

Protecting the Environment



MEADOWLANDS CONSERVATION TRUST

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES

DATE: October 11, 2017
TIME: 10:14 a.m.
PLACE: NJSEA Environment Center 2nd Floor Lecture Room
Two DeKorte Park, Plaza, Lyndhurst, NJ

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

WILLIAM SHEEHAN, Chairman
Hackensack Riverkeeper

GREG REMAUD, VICE CHAIRMAN
NY/NJ Baykeeper

DONALD PALOMBI - VIA PHONE
NJDCA Delegate

MAYOR ALBERTO SANTOS - VIA PHONE
HMMC Delegate
Mayor of Kearny

ABSENT:

RALPH J. MARRA, JR., ESQ.
NJSEA Delegate

ALSO PRESENT:

CHRISTINE A. SANZ, Chief Executive Officer
JASON STYPINSKI, Deputy Attorney General
COLLEEN MERCADO, Senior Operations Administrator, NJSEA

Chairman Sheehan welcomed everyone, followed by the flag salute.

CEO Sanz read the Sunshine Law statement into record and Ms. Mercado took roll call.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Chairman Sheehan presented the Open Session meeting minutes from the September 14, 2017 Special Meeting. Upon motion by Vice Chairman Remaud and second by Trustee Palombi, the minutes were carried with all in favor.

CHAIRMAN REPORT

Chairman Sheehan updated the Board on the following matters:

- Triple Five recently made a payment to the Trust of \$700,000.00, representing their past-due obligations pertaining to the annual funding towards maintenance of the Kane Tract. This payment brings their obligations current as of 2017.
- The Bergen County Audubon Society joined the Trust and BCUA as a partner in the development of the Mehrhof Pond Wildlife Observation Area. A letter was sent to Don Torino thanking BCAS for their involvement.
- A letter of comment was recently sent on behalf of the Trust to the Army Corps of Engineers in response to a public notice on a project at Teterboro Airport, which would impact wetlands within the Meadowlands District. The letter stated that the Trust did not agree with them moving the mitigation for this project outside of the Hackensack Meadowlands District.

CEO REPORT

CEO Sanz reported that she had received an inquiry from Diana Fainberg, a consultant for Bellemead Properties, advising that they may be interested in transferring approximately 40 acres of their wetlands to MCT. CEO Sanz noted that she did not know what the terms or conditions were at that point and would like to request the ability to arrange a meeting with Ms. Fainberg and MCT Land Acquisition Committee to hear them out and report back to the full board. Chairman Sheehan responded that he thought this was a great idea.

CEO Sanz advised the Board that the MCT was notified by Don Torino and the Bergen County Audubon Society of illegal dumping occurring at Skeetkill (pictures of which were included in the Board packets). She said the MCT was very thankful for their help in looking out for the different things going on in the District. CEO Sanz also stated that Don Smith has been of great assistance to MCT in the continuing maintenance of the Trust sites. She noted that the dumping would be cleaned up. She then made note of the Resolution that was before the Board for consideration relative to obtaining bids to have improvements done at Skeetkill. She continued by saying that this was one of the sites that the Trust owns outright and the goal would be to maintain it in as good condition as possible.

CEO Sanz reported the 2017 license plate revenues through August were \$12,068.00.

CEO Sanz noted that the Mehrhof project continued to do well and that there was a resolution before the Board adding Bergen County to the list of partners, which currently included Bergen County Audubon Society and BCUA.

Chairman Sheehan commented that he had been at the BCUA a few weeks ago for a meeting and was able to look at the Mehrhof site. He stated that it was really looking good and thanked Don Smith for the good work and everyone else who had a hand in putting it together. He concluded by saying he hoped to have an opening before standing in two feet of snow.

