

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, PO Box 179
Oxford, NJ 07863

**June 10, 2025
Meeting Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Fineran called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Charles Fineran, John Trontis, Tom Lizzi, Jane Bullis, Mike Helbing (arrived 5:06)

Members Not Present: Michael Margulies

Staff Present: Corey Tierney, Justin Tibbetts, Elizabeth Roy

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT:

Mr. Fineran read the Open Public Meeting Notice.

MINUTES:

May 13, 2025 meeting minutes were reviewed. Mr. Trontis motioned to approve as presented, seconded by Mr. Lizzi. Mr. Trontis, Mr. Lizzi, Ms. Bullis and Mr. Fineran voted in favor. May 13, 2025 minutes approved.

When Mr. Helbing arrived, the Board returned to review the meeting minutes for the April 8 meeting. Mr. Fineran motioned to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Ms. Bullis. Mr. Fineran, Ms. Bullis and Mr. Helbing voted to approve. Mr. Trontis and Mr. Lizzi (not present at April meeting) abstained. April 8, 2025 meeting minutes approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT (related to agenda items): Mr. Roth reported the activity of the Warren County Parks Foundation including the Rockport Morris Canal Greenway trail improvements, a work day at Bread Lock Park, Plane 10W interpretative signage, and a tour of Plane 9W.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

Morris Canal Committee – Mr. Fineran reported the Morris Canal Committee met on June 9. The museum at Plane 9 remains closed. Bread Lock Park will be on the Warren County History Trail in November.

Mr. Helbing led a discussion about canal features both on and off county lands and suggested that such features be interpreted for public education.

Warren Heritage Scenic Byway – A meeting of the committee was held on May 16. Warren County will be to the NJTPA for funding for signage replacement and upgrades. A County Corridor Management Plan is needed to that the extended length of the byway can be formalized. Mr. Trontis commented that our byway is the most comprehensive in the state. Identity events can be planned when the extended sections of the byway are adopted. The next meeting will be on August 15 or 21, pending availability of members. Mr. Fineran commented that Mr. Dech, County Planner, is retiring at the end of the month. Mr. Dech was a strong leader in the Byway project. Mr. Helbing commented on the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Rockport train wreck.

Warren Highlands Trail – Mr. Trontis commented on the April 4 meeting. The next meeting will be held in the fall, date TBD. There was a dicussion about other catagoies of publicly owned lands.

Lehigh and Hudson Trail – Mr. Tierney reported that project maps have been updated and copies were provided to the Board. There are a total of 22.86 miles of this trail in Warren County with 7.56 miles in private ownership and 15.3 miles in public ownership (67% is publicly owned). Mapping updates will continue. Another stakeholder meeting will be schduled, date TBD.

Mr. Tierney asked the Board whether they wished to consider recommending that the County Planning Board include protecting the Leigh and Hudson in the Couty Development Review Regulations, similar to what is done for Morris Canal properties. After a brief discusion, Mr. Trontis moved to so recommend, seconded by Mr. Fineran. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Other trails:

Mr. Helbing lead a discussion about the Lackawana Main Line Railroad. Mr. Tierney commented the regional trail network can be incorporated in the update to the County's Open Space Plan which will be updated by 2028.

Ms. Bullis commented on different formats for the acquisition report with the suggestion that a spread sheet would be more user friendly. Mr. Lizzi asked if this format could be used for all the reports, perhaps combining them into one report. Mr. Tierney said this will be disussed with staff.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Administrator's Reports – Mr. Tierney reviewed the following reports and updates with the board.

- ACQUISITIONS
 - Mr. Tierney reported on an update to the Genesis Farm (225 acres) project. It is already preserved, a portion in farmland and a portion in a DEP conservation easement. If acquired by the County, the farmland would remain in agriculture. The conservation easement lands could be used as parkland. If the project moves forward, a site visit can be scheduled for this Board.

- MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS

- Plane 9 pedestrian bridge project is moving ahead.
- The bridge project at Mt. Pleasant is moving ahead; services are being provided by a consulting engineering firm.

- PARK PROGRAMS
 - Yoga at White Lake has been restarted and is being run through the NJ Youth Corps. It is held on the third Sunday of the month from 9:30 am – 10:30 am, May through September
 - Moonlight Paddle at White Lake is scheduled for Thursday, July 10, 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEXT MEETING: Mr. Tierney reported that he will be on vacation early in July and will not be attend the regularly scheduled meeting. After a brief discussion, the next Board suggested canceling the July 8 meeting. Mr. Fineran made a motion to cancel the July 8 meeting, seconded by Mr. Lizzi. All voted in favor, motion carried.
The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August June 13, 2025 at 5:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Mr. Trontis motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Fineran. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Roy
Warren County Land Preservation Dept.