

August 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Montour Preserve Environmental Education Center, 374 Preserve Rd, Danville, PA 17821
and online through Zoom

MEETING ATTENDEES

MARC BOARD MEMBERS (online)

Commissioner Rebecca Dressler

MARC BOARD MEMBERS (in person)

Dr. John Bulger, Bill Byron, Frank Dombroski, Tyler Dombroski, Tami Gabrielsen, Brett Johnson, Kristin Mikita, Chadd Roadarmel, Mike Wert

MARC STAFF (online)

Craig Reinard

MARC STAFF (in person)

Bob Stoudt

PUBLIC (online)

Wayne Kashner and Joe Scopelliti (Columbia Montour Visitors Bureau)

PUBLIC (in person)

Dave Decoteau, Dr. Victor Marks, Mark Deroba (Danville Borough)

MEDIA (online)

Anna Weist (Daily Item / Danville News) and Drew Mumich (Press Enterprise)

MEDIA (in person)

none

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Tyler Dombroski.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Victor Marks expressed his concern regarding recent developments related to the Danville Borough request for proposals for forest management services. Dr. Marks encouraged all concerned parties to communicate more effectively and to work together for the public interest.

Dave Decoteau reiterated the concerns expressed by Dr. Marks and encouraged a renewed focus on the long-term, permanent protection of parks and recreation areas throughout Montour County. Mr. Decoteau noted the issue had been a persistent theme throughout MARC's history.

OFFICER REPORTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Dombroski thanked the members of the public for attending the meeting to share their concerns. Chairman Dombroski noted he continues to meet regularly with Stoudt to review expenses and discuss updates and concerns.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dr. Bulger called attention to the Treasurer's report, as provided as pages 2 – 25 of the meeting agenda packet. Stoudt noted the report contained three months of records since MARC had not met since May. Stoudt called attention to the mid-year budget update packet distributed with the meeting agenda and discussed the significant changes. Stoudt called attention to three primary changes: \$100,000 in anticipated revenue from the Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association's Vernal School program is being spent directly through the Vernal School program, not through MARC; \$250,000 in anticipated expenses for the construction of the Hopewell Park Pump Track are not expected to occur until 2025; and \$150,000 in anticipated expenses for the Hess Recreation Area access road will be accounted for through Danville Borough, not through MARC.

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

Second: Chadd Roadarmel

Motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

In the absence of Secretary Johns, Stoudt called attention to the minutes of the May 20, 2024 meeting, as distributed with the meeting agenda packet. Stoudt noted the June meeting had been canceled and MARC does not meet in July.

No comments or concerns were noted.

Motion to approve the May 20, 2024 meeting minutes: Dr. Bulger

Second: Bill Byron

Motion passed unanimously.

PARTNER REPORTS

DANVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Stoudt noted that MARC will be hosting a Danville Area High School Co-Op student for the 2024 / 2025 school year. Ava Bulger's co-op experience began August 26 and will continue through June 2025.

DANVILLE BOROUGH

Mike Wert noted progress was being made on the Hess Recreation Area access road reconstruction. Stoudt reported that the contract had been awarded by Danville Borough to RC Young, Inc. (the same firm that MARC had worked with in 2010/2011 for the most recent road work). PA One Call markings have been made in preparation for the work and activity may begin in coming days. Stoudt expects to announce road closures during the work to allow for quicker work completion and visitor safety. Closures may last two to three weeks, depending upon weather conditions and difficulties encountered.

MAHONING TOWNSHIP

Bill Byron noted nothing new to update. Stoudt noted that Mahoning Township had not yet appointed a replacement for Marlene Gunther.

MONTOUR COUNTY

Commissioner Dressler noted nothing new to report.

RIVERSIDE BOROUGH

No representatives / no report. Stoudt noted that Riverside Borough had not yet appointed a replacement for Elizabeth Rake.

WASHINGTONVILLE BOROUGH

Chairman Dombroski noted the successful completion of the DeLong Park Pavilion Project and thanked MARC's staff for their support. Chairman Dombroski noted work continues to advance the planned Mill Park project, conditioned upon the necessary approvals by PEMA. Chairman Dombroski also noted the planned ex Frank Dombroski noted the DeLong Park Community Garden had been planted and expanded.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Stoudt called attention to the Assistant Director's report provided on page 26 of the meeting agenda packet. Stoudt thanked Brehm and Piatt for their significant help with the DeLong Park Pavilion Project and other recent projects.