CEO Sanz thanked Colleen Mercado for being the project manager. She added that it had been a huge contribution by a lot of parties but takes someone to bring them all together and that Colleen had been that person for MCT.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT

Mr. Donald Smith of Hansen & Smith Environmental Consulting stated that the Mehrhof Pond project has been a labor of love for him and that he had spent a lot of time there as a boy. He added that it was close to home and close to heart. Mr. Smith provided the following updates on the monitoring of the Trust's properties for the month of September:

- Clark Property, Demarest - Property is fine. The owners go out of their way to keep it very nice and presentable.
- Pine Hills, Demarest - In walking the perimeter of the property there is some spillover of debris from the adjacent property which will be taken care of in the near future.
- Emerson Woods, Emerson - Deer are becoming quite a problem here. Nothing green is growing six feet down from the tree lines as it has all been consumed by deer. The ground is becoming a biological desert. The deer are so used to people, and even a walking dog does not disturb them.
- Skeetkill, Ridgefield - A few problems here. Looking to do some rehab with benches and so forth. In regards to recent illegal dumping, Don advised that the skids were 16 to 18 feet long, so he cut them up into smaller manageable sections and piled them with the couch and chairs. He stopped at the DPW and spoke with the Supervisor, Joe Greco, who advised him that the neighboring property owner, ColorRite Plastic, had agreed to arrange for a dumpster to have the debris loaded up on and then removed.
- Pomander Walk, Teaneck - Some of the older planters have deteriorated and rotted, and should be cleaned up. Don advised that he and his wife were recently at Pomander Walk and bumped into a crew doing maintenance work for the Hackensack River trail. Don feels the Trust could enlist them to help with the refurbishing and believes they would be more than glad to do so.
- Kane Tract - Mr. Smith provided an update on the recent fires at the Kane Tract. He stated that a large part of the Tract, a dry freshwater area, had burnt and the fire had gotten very close to the berm. He said the concern is the gabion basket on the dike which is lined with nylon fabric that could melt in a hot fire and compromise the integrity of the dike. He advised that the State Forest Service had also been out at the site. He noted that there were still some underground residual fires occurring and that the Carlstadt police and fire departments were keeping an eye on it. Mr. Smith then made a few suggestions for future discussion:

➤ Request the State Forest Service to come back and see if they could

wet the specific hot spots or employ a gas-powered water truck as there is no close hydrant or water source;

- Purchase a surplus fire truck or equipment to have on hand;
 - Put a spillway at Moonachie Creek and Bashes Creek to keep the metal wet with a foot of water.
- Miscellaneous – Mr. Smith displayed some photos of native plants that are growing on the Kane Tract and at Losen Slote Woods, specifically mentioning the swamp azalea and sweet pepperbush. Mr. Smith went on to speak of how he has been collecting the seeds from these plants to have them grown and then planted in places like the Kane freshwater area, DeKorte Park and in the District. He hoped that possibly in the future to have a symposium and bring in landscapers that work in the District and property owners to inform them of the benefits of using native plants rather than bringing in exotic plants.

Chairman Sheehan posed a question to Mr. Smith relative to the gabion wall dike at the Kane Tract. He commented that during the time that the site was being designed, there were assurances that once the wall went in it would eventually become a vegetative barrier and the vegetation would help hold it together. He asked Mr. Smith if he noticed that this was taking place?

Mr. Smith replied that only minor vegetative stabilization was going on and noted that the dike was plagued with a lot of problems, such as leaking. He said that Kane Mitigation's consulting crew has been plugging holes in the dike every year for the past three summers, adding that he didn't want to see the Trust inherit a problem once Kane Mitigation is done and walks away.

CEO Sanz agreed that there is lot of maintenance and advised that she speaks constantly with Mr. Derickson regarding the continued maintenance and fixing the leaks. She said that at one point everyone was hopeful that Rebuild by Design would take this on, but unfortunately that was not going to happen. CEO Sanz suggested that the Trust start to investigate other areas near Kane to see what can be done to improve the area so as to prevent this type of fire. She noted that Mr. Smith has been telling everyone this for a very long time and recommended working together with him in trying to form a solution to bring to the Board for consideration.

