

TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM
MEETING OF THE BYRAM TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
10 Mansfield Drive, Stanhope NJ 07874
Monday, February 12, 2024, 7:00 P.M.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84304076295?pwd=Mi8rTHJhTFVLVGZhOWpORm9tTHQ5QT09>

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The public will have an opportunity to comment at appropriate times during the meeting. The following is the agenda to the extent known:

- **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT**

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting has been electronically sent to the newspapers, posted on the bulletin board of the Municipal Building, and uploaded to Byram's website, www.byramtwp.org not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. In addition, a copy of this notice is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.
- **NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICECHAIR OF OS COMMITTEE**
- **ROLL CALL**
- **OS FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT**
 1. Reserve for Open Space- \$360,435.56
 2. Reserve for Debt Service- \$23,863.73
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** –December 11 2023 Minutes
- **OLD BUSINESS**
 1. Township Park Updates
 2. 2024 Sussex County Trails Grant
 - a. Trail Committee involvement and updates
- **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. Playground Updates
 2. 2024 Goals
- **MEMBER REPORTS** – Reports from members on actions by their committees pertinent to OS.
- **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
- **CLOSED SESSION**
- **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE COMMITTEE DEEMS NECESSARY**
- **ADJOURNMENT**

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- February 18- Recreation Committee's Polar Plunge
- April 8- Open Space Committee Meeting
- June 10- Open Space Committee Meeting
- June 15- Recreation Committee's Sussex County Miner's Game night

17-286-56-000-001 Reserve - Open Space

From 01/01/2024 to 01/01/2024

Date	Source	PO#	Contract#	Check #	Vendor#	Vendor/Description	Budget	Debit	PO Encumber	PO Payment	Balance (CR)*
02/08/2023	ENC	26591				ENGINEERING & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE SERVICE			3,950.00		
08/23/2023	ENC	27521				DRAWDOWN #1			84,340.00		
08/23/2023	ENC	27510				ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR CO JOHNSON PARK BAS			9.87		
						ACTIVITY/BALANCE (YEAR START)	-				360,435.56
01/10/2024	DJ 12	27521		8086	3783	GREEN VALLEY GROUP, INC. DRAWDOWN #1			(43,238.78)	43,238.78	360,435.56
							-	-	45,061.09	43,238.78	360,435.56

17-286-56-000-002 Reserve - Open Space (Debt Service)

From 01/01/2024 to 01/01/2024

Date	Source	PO#	Contract#	Check #	Vendor#	Vendor/Description	Budget	Debit	PO Encumber	PO Payment	Balance (CR)*
						ACTIVITY/BALANCE (YEAR START)	-				23,863.73
							-	-	-	-	23,863.73

OPEN SPACE MEETING – December 11, 2023

Members Present: Messrs. Bonker, Sabatini, Morytko, Duch, Raffay, Yappen; Mayor Rubenstein

Members Absent: None **Also present:** Caitlin Phillips, Peter Dlugos

Mr. Morytko called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

OS Financial Status Report:

Reserve for OS- \$350,702.75 / Reserve for Debt Service- \$25,897.10

Approval of Minutes – June 12, 2023 Minutes

Mr. Raffay motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mayor Rubenstein. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Township Park Updates (CO Johnson #8 and Improvements)

Mr. Sabatini said the basketball courts are done for the winter. The striping and colors are left; they were not done in the fall because of the warranty. Mr. Sabatini said both CO Johnson projects were authorized. French and Parello are prioritizing field 8. There are multiple fields involved so may there may need to be an assessment on the existing well. They will be getting the estimated costs of the project soon. Mayor Rubenstein said they need to see where the financing it at for the fieldhouse. There is no engineering diagram yet, and it is covered under the grant. They need DEP permitting. Mr. Sabatini said they're also using ARP funding.

Byram Historical Society- NJ Tourism Grant Updates

Mr. Yappen said there are 2023 and 2024 grants, and they're getting more details near the end of the year. He reviewed the anniversary events in Byram, in which they used the money for marketing and tourism.

NEW BUSINESS

2024 Sussex County Trails Grant (Involvement and Updates)

Mr. Morytko said the grant amount increased. Mr. Bonker added that it's now \$10,000, so it's been doubled. Mr. Sabatini said they need a project defined first before applying for grants. The CO Johnson project is projected for 2024 or 2025, and they're not sure of the grant application deadlines. Mr. Bonker said the Trails Committee should review the CO Johnson trails and do work on them. Mr. Sabatini said the return on investment is not great for this project; they want a project that's more worth the time and effort that will be needed to apply for the grant. Mr. Bonker noted the previous grants have forced them to get the work done. Mr. Duch asked what's going on with the new Trails Committee. Mr. Sabatini said they have no set schedule to meet. They're supposed to be doing work out on the trails, but he hasn't heard much from them.

