

**Towamencin Township
Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting
April 15, 2025
Meeting Minutes**

Attending:

Joseph Meehan, Chairperson
Dr. Richard Costlow, Vice Chairperson
Nancy Becker
Michon Blake
Robert DeHaven
Dan Vaitis
Joe Rumsey

Not attending:

Dave Sponseller
Todd Fisher

Also attending

Towamencin Township Supervisor Joyce Snyder
Towamencin Township Supervisor Kristin Warner
Katie Cleary, Township special Events Coordinator
Peter Simone, Simone-Collins

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Meehan at 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present participated in the pledge of allegiance.

**PRIOR TO THE REGULAR OSPAC MEETING A MEETING WAS HELD WITH SIMONE COLLINS
REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**THE REGULAR MONTHLY OPEN SPACE AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
FOLLOWED. THE MINUTES OF THE OSPAC MEETING ARE PRESENTED BELOW.**

OPENING COMMENTS

Mr. Meehan noted that he records the audio of the meeting for his convenience in preparing the minutes. He also said he met with David Kraynik, the Township Manager on March 7th and Mr. Kraynik provided an update on items of interest to the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSPAC) which Mr. Meehan said he will note as the items are discussed as the meeting goes forward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bruce Bailey – Township Resident- He wanted to note that the EAC is working on a plan to remove invasive species plants and trees from the open space area adjacent to the Township Building entrance driveway. A plan has been set and is expected to begin in another month or so. The invasive Bradford Pear trees as well as the Canadian thistle will be removed beginning with several treatments timed to eliminate the thistle. Bruce encouraged the OSPAC to support the effort and similar efforts he hopes to see in the coming years. He would like to see the same thing done on the Township property along Bustard Road across from Nash Elementary school to remove invasive plants there.

John French – Township Resident – He held his comments for the discussion of geocaching which is an agenda item.

APPROVAL OF OSPAC MINUTES – Meeting of March 10, 2025. Mr. Meehan asked for comments or corrections, if any, on the draft minutes of the March 10, 2025, meeting he sent to the Committee on April

8, 2025. There were no comments or corrections from the Committee. Ms. Becker made a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Costlow seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the motion. The March 10, 2025, meeting minutes are approved.

OLD BUSINESS – Updates provided by Mr. Meehan

Grist Mill Park Improvements – The contractor has been working and making progress but has been slowed by recent rains which continue to create muddy conditions during grading. The playground, pavilion area and basketball court are rough graded, and curbing is being constructed around the perimeter of the playground. The scheduled completion is early June.

Green Lane Road Park Soccer Field

At the March 26, 2025, BOS meeting the “soil amendment” contract was awarded to Land Tec Enterprises for the base bid +Alternate 1+ Alternate 2 + Alternate 3 in the total amount of \$133,694.50. The contracts were signed on April 9, 2025, and the next action will be a preconstruction meeting. After that work will begin on survey, setting erosion and Sediment Control devices followed by stripping of topsoil and rough grading. The Township Public Works department will perform the rough grading phases of the work.

Pickleball Courts At Butch Clemens Park-

At the BOS meeting of March 26, 2025, the Board authorized the submission of an application for a DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant for Pickleball Courts at Butch Clemens Field. An application in the amount of \$533,973 was submitted before April 2nd. For the application Mr. Meehan said he prepared and submitted a letter of support of the grant request on behalf of the OSPAC. An additional grant application to DCED under its Greenways Trails & Recreation Program in the amount of \$250,000 will be submitted in early May. If both are approved, these grants will be combined to provide funding for the pickleball courts.

Connector Path from Grist Mill Drive to Grist Mill Park

The township also submitted an application for a C2P2 Grant to construct a connector trail from Grist Mill Drive to Grist Mill Park; The Grant application requested \$159,012 for this trail. The application was submitted on April 2nd. Mr. Meehan noted that he prepared a letter of support from the OSPAC which was included in the application. He also obtained a similar letter of support from TYA which was submitted with the application.

Planting Trees – 2025

Mr. Meehan said he has not marked out sites for the 2025 tree planting locations yet. As he gets some time, he will do the layout and if needed, ask for help from other Committee Members.

Tree bank

The Committee requested a summary of funds held in the Township “Tree Bank” from the Township. On March 12, 2025, Mr. Kraynik responded saying past powers to be decided to put those funds in the Parks Capital Miscellaneous Account, and some of it has been used toward various park projects in addition to trees.

