

Franklin Township Open Space Advisory Committee Minutes
Tuesday, January 17, 2006

1. **Call to order in accordance with the Sunshine Law provision.** At 7:30, a quorum was present and Chairman Jones called the meeting to order in accordance with the Sunshine Law.
2. **Introductions/roll call.** Present were members Jones, Moon, Danile, Connolly and Battin. Also present was Consultant Loos. Arriving later were Chase, Sherwood, Orsini, Clyde Kanarek and Osipowitz.
3. **Reorganization.** Chairman Jones asked for nominations for Secretary. Connolly nominated and Battin seconded John Loos for Secretary. There being no other nominations, the committee voted unanimously to elect Loos as Secretary. Loos then asked for nominations for Chair. Battin nominated and Connolly seconded Randy Jones for Chair. There being no other nominations, the committee voted unanimously to elect Jones as Chair. Jones then asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Danile nominated and Battin seconded Jack Connolly for Vice-Chair. There being no other nominations, the committee voted unanimously to elect Connolly as Vice-Chair. At this point Chase, Sherwood and Orsini arrived.
4. **Approval of the December 6, 2005 minutes.** Danile asked that the draft minutes correct a misspelling in paragraph 9. Connolly moved and Battin seconded a motion to approve the December 6, 2005 minutes with the above correction. Motion carried.
5. **Financial Report and current state of negotiations for property.**
6. Loos reported that there is \$9,748,213.09 in the open space trust fund as of January 17, 2006. At this point Kanarek arrived.
 - a. Around 7:50 PM, Orsini moved and Chase seconded a motion to go into Executive session to discuss the current negotiations to purchase property and to get a better understanding of the negotiation's impact on the trust fund. Motion carried. During the Executive session, Clyde arrived. Around 8:25, the committee came out of Executive session.
 - b. Upon coming out of Executive session, Clyde moved and Chase seconded a motion as follows: In light of the Township's successful efforts to preserve land and the likelihood that current preservation projects, if completed will deplete the open space trust fund, the OSAC recommends to the Council that it explore additional means of funding for future identified preservation acquisitions. Motion carried.
7. **Consultants report.** Loos reported on several matters:
 - a. The Galdi farm closed in December. The farmland easement was placed on 68.246 acres at a cost of \$37,500 per acre, for a total of \$2,559,225.00. The SADC contributed \$1,212,048.96; the County contributed \$404,016.32; and the Township contributed \$438,139.32. For the first time, the Federal government contributed money to a farmland preservation purchase in Franklin, because the owners agreed to restrict future impervious coverage to no more than 6%. The federal government's funding for this was \$505,020.40. Each of the three aforementioned funding partners saved money as a result of this federal funding and the Township's savings was \$101,004.08.

- b. Since the property management report was mailed to the committee, he has added maintaining the railroad bed from South Middlebush to Elizabeth Avenue. Also he reported that he is going to a meeting on Friday to discuss the possibility of applying for a \$2500 grant to remove trash, trees, vines and shrubs from the RR bed, to level the pathway and to erect trail signs on the pathway.
- c. He has had several meetings with Public Works to discuss coordination and that he feels a new system of charging the Open Space Trust Fund for two employees part time will soon be implemented. He is developing a form that will be utilized to track hours worked. He then reported on open space trust fund-purchased equipment. The trust fund bought approximately 5 years ago a mason dump truck, two trailers, a large bulldozer and a gator. The large bulldozer has not been utilized very much (87 hours since its purchase) and he recommends that the Township sell or trade the bulldozer and purchase what is really needed for trail maintenance which is a small dozer and some attachments such as a brush hog. Clyde moved and Moon seconded a motion to approve this concept and Loos was directed to explore a cost effective way to get rid of unneeded bulldozer and acquire the needed equipment. Motion carried.
- d. Loos is of the opinion that there is a need for a large container, like what is used to transport cargo on container ships, for storage at the Griggstown site. Connolly moved and Orsini seconded a motion to support purchasing a large, used container. Motion carried.
- e. Loos shared with the committee a list of NJAS proposed outings for 2006, which were: 1. Amphibian evening – rainy evening in late March; 2. Woodcock watch – late March/early April; 3. Spring Birding – May; and 4. Butterflies, Birds and Flowers – late June/early July. After some discussion, the committee decided by consensus to have the following outings:
 - Wetlands walk at the Negri wetlands;
 - Early morning spring migration birding;
 - Exploring the Ten Mile Run Greenway; and
 - Exploring the Negri-Nepote native Grassland Preserve.

8. New Business.

- a. Clyde reported on the activity of the Trails Advisory Committee. Its focus, he reported, is finding trail connections from the Somerset section of the Township to the Colonial Park/Canal area. He also reported that the TAC was asking the Township to support a pedestrian/bike/equestrian bridge from Colonial Park to the Canal. Upon a motion by Clyde, seconded by Chase, a motion passed as follows: That the OSAC supports the construction of the Colonial Park bridge, utilizing County open space trust fund dollars. Motion carried. Clyde also reported that the TAC's second focus is to connect the northern and southern sections of the Township on a route that would parallel Canal Road.
 - b. Sherwood asked if the amount of \$140,000 for the historic grant had been set by the committee. Loos explained that the committee set this amount, as a maximum, when it approved the budget. However, the entire amount does not need to be awarded.
9. **Opening of the meeting to the public.** Seeing no members of the public present, the committee did not open the meeting to the public.

10. Adjournment. At 9:26 PM the committee came out of Executive Session and upon a motion by Clyde, seconded by Orsini, the OSAC adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

John Loos
Secretary/Consultant

**Franklin Township OSAC
Executive Session Minutes
January 17, 2006**

1. Loos reviewed a financial report that he prepared and brought to the committee's attention that if all pending purchases (Lemantovich, Riya, Harris, Perrin, Middlebush Farms, Lake, Suydam Associates, J Kiss and K. Kiss) were to be completed, there would only be a deficit of \$2,988,399 in the trust fund. However, he reminded the committee that in September, he had asked the CFO what additional bonding capacity the trust fund had and that he was told that the township likely could bond for another additional \$5 million. Thus, if this additional bonding were to be done, all pending purchases could be completed.
2. Loos reported on a pending agreement with the owners of the Lemantovich property that provides for the property to be preserved as farmland, with the existing house being subdivided off onto a one-acre lot, with a trail in the rear of the property being subdivided off and purchased as open space by the township and the remaining approximately 56 acres being preserved with the owner's right to construct one single-family dwelling on the property. Orsini moved and Danile seconded a motion to support this concept (subdivision of the one-acre with the existing house, subdivision of a portion for a trail to connect to the adjacent RR bed, and preservation of the remaining tract) and recommend same to the township. Motion carried. Kanarek, not a voting member, also expressed support.
3. The committee discussed the need for the township to do additional bonding to complete all pending acquisitions. Sherwood moved and Orsini seconded a motion to recommend to the Township that the Township bond to the fullest responsible level utilizing the existing open space trust fund revenue stream, given the need to complete the pending projects. Motion carried.
4. Around 8:25, Clyde moved and Orsini seconded a motion to leave Executive Session. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

*John Loos
Secretary/Consultant*