PINELANDS PERSONNEL & BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

This meeting was conducted in-person and virtually.

The public could view/comment through Pinelands Commission YouTube link:

https://www.youtube.com/c/PinelandsCommission

August 18, 2026 – 9:30 a.m.

MINUTES

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Virtually: Chairman Alan W. Avery, Jr., Commission Chair Laura E. Matos, Commissioners Mark Lohbauer, Ryck Signor, and William Pikolycky, and Governor's Authorities Unit representative Michael Eleneski.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Nicholas Asselta

STAFF PRESENT: Jessica Lynch

Virtually: Executive Director (ED) Susan R. Grogan, Charleen Danley, Ernest Deman, and Paul Leakan

1.Call to Order

Chairman Avery called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

2. Adoption of June 30, 2026, Personnel & Budget Committee meeting minutes

Commissioner Pikolycky moved the adoption of the minutes. Commission Chair Matos seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the June 30, 2026, Personnel & Budget Committee meeting minutes were adopted. Commissioner Lohbauer was not present for the vote.

3. Financial Updates

a. Check register: Jessica Lynch, Business Services Manager, highlighted the more noteworthy purchases/checks on the register for June and July 2026.

   More notable purchases mentioned were Regulatory Programs staff training courses at Rutgers University, Fenwick Manor construction permits from the Department of Community Affairs, replacement of workstation devices, application refunds, repairs to the sprinkler system, various science supplies, various renewal services, and FY2026 chargebacks for NJ Office of Information Technology (OIT) services.

   Commissioner Mark Lohbauer joined the meeting at 9:39a.m.

b. Electronic Disbursements: Ms. Lynch noted that all EFT disbursements were related to payroll, ACH and direct deposit.

c. Application Fees: Ms. Lynch stated that the net application fees for FY2026 are $1,024,238.44, which exceeded the quota by 20.50%. The FY2027 application fees total $40,880.92 which is 5.11% of the anticipated fees as of July 31, 2026.

4. Personnel Updates

Charleen Danley, Human Resources Manager, reviewed employee actions and recruitment efforts for July and August 2026:

Departing employees:

- Carol Ebersberger, Business Specialist 1, retired effective September 1, 2026

Promotions:

- April Field to Director of Regulatory Programs, effective July 1, 2026
- Morgan Foley to MIS Specialist 3, effective July 1, 2026
- Donna DiPalma to Technical Assistant 1, effective July 1, 2026

Current Vacancies/ Recruitments

- Chief Permit Administrator, budgeted
- MIS Specialist, budgeted
- Business Specialist, budgeted

5. Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

Jessica Lynch, Business Services Manager, introduced the draft budgets, noting the proposed totals as follows:
(For the full presentation, please click here.)

- Operating Fund -$7,935,438
  - Chargebacks to the state anticipate an increase of $10,000 to a total of $272,062 for FY2027
- Pinelands Conservation Fund - $3,535,469
- Fenwick Manor Preservation Fund - $1,039,398
- Katie Fund Budget - $3,850

ED Susan Grogan reviewed the projects and initiatives that would be supported by the proposed FY2027 budgets. She highlighted the following:
(For the full presentation, please click here.)

- As part of the project to restore Fenwick Manor, contractors have removed and will restore all of the windows. They are also removing the peeling, exterior paint on the building by sanding and scraping the surface;
- Protection of land in the Black Run watershed;
- Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) amendments related to accessible trails and wetland protection, the gap approval process, improved clustering standards for the

Forest Area and Rural Development Area and the Right of Way Transmission Line Pilot Program;
- Long-term economic monitoring projects including the installation of an interpretive Lenape panel and mortar and pestle in the lobby/exhibit area of the Commission's Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy & Education, and an updated Pinelands Application Information System (PAIS) to enhance and modernize application reporting and tracking;
- Administration of the Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank, including the annual report, legislative changes, rulemaking and funding, as well as estimates of PDC supply and demand;
- The Science office's timber rattlesnake monitoring project, using funds from a prior settlement agreement. The Science office is looking to secure additional grant funding;
- Negotiations with the Communications Workers of America (CWA), Local 1040 on a new contract;
- Adoption of updated personnel and purchasing policies;
- Redesign of the Commission's website;
- Updating and implementing the Commission's record retention policy;
- Upgrade the Wi-Fi system for all office buildings; and
- Preparation for the Fiscal Year 2023 audit.

Commissioner Avery asked for confirmation that the proposed website redesign and upgraded Wi-Fi system are projects that the Commission asked NJOIT to assist with. ED Grogan said that was the case.

Commissioner Lohbauer asked whether use of Starlink was considered as part of the project to upgrade Wi-Fi at the Commission's offices. He suggested Starlink could be a possible provider, given our location is in a remote area. ED Grogan said that the Commission will need to do whatever NJOIT requires as part of this project and may not have the ability to choose a provider.

Commissioner Avery stated that it would have been helpful for Committee members to have had more time to review the draft FY2027 budgets prior to today's meeting. He noted that would have provided a better opportunity to ask the staff questions about the budgets before the meeting. ED Grogan agreed with that assessment.

Commissioner Lohbauer made a motion to recommend adoption of the FY2027 budgets by the full Commission. Commission Chair Matos seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

6. Public comment: None

7. Closed Session

Commission Chair Matos made a motion to go into closed session to discuss the staff's recommendation to award a contract for payroll, time and attendance and human resource management services at 10:19 a.m. Commissioner Signor seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

The Committee returned to open session at 10:30 a.m.

There being no further discussion, Commission Chair Matos moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion. The Committee agreed to adjourn at 10:32 a.m.

