

June 12, 2017 MARC Meeting Minutes

MARC Attendees:

BOARD MEMBERS

Ken Holdren
Frank Dombroski
Joe Ward
Dave Walker
Vic Marks
Mike Mills
Chris Johns

STAFF

Bob Stoudt
Dennis Piatt
Connor Durkin

Public:

Wayne Kashner
Lloyd Bunch
Ralph and Kathy Schumacher
Rob Ryder

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm by Mike Mills.

OFFICER REPORTS

Chairman's Report

Mike Mills thanked the Board members, staff and guests for attending and reminded all that MARC's Board will not meet in July. The next meeting will be August 14.

Treasurer's Report

Ken Holdren reviewed the financial accounts with the board. MARC has received the DCNR money and that has been used to reimburse the organization. He reviewed the "Earmark Categories" in detail. Motion to approve: Dr. Marks. Seconded: Dave Walker. Motion carried.

Secretaries Report

Motion to approve: Dr. Marks Seconded: Dave Walker. Motion carried.

PARTNER REPORTS

Washingtonville Borough

Nothing new to report

Danville Borough

Nothing new to report

Riverside Borough

Stoudt noted that the new river access signage is in hand. Bob explained a plan for installation.

Montour County

Documentation is in hand regarding the adjacent landowner dispute along the North Branch Canal Trail. Ken explained that the Commissioners are ready to move forward in conjunction with the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority to take the proper legal steps in order to clean up and open the remaining section of the North Branch Canal Trail.

Danville Area School District

Chris explained how work has begun on renovations and updates to Ironmen Stadium with an expected completion date of fall 2017.

There have also been meetings/rides scheduled by the scholastic mountain biking team. There will be more information forthcoming about the 2017-18 schedule.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ralph Schumacher commented that the Schumacher Rugby Classic at the Hess Recreation Area had low turnout that year but that he planned on continuing the tradition.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mike Mills noted highlights of Jon Beam's report in the meeting agenda packet.

MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN'S REPORT

Mike Mills noted highlights of Dennis Piatt's report in the meeting agenda packet.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Stoudt reminded the group that there is no meeting scheduled for July. He also noted that continued support and help of Wayne Kashner with regards to the North Branch Canal Trail. Stoudt noted highlights of his report in the agenda packet, specifically noting recent developments with the East Branch Recreation Area lease agreement, to be discussed in detail under old business.

OLD BUSINESS

MARC Employee Handbook

Stoudt noted the recent development of a MARC Employee Handbook. Input has been received from the Montour County Solicitor's office and is ready for action. Motion to approve: Ken Holdren. Seconded by: Frank Dombroski. Motion carried unanimously.

Hess Recreation Area Smoking Policy

As a follow-up to an email from a Danville Area School District lacrosse parent dated April 27 regarding smoking at the Hess Recreation Area. The parent is upset by smoking at the park, particularly around children. Stoudt noted that signs could be made politely reminding people to be aware of smoking around children. Signs, as shown on page 25 of the meeting agenda packet, will be posted at Hess Recreation Area as soon as funding allows. Motion made by: Frank Dombroski. Seconded by: Dave Walker. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

East Branch Recreation Area Lease

Stoudt gave background on the East Branch Recreation Area lease dating back to 2012. The property is located in Madison Township, Columbia County and owned by Talen Generation, LLC. The site includes two soccer fields, one large multi-purpose field, paved parking area, gravel trails and a gated storage area. In 2012, MARC entered into a lease agreement with PPL Generation, LLC, to operate and maintain portions of the property, including: mowing, weed control, trash removal, porta-potty service, field scheduling and general site administration and operation. The lease agreement transitioned in late 2015 to Talen Generation, LLC.

The lease agreement originally provided for \$10,000 in annual funding to MARC from PPL Generation, LLC to operate and maintain the site; the initial lease also included an additional \$10,000 to fund the purchase of site amenities, including soccer goals, benches, shed, etc. The annual lease payment amount was decreased to \$9,000 for the 2016/2017 lease. Talen has now offered to extend the lease for another term, but with no payment to MARC. Instead, MARC would be obligated to assume all financial obligations required to operate and maintain the site.

Stoudt presented past years' expense summaries, showing the most recent annual cost to maintain the site as \$7,367.68. Stoudt noted that MARC is already providing close to bare-minimum services as called for in the lease agreement and there are few options to further cut costs.

Rob Ryder, newly elected President of the Warrior Run Soccer Club, was in attendance at the meeting as a member of the public and asked whether the club might be able to assist with site maintenance, including mowing and trash removal. Mr. Ryder noted that the club hoped to continue to use the facility for the foreseeable future, perhaps including at least one new team from the Millville area, and offered to help offset the cost of using the facility through volunteer efforts. Though concerns were raised regarding potential liability concerns and current contracts for site maintenance, MARC Board members thanked Mr. Ryder for his offer and Stoudt pledged to look into options for collaboration.

Commissioner Holdren stated he would reach out to the Columbia County Commissioner Chris Young and Talen Energy regarding the matter. Commissioner Holdren and Stoudt will work together to devise a workable solution if at all possible.

Stoudt proposed that for the next 30 days MARC continue to maintain the site with budgeted funds while he and Commissioner Holdren explore options for financial support. After the 30-day period, Stoudt will report back to the Board with recommendations. At that time, MARC's Board will decide whether to enter into the revised lease agreement or terminate the lease. Motion by: Mike Mills. Seconded by: Dr. Marks. Motion carried unanimously.

2018 River Towns Half-Marathon

Stoudt reviewed the participation trends of River Towns Races (specifically the Half-Marathon) and noted that there has been a sharp drop-off in participation in the Half-Marathon. A lengthy discussion ensued with ideas about how to proceed and will be re-visited at a future meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

Montour Master Naturalist

Stoudt noted that the program agreement is ending and MARC has been asked to renew the agreement through 2019. Stoudt noted that the program takes up a significant amount of Jon Beam's time and seems to be delivering less of a return on MARC's investment than had been anticipated. Stoudt will consult with Beam after the program's conclusion this month and will provide recommendations to the Board at the August meeting.

Credit Card Update

Stoudt ordered a debit card through Service 1st in mid-May. It has not yet arrived. Stoudt will use the debit card in place of personal credit/debit cards for MARC purchases going forward.

ADJOURNMENT

President Mike Mills adjourned the meeting at 8:09pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.D. Johns', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher D. Johns
MARC Board Secretary
6/12/17