

**MINUTES OF THE
NATURAL LANDS TRUST MEETING
March 16, 2018
12:00 PM**

Office of Natural Lands Management, Trenton, New Jersey

Chairman Catania called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM and roll was taken. A quorum of trustees was present. At least one of the trustees was a state governmental representative.

The Open Public Meetings Act notice was read as follows: Notice of the date, time, location and agenda, to the extent known, was forwarded to three newspapers of general circulation, and provided to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. It was also noted that such notice was provided on the Trust's website in compliance with the Act requiring State, regional, and local authorities, boards, and commissions to establish a website providing specific information to facilitate transparency in government.

In attendance were:

Michael Catania, Chairperson
James Hall, Vice Chairperson
Theresa Lettman, Trustee/Secretary-
Treasurer
Judeth Yeany, DEP Trustee (Left 2:00 PM)
Larry Torok, DEP Trustee
Steve Eisenhauer, Trustee
Thomas Gilmore, Trustee (Joined by phone
at 12:35 PM, left 12:45 PM)

Matt Spayth, Trustee representative for the
State Treasurer
Adrienne Kreipke, alternate for Rich
Boornazian, Trustee representative for the
DEP Commissioner
Robert J. Cartica, Executive Director
Martin Rapp, Trust Staff
Cari Wild, Trust Staff

Absent were:

Emile DeVito, Trustee
State House Commission representative (not appointed)

Guests:

William Bennett

General Public Comment: William Bennett presented the Board with his situation of owning an unbuildable lot but not being able to sell it for conservation. He owns property near the Trust's Kislow Preserve in Stafford Township, Ocean County. Given the Trust and Green Acres' limited acquisition funding, this not a state acquisition priority. Mr. Bennett advised the Board that Ocean County also turned down the request to purchase his property. Mr. Bennett was advised to consult his tax professional regarding options surrounding a donation of the property.

Financial Report: Mr. Cartica outlined the Financial Statements for the quarters ending December 31, 2017. Ms. Kreipke commented that future statements should identify all restricted funds. Ms. Kreipke motioned to approve the Financial Statements. Mr. Hall seconded the motion and the Financial Statements were unanimously approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

The **December 1, 2017 minutes** were reviewed. Mr. Hall motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Torok seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

Unfinished Business:

Mr. Catania provided the Board with a **Petty's Island, Pennsauken Township, Camden County Status Report** which included an update on the removal of all the tanks and other CITGO equipment and the upcoming termination of Crowley's operations on April 30, 2018. The Board was advised that the documentary *500 Acres of Controversy: Saving Petty's Island* will be screened at the Princeton Environmental Film Festival on April 15, 2018, that Petty's Island participated as a member of Alliance for Watershed Education in the Philadelphia Flower Show in March of 2018, and that Trust staff will be making a presentation to the US Coast Guard on April 18th with Delaware RiverKeeper.

New Business:

Mr. Gilmore presented the **Nominating Committee Recommendations** for Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary/Treasurer Officers and motioned their approval. Nominated for Chairperson was Michael Catania, Vice Chairperson was James Hall, and Secretary-Treasurer was Theresa Lettman. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 9 to 0.

Mr. Cartica presented the **Spending Authorization for Calendar Year 2018**. This year's authorization includes a full biodiversity inventory at the High Rock and Congleton preserves and several species- or habitat-specific inventories at other preserves. Mr. Hall motioned to approve the Spending Authorization for Calendar Year 2018. Mr. Eisenhower seconded the motion and the 2018 Spending Authorization was unanimously approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

Ms. Dey and Mr. Wheeler presented the **Delaware Bay Migratory Shorebird Project 2018 Budget Request for the Conserve Wildlife Foundation (CWF) and the Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP)**. Ms. Wild advised the Board that the proposed 2018 shorebird budget totals \$49,500 which includes \$41,000 for CWF and \$8,500 for ENSP. In 2016, \$58,500 was budgeted and \$58,246 expended. After final reimbursement for 2017 expenses and projected 2018 expenses, the Trust's Shorebird Fund will be left with \$9,674. Ms. Dey has done a tremendous job in obtaining federal funding in recent years but the amount that is provided in any given year is unpredictable, therefore, she is seeking funding consistent with prior years even though the fund is being quickly depleted.

Ms. Wild advised that the ability to contribute to the Trust's Shorebird Fund has been approved as a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. It is currently the only approved SEP in southern New Jersey. Mr. Wheeler advised the Board that CWF is actively seeking grants from organizations such as National Science Foundation and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to fund shorebird research and maintain shorebird habitat.