ANJEC Alert

Mr. Duch said they discussed the expansion of the turnpike. The ANJEC alert is about Open Space funding that is proposed to be taken away. The Environmental Commission is supporting continued funding, and is asking the Council to look into the alert as well for support. Mr. Sabatini said he will follow up with the Environmental Commission. Mr. Morytko said Open Space can share their support with the Council.

Discussion Items (2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Goals and Meeting Format)

Mr. Morytko asked the Committee about their accomplishments this year. He noted the completion of the trails grant, and the kiosks that were put up by the scouts. Mr. Raffay added their marking of the Cranberry Overlook.

Open Space Minutes – December 12, 2023

Mr. Bonker added their Glenside Woods improvements, forming the Trails Committee, using the ARP funds for CO field 8, renovating the basketball court, providing the Historical Society with funds, increasing the grant funding, the ash tree removal, the new tennis benches and the bleachers, increasing the Highlands grant, and the Neil Gylling dugouts. Mr. Duch noted the benches were done by the Environmental Commission and Recreation. Mr. Bonker noted the funding came from Open Space. Mr. Yappen asked about the treks benches. Mr. Sabatini said the last benches were put either at Riverside or Tamarack Park, and the Environmental Commission directs those.

Mr. Morytko said the committee should think about goals for 2024, to discuss at their reorganization meeting. Mr. Bonker noted some goals, including the Sussex County trails grant, beginning the CO field 8 work, having the preliminary meeting with the DEP, and developing trails at CO Johnson. Mr. Duch asked about starting the dog park. Mr. Bonker said that's part of the DEP transfer and the CO Johnson work, so they can't start without the transfer. Mr. Sabatini said they'll have more information in mid-June from the DEP meeting. He added in 2024 they should look at the Open Space tax and funding source. There may be an assessment reevaluation, so property values may change. Mr. Bonker added they should check in with the forester. Mr. Duch confirmed Glenside Woods is the target area.

Mr. Morytko asked about the 2024 meeting format. Mayor Rubenstein suggested meeting quarterly. Mr. Bonker said if work on CO 8 increases they may need to meet more. Mr. Sabatini recommend keeping the format the same, on Zoom every other month.

MEMBER REPORTS

Peter Dlugos from the Environmental Commission was present. He said he's been a member for about 1.5 years. He is enthusiastic about trails outreach and the trails systems. He suggested an outdoor classroom, with an amphitheater to teach people about the environment. He noted the Trails Committee doesn't have a leader. Mr. Sabatini said they need more people; he suggested having a Committee Heads meeting in 2024. Mr. Dlugos suggested programs for family and kids, with environmental speakers coming to schools.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE COMMITTEE DEEMS NECESSARY

Mr. Raffay said he's stepping down from the Committee and thanked Mr. Bonker for all his work and for representing the town's interests. Mr. Sabatini said Mr. Bonker has been involved with the Committee since the beginning and is responsible for many of their accomplishments. Mr. Rubenstein said Mr. Bonker will be missed on the Council. Mr. Morytko said Mr. Bonker ran the Committee and put in all these years to help the town with great ideas. Mr. Duch thanked Mr. Bonker, noting he's been important to the group.

Mr. Duch asked about tax sales for properties viable to Open Space.

ADJOURN –Motion by Mr. Sabatini, seconded by Mr. Raffay, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45p.m. All members in favor. Motioned carried.

Open Space 2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Goals



Raymond Bonker

To Caitlin Phillips; John Morytko

 You replied to this message on 12/12/2023 8:24 AM.

John, Caitlin:

As discussed during our meeting tonight, here are some suggestions for the 2023 accomplishments and 2024 goals.

2023 Accomplishments:

- Completed all work on Sussex County Trails Grant from 2022
- Glenside Woods Forest Stand Improvements
- Successfully lobbied Sussex County to raise Trails grant to \$10,000
- New Trails Committee created
- Assigned ARP money to CO#8 renovations
- CO Johnson Basketball Court renovated
- Ash tree removal at COJ
- New tennis benches at COJ
- New bleachers at COJ and Neil Gylling
- Funded BTHS grant with OS funds
- Received updated \$137,790 Highlands grant for COJ renovations to include dog park, parking lots, walking paths, and CO#4 improvements
 - Neil Gylling dugout renovations

2024 Goals:

- Receive 2024 Sussex County Trails Grant
- Begin CO#8 renovation work
- Hold preliminary project meeting with DEP on greater COJ renovations
- Build 3 trails at COJ
 - Funding/Bonding plans for future OS work
 - Forester work/ Timber Sale Plans