

Williams Township Land Preservation Board

Minutes, February 25, 2020 Meeting

Present: Bob Schmidt, Ron Hinehline, Rick Reppert, Jim Williams, Polly Clark, Linda Heindel
Supervisors: Mark Ernst, Ray Abert, Mike Bryant

Schmidt opened the meeting at 7:01 pm with the salute to the flag.

Minutes of the January 28, 2020, meeting were approved 5-0 on motion (moved, Reppert, 2nd Williams).

Reorganization meeting was held:

Re-elected to their posts were Chairman Bob Schmidt (Nominated by Heindel, 2nd Hinehline) elected 5-0

Vice Chairman Ron Hinehline nominated by Schmidt, 2nd Williams) elected 5-0

Secretary Linda Heindel (nominated by Hinehline, 2nd Reppert) elected 5-0.

Project Updates

Nehoda – Debbie Newberry withdrew from the project by email. Motion to seek reimbursement for expenses subsequent to the appraisal (moved Hinehline, 2nd Williams), approved 5-0. Schmidt will compile list of costs for submission to Supervisors.

Russell – LPB members and Baird met with Russell on February 4 to review the survey contents, easement language, access issues, project timeline, and remaining steps. Easement language is being reviewed by Atty. Reiss. The informal \$15K proposal (sent to Schmidt) by Heritage to provide full service to each easement project, including Heritage counsel, monitoring costs, endowment for the project was discussed. LPB made a recommendation to the Supervisors to explore a formal proposal when presented. Meanwhile, the Russell project will be kept on track for settlement in June or earlier.

Wharen – Schmidt consulted with Sherry Acevedo about a fee-simple possibility (property is along the canal and adjacent to DCNR-owned property). Acevedo believes the County is not yet ready to move ahead, and LPB was awaiting County's wishes. To resolve the stalemate, a meeting of Wharen, Baird, and LPB members to sort out possibilities for the property, including use by the County. Wharen requested a meeting on a Tuesday or Thursday before March 5, so Schmidt will try to schedule for an afternoon meeting.

Boss – Williams was not able to acquire a bid from three other appraisal companies to supply a second bid (in addition to Indian Valley). Williams will make an attempt to acquire a bid from Snyder Appraisal.

O'Brien – LPB team conducted a site walk and scored the property. To cover additional issues and counsel, Laura Baird will be asked to meet with O'Brien and Paul Smith, possibly on same date as meeting with Wharen.

Hunter – Now that an application has been received, a site walk should be scheduled. Heindel will call and try for March 12 or 13 afternoon.

Old Business

Treasurer's Report as of January 31, 2020 – Hinehline reported a total of \$2,260,178.52 in the Open Space account. Since a number of CD's will come due in March and in June, Hinehline will consult with Asst. Mgr. Mel Ernst about which ones to roll over and for what length (6 mo. or 1 yr.).

Ernst had asked when should next EIT referendum be conducted. Hinehline is to send email query to Asst. Mgr. Ernst.

Schmidt calculated \$790K would be needed to cover current projects over the next several years if NO county money was available and \$375K if the County provided some funding. He advised that no EIT campaign be initiated until open space funds were further diminished.

Ernst noted that one more member is needed to complete the ASA Committee (1 Supervisor, 3 farmers, 1 non-farmer).

There were no volunteers.

Possible LPB members to replace Reppert were discussed, and LPB and audience were asked to urge any interested party to read the LPB website for information and to apply by letter to the Supervisors.

Audience – Seth Tyson at 1329 Island Park Rd. and Brian Mauro, whose property straddles Wms. Twp. and Lower Saucon Twp., showed interest in combining in a somewhat complicated process (involving Act 319) in preserving their properties. They will start with Zoning Officer Lezoche because a subdivision may be involved.

Regarding the monitoring reports that were sent to landowners of preserved tracts monitored by Heritage for the township, Ernst noted that reports were sent to two owners whose reports showed violations.

Announcements – none

Audience comments –Supervisor Ernst reported at Supervisors meeting that a consensus of Supervisors Board and audience present that all township board members should be residents of the township.
Meeting was adjourned on motion (moved Williams, 2nd Reppert) at 8:10 pm.

Submitted,
Linda Heindel, Secretary

Next Meeting: March 24, 2020, 7 pm