THOMPSON WOODS PRESERVE JOINT
GOVERNANCE & ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, April 10, 2024
4:00 PM
1481 E. College Avenue, State College PA 16801
2nd Floor Meeting Room

ATTENDED BY:

GOVERNANCE
Bill Keough, Chair
Earl Moore, Vice Chair
Charles Fisher
William Ray
Eric Silver

ADVISORY
Jim Carpenter, Centre Region Parks and Recreation
Suzy Yetter, Clearwater Conservancy
Bruce Pincus, Thompson Woods Property Owners’ Assoc.
Matt Kleiman, Vallamont Neighborhood
William Elmendorf, Penn State
Wes Fahringer, DCNR

STAFF:
Jasmine Fields, State College Borough
Lance King, State College Borough
Amy Kerner, College Township
Mike Bloom, College Township

OTHERS:
Kathy Matason – Centre Region Parks & Recreation Authority

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Keough called to order the April 10, 2024, Joint Meeting of the Thompson Woods Preserve Committees, at 2:01 PM.

INTRODUCTIONS:

There was a round of introductions for all in attendance.

PUBLIC OPEN DISCUSSION/NEW AGENDA ITEMS:

None

NEW BUSINESS: NB-1 Review Phase 1 Survey Results & Discuss Phase 2 Distribution

Mr. Bloom provided an overview of the survey and the results received from the Committees during the Phase 1 distribution. He noted that he was seeking input from the Committees on the survey itself, any issues with the findings to date and to get authorization to commence Phase 2 with the Municipal Elected Officials and staffs.
Mr. Ray noted that throughout the discussions to date, there have been a number of suggestions raised for the Preserve. Those need to be memorialized in some manner. Further, it is his hope that in time we bring in experts to offer suggestions on best practices for a Preserve.

Overall the Committees were very pleased with the survey and felt it was a good tool. Mr. Fahringer noted that the outcome of this survey would lead to a Stewardship Plan for the Preserve and a better understanding of how to engage with the property. Ms. Yetter acknowledged that pieces of a Stewardship Plan are already in place and just need updated and fitted together.

Mr. Moore requested that in Phase 2 the covenants are underscored for survey participants. Further he felt a question on understanding/awareness of the Preserve would be good in Phase 2. Mr. Bloom felt he could develop a question to get the desired information from future participants.

Mr. Silver made a motion to authorize staff to commence with Phase 2, Mr. Fisher seconded. The motion pass unanimously.

**NB-2 Preserve Maintenance**

Ms. Kerner noted that for years maintenance has been handled between the three parties, College Township, State College Borough and Centre Region Parks and Recreation. Issues are reviewed and determined as to which entity was responsible. This is handled informally on a staff level.

Mr. King noted that this relationship is rooted in the 1988 COG Policy for regional parks. The policy is somewhat vague and as such, issues tend to be taken on a case by case basis.

Mr. Keough noted that Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority can’t figure out how this property became a regional facility, if in fact it ever did. Ms. Matason acknowledged that the current process has worked, but it obviously lack clarity. It remains the responsibility of the owners to determine what is ultimately meant by a “Preserve.”

Mr. Silver noted that the current practice is very reactive, where the property would benefit from more proactive maintenance. Mr. Moore felt that another MOU or Agreement between the parties dealing with maintenance would be warranted. Mr. King noted that all parties would benefit from having a better definition of who does what and how it is paid for in the future.

Mr. Keough noted that this is obviously an issue that needs some type of resolution for the future of the Preserve. While the Committees can offer suggestions and advice, the final decision is going to require a policy level resolution by the municipalities.

Moving to the next topic, Ms. Kerner provided information on the wet area within the Preserve trail system. She and Mr. Carpenter have evaluated the area and determined that one or more culverts with cross pipes would be needed to move the runoff away from the area. Once the water is moved, then the focus can move to stabilizing the surface.
Good of the order info:

Mr. Bloom shared that College Township and State College Borough are working on an amendment to the Intermunicipal Cooperation Agreement to provide the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority with increased flexibility in making their appointment in the future.

Mr. Keough noted that the Committee is seeking a good point of contact with West Penn Power. Mr. King thought he might have a name.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Keough accepted a motion from Mr. Ray to adjourn the April 10, 2024, Joint Meeting of the Thompson Woods Preserve Committees, which was seconded by Mr. Moore. The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Mike Bloom
College Township Assistant Manager