

October 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Montour Preserve Environmental Education Center, 374 Preserve Rd, Danville, PA and online through Zoom

MEETING ATTENDEES

MARC BOARD MEMBERS (online)

Elizabeth Rake, Kristin Mikita, Dr. John Bulger, Chadd Roadarmel, Kyle Postupack

MARC BOARD MEMBERS (in person)

Chris Johns, Brett Johnson, Tyler Dombroski, Frank Dombroski, Marlene Gunther, Bill Byron, Commissioner Dan Hartman, Tami Gabrielsen

MARC STAFF (online)

Craig Reinard

MARC STAFF (in person)

Bob Stoudt

PUBLIC (online)

Joe Scopelliti (Columbia-Montour Visitors Bureau), Otto Kurecian (Columbia Montour Visitors Bureau), Wayne Kashner

PUBLIC (in person)

John Zaktansky (Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association), Dr. Victor Marks, Dave Decoteau (Riverside Adventure Company), Nicole Shingara (Harris Pest Control), Shaun Harris (Harris Pest Control)

MEDIA (online)

Geri Gibbons (Press-Enterprise), Anna Weist (Daily Item / Danville News)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Tyler Dombroski called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dave Decoteau asked that the meeting time be better coordinated for baseball (Phillies) fans, otherwise no other public comment.

OPEN AND AWARD 2024 LAWN CARE INVITATION TO BID

Stoudt reviewed MARC’s annual lawn care bid procedure and presented MARC staff calculations to perform mowing services in-house if needed. MARC’s staff calculates an annual cost of approximately \$55,000 for MARC to perform the services. However, MARC would also need to make an up-front investment of approximately \$20,000 to purchase the necessary mowers and equipment. Stoudt recommended that MARC accept bids if the cost would be less than what MARC could do the work in-house. If bids are higher than \$55,000, Stoudt recommends MARC consider options to do the work in-house.

Chairman Dombroski opened four bids submitted for MARC’s 2024 Lawn Care Invitation to Bid. The results are presented below.

2024 MARC LAWN CARE BIDS SUMMARY				
SITE	Harris Pest Control	Shawn's Lawn & Excavating	Liberty Valley Lawn Care	Womer Landscape & Design, LLC
SITE 1 - HESS RECREATION AREA	9,137.20	13,825.00	20,005.00	30,138.57
SITE 2 - HOPEWELL PARK	1,802.00	2,550.00	5,780.00	7,525.56
SITE 3 - NBCT TRAILHEAD / RIVER ACCESS	1,590.00	1,500.00	2,325.00	2,773.05
SITE 4 - LEGION ROAD PARCEL	795.00	1,500.00	2,100.00	1,375.65
SITE 5 - NORTH BRANCH CANAL TRAIL	4,770.00	3,375.00	4,125.00	8,165.25
SITE 6 - MONTOUR PRESERVE	33,825.00	44,100.00	38,340.00	77,041.11
GRAND TOTAL MARC SITES 1 - 6	\$ 51,919.20	\$ 66,850.00	\$ 72,675.00	\$ 127,019.19
OPTIONAL WASHINGTONVILLE BOROUGH TASKS				
SITE 7A - WASHINGTONVILLE DELONG PARK AND CEMETERY	DID NOT BID	9,200.00	9,430.00	21,235.99
SITE 7B - WASHINGTONVILLE STREET CURBS	DID NOT BID	2,025.00	1,875.00	1,500.00
GRAND TOTAL WASHINGTONVILLE SITES 7A + 7B	DID NOT BID	\$ 11,225.00	\$ 11,305.00	\$ 22,735.99

Motion to approve the bid of Harris Pest Control, in the amount of \$51,919.20, subject to verification of required insurance coverages and other bid requirements: Bill Byron

Second: Marlene Gunther

Motion passed unanimously

PRESENTATION BY JOHN ZAKTANSKY (MIDDLE SUSQUEHANNA RIVERKEEPER ASSOCIATION)

John Zaktansky, Executive Director, Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, presented information about the proposed Vernal School Environmental Education Partnership at the Montour Preserve. Mr. Zaktansky reported the program will be a collaborative effort of more than twenty organizations working to develop sustainable, long-term support for the Montour Preserve by reinvigorating the Preserve’s environmental educational programming. The 1994 Charles B. Degenstein Foundation has announced an initial \$300,000 grant to generate additional support for the program. More information is available at

www.MiddleSusquehannaRiverkeeper.org/Montour-Preserve.html

OFFICER REPORTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Dombroski noted his appreciation for the continued collaboration of so many organizations to maintain the offerings for the community at the Montour Preserve and other MARC managed sites.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Dr. Bulger called attention to the Treasurer's Report as provided on pages 2 – 19 of the meeting agenda packet. No items of concern were noted.

