rob volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Bob made a motion to create a committee. Rob seconded.

All commissioners voted aye via roll call: Rob, Dorothy, Walter, Bob, Ken

Website Creation

There was discussion of how it was an easy task to do, but challenge to maintain and pay for it.

Does spending on the creation of the website follow the public laws or not regarding what and how we spend money, especially regarding the level of expenditure.

Bob Diehl stated that we should advertise what we do and any activities, so we have to make sure it is updated.

Rob B. stated that most towns use Civicplus, but it is very expensive.

Ken stated that he knows that the Metuchen Library is currently revamping their website and that he would talk to the president of the Metuchen Library Board of Trustees and the Director to see what the cost is.

Dorothy stated that we have \$86,000 in the account to do the work of the commission and that she and John Wiley had created online account access with Manasquan Bank which holds the funds.

Other Business and Announcements

Walter stated the following: Windows of Understanding has contacted the Greenways Group – Climate Change theme for art. They are interested in the Barnes Preserve. Lead is Joe Castronovo.

All of the ash trees are dead from emerald ash borer infestation.

There is a lot of new growth from sweet gum saplings. The deer are not eating these trees.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

Dorothy stated that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 11, 2024.

Rob made a motion to adjourn at 8:13 PM. Walter seconded. All said aye.