

**MEADOWLANDS CONSERVATION TRUST
PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES**

DATE: February 23, 2007

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: New Jersey Meadowlands Commission
Commissioner's Room
Lyndhurst, New Jersey

RE: Board of Trustees meeting of the Meadowlands Conservation Trust

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

WILLIAM SHEEHAN, Chair
Hackensack Riverkeeper

ROBERT CEBERIO
NJMC Executive Director

ABIGAIL FAIR
Association of NJ Environmental Commissions

GREG REMAUD
NY/NJ Baykeeper

ALSO PRESENT:

KRISTINA SCHVEJDA
Executive Director, Meadowlands Conservation Trust

PENNY LUDMAN, ESQ. – Conference called in via phone
Deputy Attorney General

CONFERENCED IN:

MARK BECKER, Vice Chair
Co-Director of Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network

RITA STRMENSKY, ESQ. - NJ Ethics

ABSENT:

DENNIS ELWELL
Mayor of Secaucus

MICHAEL GONELLI
NJMC, Commissioner

1. **Chairman Sheehan presided** over the Meadowlands Conservation Trust Board of Trustees meeting. The meeting began at 1:36 p.m. with Chairman Sheehan leading the pledge of allegiance.
2. **Executive Director Schvejda read** the Sunshine Law and took roll call for the December 15, 2006 meeting of the Meadowlands Conservation Trust's Board of Trustees.
3. **Review and Adoption of Minutes:** Minutes of the December 15, 2006 meeting were adopted and approved with a motion made by Trustee Ceberio, seconded by Trustee Remaud and unanimously carried by acclamation.
4. **Public comment:** none at that time
5. **Conference call:** Ethical Questions conflict of interest

- a. Rita Strmensky, NJ Ethic's Director
- b. Cathy Wiehnik, Ethic staff person

Several questions were posed during the conference call.

1. The question of whether or not MCT could sit on NENJWA's board or participate in joint

ventures was brought up. MCT staff and board members sit on various boards including newly formed North East New Jersey Watershed Alliance (NENJWA), formerly known as WMA5. With state funding now completely depleted and not being funded in the future, the group is trying to obtain an 501 C 3 status and continue monitoring, overseeing, assisting other entities in the Hackensack River Watershed. The group, may if funds allow, get into land acquisition too. We can't conduct joint projects with BOT & MCT conflict law that we are not exempt from. We are encouraged to cooperate w/ non profit for the furtherance of the legislative purposes. Someone from a non profit who doesn't sit our MCT BOT can represent the entity in a joint project. MCT BOT must recuse themselves from participating and voting on a project.

2. The question MCT BOT still being able to have a quorum if several BOT are involved in a particular project. Must have a quorum.
3. Entities can not conduct a "volunteer" project w/ MCT even on a third party basis, due to conflict of law.
4. Nor can MCT Board of Trustees request MCT to "support" their cause or give an endorsement.

Chairman Sheehan stated that the enabling legislation is really the disabling legislation because the four non profits that are the natural partners for MCT would be in "conflict" with the Trust at times and will have to recuse themselves.

6. **Resolutions:**
 - a. Resolution 07- 01 : Supporting The Renewal of The Garden State Preservation Trust
 - A. Motion made by Chairman Sheehan seconded by Trustee Remaud –
 - B. Passed unanimously by acclamation.

- b. Resolution 07 -02 : Supporting Off-Road Vehicle Legislation
 - A. Table since Mayor Elwell who was going to introduce the resolution was unable to attend the meeting
- c. Resolution 07 -03 : Closed Session
 - A. Negotiation on land acquisition projects
 - B. Personnel issues

7. **Director's Report:**

a. Old Business:

- A. License plate update – material was enclosed in packet.
- B. Monetary issue of Kane Tract- Ms. Ludman reached out to Mill's attorney Michael Luchiew, Esq. with regard to MCT receiving an annual stipend for the Kane Tract.

b. New Business

- A. Ms. Schvejda thanked NJMC Commissioners and both Trustee Ceberio and Commissioner Gonnelli, in particular, for putting forth and adopting NJMC Resolution 07 -12.
“Authorizing A \$175,000 Contribution To The Meadowlands Conservation Trust for 2007”
- B. Trustee Ceberio, executive director for NJMC informed the group that there has been established a special reserve fund account in MCT's name for any Trust money that has not been spent annually will be kept in that account and then “rolled over” for the following year's use. The use of these funds is for land acquisition, capital projects, studies etc. not for operational purposes. Operational money would have had to be spent during the regular calendar year but they alone are not allowed to be “used” in the following year's accounting.
- C. Joint Project between NJMC, Bergen County and MCT – Inter-Municipal Greenway Project -
 Ms. Schvejda proposed a joint project engaging municipalities in connecting the communities through greenways and trail systems. By working with municipalities the Trust hopes that they would donate any and all lands that are not on their ROSI sheets to MCT. The

supporting staff for this project would be shared between MCT, NJMC and Bergen County. Ms. Schvejda had meetings with both Bob Ceberio, Executive Director of NJMC and Farouk Ahmad, Planning and Economic Development Director of Bergen County; both agreed to assist MCT with staff on this collaborative project. The consensus was that MCT should focus on easements and identify potential parcels for open space land acquisition. Both Trustee Fair and Remaud felt that the County and municipalities should take the role in identifying and implementing greenways and trail systems. MCT Board of Trustees felt that this project should not move forward but to continue our present path on land acquisition.

8. **Public Comment** – Dr. Ravitz commented that she personally would like to see MCT take an active role in assisting municipalities in connecting towns through greenway and trails. Many towns would welcome the Trust’s help and assistance. Trustee Remaud felt that MCT’s role and goal is to have a positive interaction with entities and try to stay away from getting “in the fray” with other entities, since there are many that already play that role.
9. **Closed session** Resolution 07 - 03
10. **Next meeting will be held** on April 20, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in NJMC’s Commissioner’s meeting room.
11. **Motion to adjourn meeting** was made at 3:20 p.m. by Trustee Remaud, seconded by Commissioner Gonnelli and unanimously carried.

Kristina R. Schvejda, Executive Director
Meadowlands Conservation Trust