Stoudt noted that MARC had delayed many planned projects, including the Hopewell Park Pump Track project, because of ongoing funding uncertainties. MARC is on track to end the year in a stronger financial position than originally anticipated, but will need to work hard in 2024 to make up for work that has been delayed.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report: Dr. John Bulger

Second: Commissioner Dan Hartman

Motion passed unanimously

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Johns called attention to the minutes of the September 25, 2023 meeting as distributed with the meeting agenda packet. No concerns or errors were noted.

Motion to approve the September 25, 2023 meeting minutes: Marlene Gunther

Second: Bill Byron

Motion passed unanimously

PARTNER REPORTS

DANVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Chris Johns noted nothing new to report.

DANVILLE BOROUGH

Stoudt noted that he has been in communication with Danville Borough staff regarding funding options for the repair of the Hess Recreation Area access road. In order to allow for a possible application for grant funding, Danville Borough will allow one or more Street Department staff members to attend a mandatory Dirt and Gravel Roads Program training. Stoudt is hopeful MARC might coordinate with Danville Borough to complete the project, so long as MARC can secure the necessary funding through one or more grant sources.

MAHONING TOWNSHIP

Marlene Gunther noted that the playground equipment removed from the St. Joseph's School playground is currently at Sun Tech and the process is moving forward. The intention is that the equipment will be rebuilt by MARC's staff in 2024 at the F.Q. Hartman Recreation Area, in a location to be specified by Danville Borough.

MONTOUR COUNTY

Commissioner Dan Hartman noted Montour County-related updates would be provided later in the agenda.

RIVERSIDE BOROUGH

Elizabeth Rake noted nothing new to report.

WASHINGTONVILLE BOROUGH

Frank Dombroski noted Washingtonville Borough-related updates would be provided later in the agenda.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Stoudt called attention to Julian Brehm's Assistant Director's report as provided on page 20 of the meeting agenda packet.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Stoudt called attention to the Director's Report provided on pages 21 – 32 of the meeting agenda packet.

Stoudt noted several status updates on projects noted in the agenda packet, including the Hopewell Park Pump Track, Hess Recreation Area access road, DeLong Park Pathway project, Hess Recreation Area restroom roof, and the Chilisuagi Trail bridge at the Montour Preserve.

Stoudt also noted that MARC's staff would be working in coming weeks to prepare MARC's 2024 budget for consideration and adoption at MARC's November 20 meeting.

Dr. Victor Marks (former MARC board member) noted the history of the Central Susquehanna Hammers Mountain Bike Team and how that has led to the proposed Hopewell Park Pump Track. Dr. Marks sympathized with MARC's financial challenges, but encouraged MARC to redouble efforts to move the project forward in as timely a manner as possible to ease concerns of project contributors.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

AMENDMENT TO MONTOUR COUNTY HOTEL TAX MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Stoudt called attention to the proposed amendment to the Montour County Hotel Tax Memorandum of Understanding, as presented on pages 35 – 46 of the meeting agenda packet. Stoudt reported the agreement, if approved, would result in approximately \$75,000 in additional annual funding to MARC through the Montour County Hotel Tax, with a commitment by the Montour County Commissioners to earmark \$25,000 in Act 13 Marcellus Shale grant funds to MARC, for a total annual commitment of approximately \$100,000 in new funding beginning in 2024.

Stoudt noted that the agreement, while of great assistance to MARC, will come at the expense of the Montour County Commissioners' Tourism Fund and the Columbia Montour Visitors Bureau, both of which will receive less funding as a result. Stoudt expressed regret that no other solution could be found, but hoped that discussions will continue among MARC's many stakeholders to identify a long-term solution that better meets the needs of all concerned parties.

All members of the board expressed their appreciation to the Columbia Montour Visitors Bureau and the Montour County Commissioners for their continued assistance.

Motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding, as documented on pages 36 – 46 of the meeting agenda packet: Bill Byron

Second: Tami Gabrielsen

Motion passed unanimously.

MONTOUR PRESERVE CONCESSIONAIRE AGREEMENT RENEWAL

Stoudt requested approval to renew the existing Montour Preserve Concessionaire Agreement with the Riverside Adventure Company. The existing agreement will conclude on October 31 at the end of year three of the agreement. Stoudt praised the efforts of the Riverside Adventure Company to work with MARC's staff to provide improved recreational opportunities to visitors of the Montour Preserve and thanked Dave Decoteau for his continued interest in the concessionaire agreement.

Mr. Decoteau noted the Riverside Adventure Company's results for the 2023 season and noted several possible new programs and offerings for the 2024 season.

Motion to approve renewing the Montour Preserve Concessionaire Agreement with the Riverside Adventure Company for an additional one-year term, to conclude October 31, 2024: Commissioner Dan Hartman

Second: Bill Byron

Motion passed unanimously

OTHER ITEMS

No other items for discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, Chairperson Dombroski adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.

Next meeting: Monday, November 20, 2023, at the Montour Preserve Environmental Education Center and online through Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Johns, Secretary