Stoudt noted that Brehm has been accepted into the Foundation for the Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Central Penn class. The program meets once each month for a nine-month period to develop leadership skills. Stoudt congratulated Brehm for his admission to the program.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Stoudt called attention to the Director's Report provided on pages 27 - 40 of the meeting agenda packet.

Stoudt called attention to the materials provided as pages 42 – 51 of the meeting agenda packet related to the Danville Borough Farm property and the recent request for proposals by Danville Borough for forestry services. Stoudt noted that the Memorandum of Understanding between MARC and Danville Borough for the Borough Farm property allows MARC to operate and maintain trails at the property, but Danville Borough retains ownership and control of the property. While MARC might offer input on forest management plans for the property, decision making authority remains with Danville Borough.

Stoudt also called attention to the mid-year budget review materials distributed with the meeting agenda. Stoudt noted that MARC will come in significantly under budget for the year. Stoudt explained that funding for the Vernal School program at the Montour Preserve (\$100,000) and from the Montour County Conservation District's Dirt and Gravel Roads Program for the Hess Recreation Area access road (\$120,000) will not run through MARC's accounting as originally anticipated. Stoudt also noted that construction costs for the Hopewell Park Pump Track Project (\$210,000) will likely be incurred in 2025.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST TO DISBURSE UP TO \$60,000 AS NEEDED TO DANVILLE BOROUGH FOR HESS RECREATION AREA DIRT, GRAVEL, AND LOW VOLUME ROAD GRANT PROJECT

Stoudt requested approval to release up to \$60,000 to Danville Borough before the end of the year to reimburse Danville Borough for expenses related to the Hess Recreation Area Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance project reconstructing the park's access road.

Stoudt noted the Montour County Conservation District would provide 50% of grant funding (\$60,000) up-front to Danville Borough, with additional payments made by the District to the Borough after expenses have been paid, with 30% of the grant held back until completion of the project. MARC will need to provide up to \$60,000 to Danville Borough for bill payments, as requested by Danville Borough, until the Montour County Conservation District payments are made. Stoudt expressed confidence the payments would be made in a timely manner by the District and the impact to MARC's operations should be minimal. Stoudt reiterated that payments would be required only if so requested by Danville Borough.

Motion to approve the disbursement of up to \$60,000 to Danville Borough, if requested, for reimbursement of Hess Recreation Area Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Grant Program expenses, to be reimbursed by funds provided by the Montour County Conservation District: Dr. Bulger

Second: Chadd Roadarmel

Abstention by Mike Wert

Motion passed unanimously, with abstention by Wert.

REQUEST TO HOLD AND ADMINISTER \$1,750 COMMUNITY GIVING FOUNDATION DANVILLE 2024 GRANT FOR DELONG PARK PATHWAY CONSTRUCTION PHASE II ON BEHALF OF WASHINGTONVILLE BOROUGH

Stoudt requested approval for MARC to hold and administer \$1,750 in Community Giving Foundation: Danville 2024 grant funds for DeLong Park Pathway Construction, Phase II, on behalf of Washingtonville Borough.

Stoudt noted that MARC staff will perform the work for the project and has previously held and administered grant funds on the Borough's behalf for previous phases of the project.

Motion to approve: Bill Byron

Second: Dr. Bulger

Abstentions by Frank Dombroski and Tyler Dombroski

Motion passed unanimously, with abstentions by Frank and Tyler Dombroski.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Stoudt requested approval to pay the annual renewal of the PIRMA insurance policy at a cost of \$10,791.

Stoudt expressed his pleasure that the annual increase was minimal, due, in part, to MARC's good history with the organization.

Motion to approve: Dr. Bulger

Second: Chadd Roadarmel

Motion passed unanimously.

OTHER ITEMS

No other items for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, Chairman Dombroski adjourned the meeting at 7:38pm.

Next meeting: Monday, September 23, 2024, at the Montour Preserve Environmental Education Center and online through Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Stoudt, Director / Acting Secretary