Vice Chairman Remaud made it a point to say that he did not want all that Mr. Smith does for the Trust to be taken for granted. He thanked Mr. Smith for his intensity and love for the area that had not lessened through his career, adding that it benefits everyone.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 17-13 Resolution Authorizing the first addendum to the Amended Public Access and Maintenance Agreement between Meadowlands Conservation Trust and Bergen County Utilities Authority. CEO Sanz advised the Board that Resolution 17-13 supports the County's participation in the Mehrhof project and delineates the resources that the County will provide, which included recycling receptacles, park signage, park benches and evaluation of the trees to

ensure they are in good health. She noted that it was subject to the approval of the Board of Freeholders, which she anticipated they would move favorably on.

Mr. Smith, MCT's consultant, commented that he felt everyone involved would want to see the Mehrhof site opened before winter, and if the County was not able to provide new park benches in time, he would be willing to rehab the old benches with pressured treated wood to make them presentable for an opening. He noted that the rehabbed benches could then be reused elsewhere once the new benches came in.

CEO Sanz commented that she did not want to see a duplication of efforts between the County and Don and noted that the issue with the benches was not only the wood but the inconsistent heights; some were too high to sit on and looked bad.

Chairman Sheehan stated that he was definitely in favor of having the County on board as a partner and requested that staff follow up with the County on a regular basis during this process. He then asked if there were any other comments.

Vice Chairman Remaud asked if this issue could be resolved down the road or did it have to be part of the Resolution.

CEO Sanz replied that this issue did not change the Resolution in any way.

Chairman Sheehan asked for a motion. Upon motion by Vice Chairman Remaud, second by Trustee Mayor Santos, proposed Resolution 17-13 was unanimously approved.

Resolution 17-14 Resolution Authorizing the CEO to obtain bid proposals for property maintenance and improvements at Skeetkill Creek Marsh. CEO Sanz advised the Board that this work would be in addition to the monitoring work that Mr. Smith provides to the MCT. She stated that a scope of work would be created, together with Mr. Smith and in consultation with NJSEA staff, and bids requested. The proposals received would be brought to the Board for consideration.

Upon motion by Trustee Palombi, second by Vice Chairman Remaud, proposed Resolution 17-14 was unanimously approved.

CLOSED SESSION - None

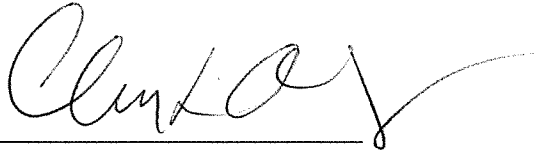
Before adjourning, Chairman Sheehan stated that he had one other question stimulated by the conversation regarding fire trucks and fire apparatus. He asked if there was any way that the MCT could avail themselves of the NJSEA's services if needed out at the Kane site.

CEO Sanz responded by saying that the NJSEA fire department was contractually obligated for fires at the complex site and other than the "arteries" leading into the complex, they are obligated to stay on the complex site. She added that, in fact, other communities provide mutual aid, if needed.

ADJOURNMENT - Vice Chairman Remaud motioned to adjourn, second by Chairman Sheehan and all members responded affirmatively.

The meeting concluded at 10:50 a.m.

I certify that this is a true and accurate transcript of the Open Session Minutes of the Meadowlands Conservation Trust Board of Trustees meeting of October 11, 2017.



Christine A. Sanz
Chief Executive Officer

NAME	Roll Call	Resolution 17-13	Resolution 17-14
Chairman William Sheehan	P	Y	Y
Vice Chairman Greg Remaud	P	Y	Y
NJDCA Delegate Donald Palombi	P Via phone	Y	Y
NJSEA Delegate Ralph Marra	--	--	--
HMMC Delegate Mayor Alberto Santos	P Via phone	Y	Y

P = Present -- Absent A= Abstain
R= Recuse Y = Affirmative N = Negative