Certified as true and correct:



Tia Sarriugarte
Business Assistant
September 2, 2026

Personnel & Budget Committee
Fiscal Year 2027

August 18, 2026

FY 2027 BUDGETS

- Operating Fund - $7,935,438
- Pinelands Conservation Fund - $3,535,469
- Fenwick Manor Preservation Fund -$1,039,398
- Kate Fund Budget - $3,850

Operating Fund FY27 Revenue

	FY27 Anticipated
State Appropriation	$4,377,000
State Supplemental Funding (Health Benefits)	$687,000
Interest Income	$100,000
NPS Grant	$298,000
Timber Rattlesnake Settlement Agreement	$35,500
Application Fees	$800,000
Escrow Payments	$70,000
Fund Balance & Reserves	*$1,566,938
TOTAL	**$7,935,438**

* Includes:

- $1,169,938 from the Undesignated Fund Balance
- $388,000 from Designated Reserves – Energy Conservation and Shelving
- $9,000 PCF Administrative Assessment

Operating Fund FY27 Expenditures

	FY27 Anticipated
Salary and Wages	$4,404,761
Fringe Benefits	$2,700,902
Supplies	$145,746
Professional Services	$261,460
Other Services	$315,762
Maintenance/Rent	$72,477
Improvements and Acquisitions	$34,330
Total Expenditures	**$7,935,438**

Chargebacks

FY26 State "Chargebacks"	
DAG legal fees	$169,527
OIT software/storage/apps	$63,302
OIT telecommunications	$26,815
Civil Service Commission - (Employee Advisory Service)	$258
Civil Service Commission - (CLIP/eLearning Platform)	$2,160
Total FY26 Chargebacks	**$262,062**

Anticipated Additional Chargebacks in FY27	
OIT for upgraded Wi-Fi	$5,000
OIT for website redesign	$5,000

Pinelands Conservation Fund
FY27 Expenditures

	FY27 Anticipated
Land Acquisition	$3,028,140
Conservation Planning & Research	$269,089
Community Planning & Design	$205,190
Education and Outreach	$33,050
Total PCF Expenditures	**$3,535,469**

Fenwick Manor Preservation FY27 Budget

	FY27 Anticipated
Hawley Bros. Inc.	$954,320
Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects	$66,878
Non-Construction Costs and Services	$3,200
Interior Paint, Furniture & Supplies	$15,000
Total Fenwick Manor Preservation Expenditures	**$1,039,398**

Katie Fund FY27 Budget

	FY27 Anticipated
Rain Garden Supplies	$100
Grounds Supplies - Plants, Mulch and Pavers	$750
Memorial Bench	$550
Pinelands Online Store - Merchandise and Supplies	$2,250
On-Line Store Postage	$200
Total Expenditures	**$3,850**


P&B Committee
FY27 Budgets, Proposed
Projects & Ongoing Work
August 18,2026

CMP Amendments

- Implementation of Black Run watershed protection, expiration of waivers and CFs, application fees for resolution of violations
  - Evesham zoning changes
  - Development applications
- Accessible Trails and Wetlands Protection
- Gap approval process
- Improved FA and RDA Clustering Standards
- Right of Way Transmission Line Pilot Program

CMP Amendments

- Standardize 1/3 application fee payments for t&e surveys, etc.
- Escrow payments and procedures
- Updated legal advertising requirements for Commission and applicants
- Revised solar facility siting and development standards
- Siting policies and standards for Battery Energy Storage Systems
- Requirement for digital submission of applications
- Stormwater management (response to REAL rules and revised BMPs)

MOAs

- Evesham Accessible Trail
- SJTA Airport: Northwest Quadrant redevelopment
- CMCMUA, Woodbine, DHS landfill leachate and sewer line
- Update or terminate old NJDEP MOAs
- Annual update on accomplishments and issues

NPS Economic Monitoring Projects

- Local Conformance/Zoning System development
  - Public access
  - Municipal training seminar
- Lenape installation at Visitors Center
- PAIS (Pinelands Application Information System)
  - Continued development of enhanced and modernized application tracking and reporting system
  - Application portal

Additional Projects

- PCF Land Acquisition funding: grant agreement for Black Run property
- PCF stewardship and monitoring report
- PLP annual report to Commission
- Completion of Garden State Parkway Interchange 44 land preservation obligation
- SADC woodland easements coordination

Additional Projects

- Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund
  - Master Plan amendment (ranking/funding)
  - Project solicitation
  - Master Plan amendment (project selection)
- Local Review Officer program suspension or termination
- CMCMUA landfill: 5-year waste flow report
- Landfill closure assessments and solar energy facilities

Additional Projects

- PDC Bank annual report
- PDC Supply and Demand
  - Methodologies and estimates
  - Reporting
- PDC Bank legislative changes
  - Sponsors
  - Funding source(s)
  - Rulemaking

Additional Projects

- Monitoring of previously required T&E plant protection measures
- Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund grant: Research, Monitoring and Decision Tools for Reptiles of Greatest Conservation Need (northern pine snake; timber rattlesnake; eastern box turtle) in the Southern Delaware River Basin
- Timber rattlesnake tracking and monitoring
- ~~EPA grant: Long-Term Trends in Wetlands Pollution and the Spatial Requirements of a Regionally Important Bioindicator Species (Pine Barrens tree frogs)~~

Additional Projects

- Contract negotiations with CWA, Local 1040
  - Retention of new outside labor counsel
- Updated Personnel Policies
- Updated Purchasing Policies
- FY2023 Audit
- Contract with new outside accountant
- Retention of new payroll processing/time and attendance/human resources management system; staff training
- Updated Records Retention Policy and implementation
- Health Insurance costs for local government entities: research and options
- Recruitment, restructuring and revised staff responsibilities
- Commission website updates and redesign
- Upgraded WiFi access in all Commission buildings