

Garden State Preservation Trust
May 25, 2021 Substantive Meeting Minutes
Teleconference 10 a.m.

Chairman Greg Romano called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Executive Director Ralph Siegel read a statement that advance notice of at least 48 hours of the date, time, agenda summary and toll-free teleconference number with access code of this public Conference Call meeting of the Garden State Preservation Trust for Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at 10 a.m. was given and distributed in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, and as amended by PL 2020 Chapter 11, to Statehouse Press Corps, specifically to the Associated Press, Bloomberg News, New Jersey Spotlight, New Jersey Public Media, NJ Advance Media and News 12 New Jersey, and to the Office of Legislative Services and to the Office of the New Jersey Secretary of State for due notification and to be posted, published and broadcast.

Mr. Siegel called the roll. Public members in attendance on the call were: Chairman Romano, Vice-Chairman Ben Spinelli and Andy Buzby. Ex-officio members in attendance on the call were Susan Payne (for Agriculture Secretary Douglas H. Fisher), Assistant Commissioner Ray Bukowski (for Acting DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette), Glenn Ceponis (for Community Affairs Commissioner Lt. Gov. Sheila Y. Oliver) and Michael Kanef (for Treasurer Elizabeth Muoio).

The eighth and ninth positions on the board are vacant.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Romano welcomed members to the teleconference and thanked them for joining.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 17, 2020, BOARD MEETING

Chairman Romano asked if there were any other corrections or clarifications to the draft minutes of the meeting. There were none.

Moved by Ms. Payne

Seconded by Mr. Buzby

Approved 7-0

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #21-001 TO APPROVE A GRANT OF \$50,000 TO THE GEOSPATIAL RESEARCH LAB AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY FOR FY2022, WITH OPTION TO INCREASE GRANT TO \$75,000, FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING AND MAINTAINING THE NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT WEB SITE AND SUPPORTING DATABASES FOR USE BY STATE, LOCAL AND NONPROFIT CONSERVATION AGENCIES.

Mr. Siegel said technical problems and confusion on the conference call created a concern the meeting would break up. He asked to change the agenda to allow a vote on Resolution #21-001 while a sufficient number of members were on the call to represent a quorum. Chairman Romano agreed.

Moved by Ms. Payne

Seconded by Assistant Commissioner Bukowski

In subsequent discussion, Ms. Payne asked for details about the NJ Conservation Blueprint's total budget and spending, and what portion was covered by the proposed GSPT grant. An effort to have Dr. Hasse address these questions led to technical problems and complications over whether members were participating in the ZOOM link or in the teleconference.

After several minutes of garble and complications, Mr. Siegel requested that the motion could be withdrawn so Dr. Hasse might proceed with his presentation on the ZOOM link and through it answer Ms. Payne's questions.

Motion by Ms. Payne withdrawn.

PRESENTATION BY DR. JOHN HASSE OF ROWAN UNIVERSITY GEOSPATIAL LAB ABOUT THE NJ CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT PROGRAM.

Dr. Hasse made a slideshow presentation through a ZOOM computer link and answered board members question. Because of technical problems, the presentation was not transmitted on the teleconference call and therefore was not recorded for the minutes.

DISCUSSION, RECONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #21-001 TO APPROVE A GRANT OF \$50,000 TO THE GEOSPATIAL RESEARCH LAB AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY FOR FY2022, WITH OPTION TO INCREASE GRANT TO \$75,000, FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING AND MAINTAINING THE NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT WEB SITE AND SUPPORTING DATABASES FOR USE BY STATE, LOCAL AND NONPROFIT CONSERVATION AGENCIES.

Chairman Romano asked again for re-consideration of the motion.

Moved by Ms. Payne

Seconded by Mr. Buzby

Approved 7-0

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mr. Siegel discussed the appropriations bills arising from the GSPT’s meetings last October and November and noted that they were signed into law in December and in February.

Mr. Siegel discussed U.S. Supreme Court arguments on April 28 in the case Penn East Pipeline v. New Jersey on whether a state can protect preserved lands from seizure through federal eminent domain to construct a pipeline. He said the oral arguments did not bode well for a ruling in favor of protecting state sovereign land. He added that a case could never be judged from the tone of oral arguments.

Ms. Siegel reported that through March Corporation Business Tax collections were 3.3 percent ahead of last year.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

Mr. Siegel reviewed the components of the Expenditure Report he had prepared showing large sums of unexpended funds. Overall under the CBT dedication from 2017 through 2020, \$515.7 million had been appropriated and \$364.3 million remained unexpended.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Romano asked to adjourn the meeting.

Moved by Ms. Payne

Seconded by Assistant Commissioner Bukowski

Approved 7-0 by voice vote

Respectfully submitted



Ralph Siegel
executive director/board secretary
May 25, 2021