

Protecting the Environment



MEADOWLANDS CONSERVATION TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OPEN SESSION MINUTES

DATE: June 21, 2023
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: Lecture Room, Two DeKorte Park Plaza, Lyndhurst

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

William Sheehan, Chairman
Hackensack Riverkeeper

Greg Remaud, Vice Chairman (via phone)
NY/NJ Baykeeper

Steven Cattuna
NJSEA Delegate

Kimberly Holmes (via phone)
NJDCA Delegate

ABSENT:

Mayor Anthony Suarez
HMMC Delegate

ALSO PRESENT:

Christine Sanz, Chief Executive Officer
Ruth Thompson, Deputy Attorney General
Anna Acanfora, NJSEA Director of Finance
Teresa Doss, Co-Director MRRI/Chief Restoration Scientist
Michael Turso, MRRI Wildlife Biologist
Colleen Mercado, NJSEA Senior Operations Administrator

1. Chairman Sheehan called the meeting to order.
2. Sunshine Law Statement- CEO Sanz read the notice of meeting required under the Sunshine Law.
3. Roll Call

4. **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Chairman Sheehan presented both the Open Session and Closed Session meeting minutes from the March 15, 2023 meeting. Upon motion by Trustee Cattuna and second by Trustee Holmes, the March 15, 2023 Open Session and Closed Session Board meeting minutes were approved by a vote of 4-0.

5. REPORTS

CEO REPORT

- CEO Sanz informed the Board of the recent clean-up effort on Jomike Court at the Kane Natural Area in Carlstadt. She explained that Ms. Mercado established a working relationship with the County Health Department through a State-wide program utilizing the coordinated efforts between the probation department and the health department. She noted that the only thing the Trust was asked to provide was a location for the inmates to have lunch, which staff arranged for at River Barge Park. Ms. Sanz thanked Ms. Mercado for setting this up for the Trust.
- CEO Sanz reported that the Mehrhof Pond estuary had sustained damages due to recent storms. She noted that the Audubon Society had alerted staff of the site's closing and that the cooperative efforts of BCUA, the County and the MRRI 's restoration staff allowed the park to reopen. She said that further repairs are needed and will be done collaboratively with the whole group.
- CEO Sanz reported the following license plate revenue:
CY2023 License plate revenues through May: \$9,103.41 and 20-year revenue: \$416,000.00

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Michael Turso narrated a power point presentation and provided the following monitoring results for the second quarter of 2023:

- Central Woods, Norwood - Observed an abundance of milkweed along the edge of Hemlock Court and a number of tiny Monarch Caterpillars, which he stated were in deep decline. Noted that it was good to see the abundance of milkweed since the Monarch Caterpillars depend on this for their survival.
- Fox Hill West, Norwood - Visited the site on a rainy evening in April and there were hundreds of frogs running across the road. Displayed pictures of a Green frog, Wood frog, and a very big Bull frog.
- Clarke Family Property, Demarest - Observed a male and female bluebird, and an Eastern bluebird. He noted they were not using the bluebird box on the property and said he would not hurt to refurbish the box or just get a newer one to give them a good nesting habitat.
- Pine Terrace, Demarest - Observed the Spicebush caterpillar and Spicebush Swallow Tail butterfly feeding on a flowering Spicebush plant.
- Emerson Woods, Emerson - Very popular site for migratory species such as the magnolia warbler, American Redstart, Hermit Thrush and Yellow-throated Vireo. Good to see the ecosystem doing so well in this riparian area as it is surrounded by suburban areas.
- Pomander Walk, Teaneck - Observed a male Peregrine who was probably bringing food to a female Peregrine Falcon who was incubating eggs. He noted that the falcons had three chicks last year.
- Kane Natural Area, Jomike Court - Besides the recent cleanup at the site there were Savanna Sparrows, which are a state-threatened species that seemed to be breeding in the grassy area.
- Kane Mitigation Bank - Observed a pair of Clapper Rails for the first time at the mitigation bank and assume they were most likely breeding. Staff plans to deploy an acoustical recording unit to look for tricolor bats, which are an endangered species in New Jersey and their presence would be quite significant in the Meadowlands.
- Kane Freshwater Site - The big problem at this site was the return of the spotted Lanternflies. Staff deployed 2,000 weevils in May at four different points to combat the mile-a-minute invasive plant. Within 5 days holes could be seen in the mile-a-minute, which would make it harder to grow.