After receiving that response, Mr. Meehan said he requested a current balance of the remaining funds. He said he got a response, but he did not have that response in his packet of papers and could not recall the exact amount. However, he said he remembers that it was less than the amount he expected to be left in the account. The Committee discussed this tree bank fund which over the years seems to be used for park items other than trees. Mr. Meehan suggested that the Committee talk to the Township staff and keep an account of revenue received in lieu of trees. The OSPAC requests this information, because these funds can be leveraged with tree planting grants and we need to know how much is available in the

account. Dr. Costlow recommended that it be a written account that the Committee reviews on a regular basis.

Veterans Memorial Park Engineering Plans

Mr. Meehan said there has been no change in the progress on Veterans Park engineering plans. Access is still the issue that has everything at a standstill and will remain that way until PSDC (Mark Nicoletti), and the Township come to an agreement on access.

Geocaching

Mr. Meehan noted that he and John French, a geocaching advocate and Township resident, attended a meeting with the Township Manager, the Chief of police and the Township Director of Administration to discuss the proposal allowing geocaching in the Township. At the meeting Mr. Meehan told the Township staff the OSPAC, at the last several monthly meetings, had reviewed and discussed the geocaching group's proposal to allow geocaching again in the township's parks.

For the meeting with the Township officials, he along with Mr. French, summarized the Rules and Regulations under which the OSPAC could accept geocaching in the Parks. Chief Troxel said he had one recommendation. He said he could not accept calling the form being filled out by a geocacher and then submitted to the Township a "Permit Form". "Permits" can bring a level of regulation that can be difficult to interpret and enforce, if that was what was intended. Mr. Meehan said the intent was to notify the Township that a geocache had been placed on Township property at a particular location. The group concluded that a "Notification Form" being submitted to the Township would be more appropriate. It would notify the Township a "cache" was placed somewhere in a park and if a query came to the Township about this object, the Township could check its files and verify it was an acceptable cache. If it is not, the Township has the ability to contact the geocaching entity and ask why this object is placed there.

Mr. Meehan said the next step is to present all this information to the Board of Supervisors for their review and action to allow geocaching in the Township parks or not. He said he will do this on behalf of the OSPAC which had been asked by the BOS for an opinion on this matter. Mr. French, who is a geocaching advocate and has extensive knowledge of this activity based on his personal experience, would also participate in the presentation.

The date of the presentation was discussed. It was agreed that the Township solicitor needs to review the proposal and weigh in on it so it will be put off for the time being. Mr. Meehan suggested it might be able to be done with a BOS meeting in June.

NEW BUSINESS

Towamencin Day is Saturday May 10th. - Mr. Meehan asked who could come out and help at the OSPAC table at this event. Dr. Costlow, Ms. Blake, Mr. Rumsey, and Mr. DeHaven volunteered to help.

Township's America 250 Committee – Mr. Meehan said the Township is starting a committee to help plan and co-ordinate a celebration of the semi-quincentennial of the United States Declaration of Independence. The Township asked that a volunteer from each of the standing committees become a member of this America 250 Committee. Mr. Meehan asked if there was someone who would be interested. Ms. Blake said she was interested and volunteered to represent the OSPAC. Mr. Meehan said he would notify the Township that she would be our representative.

Neglected Basketball Court at Valley View Way. Mr. DeHaven said while walking on the Township's new trail near Valley View Way he noted the poor condition of the basketball court located at the Valley View Way cul-de-sac and wondered why it is not being cared for. Committee members presented what

they knew of the history of the two courts at this location, one a basketball court and the other a tennis court.

In summary of their history, going back many years, the courts were considered by Public Works as not being used and they did not devote time to their upkeep. At one point they were considered as a site for pickleball but that never came about because of the noise factor of pickleball in a residential area.

Mr. Meehan said he will ask the Township manager to make a new assessment of the condition of the court for the possibility of bringing back basketball to this location. He also suggested checking if young people in this neighborhood were interested.

Mr. Meehan asked if anyone had any other new business. There was none.

Ms. Becker made a motion to adjourn. Mr. DeHaven seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Joseph F. Meehan
Chairperson, Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee

The next Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee Meeting is on May 12, 2025