Ms. Dey indicated that the peak count of the stopover population of red knots on Delaware Bay during 2017 declined from approximately 25,000 to 17,969. Mean horseshoe crab egg density also declined from 5,715 eggs/m² in 2016 to 2,796 eggs/m². Surface egg densities remain an

order of magnitude below historic densities recorded on New Jersey beaches. It is estimated that an egg density of 50,000 eggs/sq. meter is the minimum necessary to begin a true recovery of red knots. The distribution of red knots stopping over at Delaware Bay indicates that more than 70 percent are foraging in New Jersey where beach closures protect foraging birds from human disturbance. Unfortunately, only 20 percent of red knots achieved sufficient weight by the time of their normal departure from Delaware Bay. This is believed to be due to a period of cool water temperature which curtailed horseshoe crab spawning and led to reduced food availability and increased competition for egg resources. This year's survey of red knots on their main wintering area in Tierra del Fuego reflects a decline in abundance from 15,512 in 2010 to 9,840 in 2018.

Mr. Catania requested that, as with prior budgets, the 2018 shorebird budget should be approved with a rider authorizing a reallocation of expenses between categories subject to a limitation of the total budgeted amount. He also requested that the Board authorize a \$35,000 upfront payment to CWF to fund Delaware shorebird work to be done in May and June 2018 with receipts for such work to be provided later. Mr. Torok motioned to approve the 2018 budget with the reallocation rider and upfront \$35,000 payment. Mr. Hall seconded the motion and the 2018 shorebird budget was unanimously approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

Mr. Cartica presented the Board with the **Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP) Plant Fund-2018 Work Plan**. Mr. Hall motioned to approve the TGP Plant Fund-2018 Work Plan. Mr. Torok seconded the motion and the 2018 Work Plan was unanimously approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

The Board considered the proposed **Richard J. Buhlman Preserve Project Area in Fairfield Township, Cumberland County**. Ms. Kreipke asked staff to provide updates at future Board meetings as to when properties were acquired and whether they were acquired within a project area. Ms. Lettman motioned to approve the Richard J. Buhlman Project Area. Mr. Hall seconded the motion and the project area was approved by a vote of 7 to 0. Because the Project Area included a Green Acres offering, Ms. Yeany recused herself from the matter based on the advice from the NJ Attorney General's Office that her vote may present an appearance of conflict notwithstanding that she has no personal or financial stake in Trust management assignments.

The Board considered the proposed **Hirst Ponds-Guercioni Land Management Assignment Offer in Galloway Township, Atlantic County**. Ms. Lettman motioned to approve this land management assignment. Mr. Torok seconded the motion and the land management assignment was approved by a vote of 7 to 0. Ms. Yeany recused herself from the matter based on the advice from the NJ Attorney General's Office that her vote may present an appearance of conflict notwithstanding that she has no personal or financial stake in Trust management assignments.

The Board considered the proposed **Six Flags Theme Parks Easement Donation Offer in Jackson Township, Ocean County**. Mr. Hall motioned to approve the easement offer subject to a written agreement with co-grantee, New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF), that assures that NJCF will create the baseline documentation, conduct the annual monitoring, and hold the \$25,000 endowment and the opportunity for review, revision and approval by the New Jersey Attorney General's Office. Ms. Lettman seconded the motion and the easement donation was approved, and the chair authorized to execute it subject to the noted conditions, by a vote of 6 to 1.

The Board considered the **Proposed Conveyance of Primrose Brook, Harding Township, Morris County to the United States Fish & Wildlife Service**. Mr. Hall motioned to approve this conveyance subject to its compliance with the Trust's *Guidelines for Conveyance of Land* and subject to the Trust having a right to enforce the deed restrictions. Ms. Lettman seconded the motion, and the conveyance was unanimously approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

The Board considered the **Draft 2017 Annual Report**. It was requested that the Board provide any comments/changes on the draft report within the next thirty days. Mr. Eisenhauer motioned to approve the draft report subject to Board members and staff having flexibility to incorporate changes including the addition of an article by David Snyder, if applicable. Ms. Lettman seconded the motion, and the 2017 Annual Report was unanimously approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

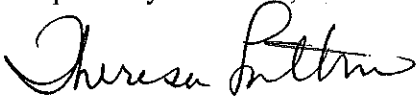
The **2018 Board meeting dates** for the remainder of 2018 are:

June 8th, September 14th, and December 7th, 2018

It should be noted that prior to her departure from the meeting at 2:00 PM, Ms. Yeany briefed the Board on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) issuance of a conditional certificate to PennEast for a natural gas pipeline that traverses, among other lands in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, the Trust's Gravel Hill Preserve. Ms. Yeany updated the Board on the steps taken to date by the NJ Attorney General's Office and NJDEP regarding the threatened condemnation of state-owned lands, including the Gravel Hill Preserve.

Mr. Hall motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Ms. Lettman seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM by a unanimous vote of 7 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,



Theresa Lettman
Secretary/Treasurer