- Skeetkill, Ridgefield – A lot of mud flats were observed at low tide. Also noticed that a lot of the phragmites had come back on the center island but not as thick. A blackleg Kittiwake had been observed sitting in the marsh at high tide, which is exciting since it is normally miles off shore in the ocean.

Chairman Sheehan and Vice Chairman Remaud thanked Mr. Turso for a good report.

Ms. Doss noted that staff also depends on bird observations from members of the Bergen County Audubon Society and volunteers for the Riverkeeper, and she wanted to thank them publicly.

Ms. Doss provided the Board with an update on the damages sustained at Mehrhof estuary. She referred to before and after pictures of the site that were included in the Board’s meeting packets and explained some of the short-term and long-term plans for the site.

Mr. Donald Smith of Gloversville, New York made the following comments:

1. Mr. Smith commented on the saltmarsh bulrush that he had observed growing in the Kane Freshwater Mitigation Site and he said that it was increasing every year. He commented that this was a good indicator that the dike was leaking. He then commented on the plastic sheeting dike, which he commented should be driven along the outside of the dike to stop the infiltration of water and strengthen the dike.
2. Mr. Smith commented on a drainage issue that exists along Moonachie Creek upstream from the Trust property. He commented that the area is overgrown with phragmites and has not been maintained since the abolishment of the Bergen County Mosquito Commission. He commented that this puts a burden on the upstream property owners because during big storms the water cannot get downstream to the retention basis on the Kane Tract. He commented that possibly the NJSEA could talk to the County in regards to dredging the area to keep the channel open to perform as it is supposed to.
3. Mr. Smith commented on a large area of milkweed that he observed growing at the Emerson Woods property and that he was concerned that the Town would cut it down while mowing the grass around it. He commented that he was just a messenger and it was up to the Trust to reach out to the Town.

7. **OLD BUSINESS** - None

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Anna Acanfora, NJSEA CFO, presented the Board with an opportunity to increase the interest earnings on the Trust account by investing a portion of the funds in U.S. Treasury bills, which she explained were a safe and conservative investment because the United States Government backs them. She noted that the Trust does not have a formal investment policy and as such is guided by New Jersey Statute. She then went on to explain the options of staggering investments into three, six and nine months so that there would always be an investment maturing and liquid funds in case of an emergency.

CEO Sanz advised the Chairman that a potential draft resolution had been prepared based on Ms. Acanfora’s presentation for the Board’s consideration.

Chairman Sheehan thanked Ms. Acanfora for her presentation and said that he would acted upon her recommendation.

9. **RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution 23-03 Consideration of a Resolution Accepting the Meadowlands Conservation Trust 2022 Financial Statements and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Upon motion by Vice Chairman Remaud, second by Trustee Cattuna, Resolution 23-03 was adopted by a vote of 4-0.

Resolution 23-05 Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Investment of Certain Meadowlands Conservation Trust Funds.

CEO Sanz read Resolution 23-05 into the record. Upon motion by Trustee Cattuna, second by Trustee Holmes, roll call was then taken.

Vice Chairman Remaud: Aye
Trustee Cattuna: Yes
Trustee Holmes: Yes
Chairman Sheehan: Yes

Resolution 23-05 was adopted by a vote of 4-0.

10. **CLOSED SESSION**

Chairman Sheehan advised there was no need for Closed Session.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon no further business, Motion to Adjourn was made by Trustee Cattuna, seconded by Trustee Holmes, followed by all in favor.

The meeting concluded at 10:45 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 June 21, 2023.



Christine A. Sanz
Chief Executive Officer

June 21, 2023

NAME	Roll Call	Resolution 23-03	Resolution 23-05
Chairman William Sheehan	P	Y	Y
Vice Chairman Greg Remaud	P	Y	Y
NJDCA Delegate Kimberly Holmes	P	Y	Y
NJSEA Delegate Steven Cattuna	P	Y	Y
HMMC Delegate Mayor Anthony Suarez	--	--	--

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