

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATURAL LANDS TRUST MEETING  
March 27, 2020  
12:00 PM  
Via Teleconference**

Chairman Catania called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM. A quorum of trustees was present. At least one of the trustees was a state governmental representative.

The Open Public Meetings Act notice was provided as follows: Notice of the date, time, location and agenda, to the extent known, was forwarded to three newspapers of general circulation, and provided to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. In addition, notice was provided on the Trust's website in compliance with the Act requiring State, regional, and local authorities, boards, and commissions to establish a website providing specific information to facilitate transparency in government.

*In attendance were:*

Michael Catania, Chairperson  
James Hall, Vice Chairperson  
Theresa Lettman, Trustee/Secretary-  
Treasurer  
Senator Bob Smith, State House  
Commission representative, Trustee  
Judeth Yeany, DEP Trustee  
Larry Torok, DEP Trustee  
John Cecil, Trustee

Emile DeVito, Trustee  
Steve Eisenhauer, Trustee  
Matthew Rossi, Trustee representative for  
the State Treasurer  
Marlen Dooley, alternate for Ray Bukowski,  
Trustee representative for the DEP  
Commissioner  
Robert J. Cartica, Executive Director  
Martin Rapp, Trust Staff  
Cari Wild, Trust Staff

*Guests:*

Kelly Wenzel, New Jersey Audubon Society

**General Public Comment:** None.

**Financial Report:** Mr. Cartica outlined the Financial Statements for the quarters ending June 30, September 30 and December 31, 2019. Mr. Cecil motioned to approve the Financial Statements. Mr. Hall seconded the motion and the Financial Statements were unanimously approved by a vote of 11 to 0.

The **June 7, 2019 minutes** were reviewed. Mr. Hall motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. DeVito seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by a vote of 10 to 0 with Senator Smith abstaining.

**Unfinished Business:**

Mr. Catania and Ms. Wild provided the Board with a **Petty's Island, Pennsauken Township, Camden County Status Report** which included an update on CITGO's site remediation activities and programming and multi-media activities including the acceptance of the

documentary *Petty's Island: Journey Back to Nature* into the Philadelphia Environmental Film Festival. Due to COVID-19, all film screening and programming events have been postponed at least through April 30, 2020. Mr. Catania noted that the Trust is working with the William Penn Foundation to be considered for another round of funding in November 2020.

### **New Business:**

Mr. Hall presented the **Nominating Committee (Mr. Hall and Ms. Yeany) Recommendations** for Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary/Treasurer Officers and motioned for their approval. Nominated for Chairperson was Michael Catania, Vice Chairperson was John Cecil, and Secretary-Treasurer was Theresa Lettman. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 11 to 0.

Mr. Cartica presented the **Spending Authorization for Calendar Year 2020**. This year's authorization includes a full biodiversity inventory at the Reinhard Preserve and several species- or habitat-specific inventories at other preserves as well as land management projects. Mr. DeVito motioned to approve the Spending Authorization for Calendar Year 2020. Mr. Torok seconded the motion and the 2020 Spending Authorization was unanimously approved by a vote of 11 to 0.

Mr. Cartica presented the Board with the **Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP) Plant Fund-2020 Work Plan**. Mr. Cecil motioned to approve the TGP Plant Fund-2020 Work Plan. Mr. DeVito seconded the motion and the 2020 Work Plan was unanimously approved by a vote of 11 to 0.

The Board considered the proposed **Petty's Island Project Area in Camden City, Camden County**. Mr. DeVito motioned to approve the Petty's Island Project Area. Mr. Eisenhower seconded the motion and the project area was approved by a vote of 10 to 0. Ms. Yeany recused herself from the matter based on the advice from the New Jersey Attorney General's Office that her vote may present an appearance of conflict notwithstanding that she has no personal or financial stake in Trust management assignments.

Ms. Wild presented the Board with information regarding the **Hirst Ponds Preserve and Bennett Bogs Preserve, Natural Area Register Listings**. On September 4, 2019, both preserves were listed on the Register of Natural Areas. On October 29, 2019, following review of the designation study for each site, the Natural Areas Council recommended to the NJDEP Commissioner that both sites be designated to the Natural Areas System. The Commissioner agreed and designation proposals were published in the March 2, 2020 New Jersey Register and a public hearing was held on March 16, 2020. There being no comments from the public, the Commissioner will now be asked, subject to Gubernatorial concurrence, to designate both sites as Natural Areas in the Natural Areas System.

Mr. Catania presented the Board with **Delaware Bay Migratory Shorebird Project Resolution Approving 2020 Budget**. Each year, the Trust approves a budget request by the Conserve Wildlife Foundation (CWF) and the DEP's Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) for funding from the Delaware Bay Migratory Shorebird Fund.

The 2020 budget request in the amount of \$31,000 for CWF was expected to be made at the March 27, 2020 meeting. In January 2020, however, CWF was presented with invoices that required payment as soon as possible.

The Trust’s bylaws provide that in the event a decision by the Board is required and a special meeting cannot be held due to time constraints or lack of a quorum, the Executive Director may poll the members of the Board to determine their preference on an issue. In such a circumstance, the Executive Director shall supply to each Board member, in writing, a draft resolution and information sufficient for Board consideration. With the concurrence of at least seven (7) members of the Board, the Executive Director may act in accordance with the resolution. The same resolution will then be presented to the Board, for affirmation, at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

On January 30, 2020, Mr. Cartica circulated the Resolution approving the 2020 budget request and authorizing a \$31,000 upfront payment to CWF and polled the Trust’s Board to determine their preference on the Resolution and received the following responses:

Michael Catania	Yes	Jim Hall	Yes
John Cecil	Yes	Steve Eisenhauer	Yes
Theresa Lettman	Yes	Matt Rossi	Yes
Judeth Yeany	Yes	Senator Smith	Yes

After eight Board members, with at least one of them of them being an official of state government, responded affirmatively to approve the Resolution, Mr. Cartica made the \$31,000 payment to CWF. Having been presented to the Board with no objection, Mr. DeVito motioned to affirm the Resolution. Mr. Cecil seconded the motion and the Resolution was unanimously affirmed by a vote of 11 to 0.

Mr. Catania presented the Board with the **New Jersey Wetlands Mitigation Council Resolution Approving Expenditures**. By Certification dated January 21, 2020, the Council requested a disbursement of \$1,138,054.55 to Bloomfield Township. In accordance with the Trust's April 28, 2004 MOU with the Council, the Executive Director of the Trust shall disburse moneys for projects approved by a resolution of the Council; provided, however, that disbursements exceeding \$250,000 shall require the authorization of the Trust’s Board, which shall act on any request for such authorization within ten working days after the Executive Director’s receipt of a request for disbursement from staff to the Council. Per Trust bylaws, in the event a decision by the Board is required and a special meeting cannot be held due to time constraints or lack of a quorum, the Executive Director may poll the members of the Board to determine their preference on an issue. In such a circumstance, the Executive Director shall supply to each Board member, in writing, a draft resolution and information sufficient for Board consideration. With the concurrence of the Board, the Executive Director may act in accordance with the resolution.

On January 24, 2020, Mr. Cartica circulated the Resolution approving the \$1,138,054.55 disbursement and polled the Trust’s Board to determine their preference on the Resolution and received the following responses:

Michael Catania	Yes	Larry Torok	Yes
James Hall	Yes	John Cecil	Yes
Theresa Lettman	Yes	Matt Rossi	Yes
Emile DeVito	Yes	Judeth Yeany	Yes
Senator Smith	Yes		

After nine Board members, with at least one of them being an official of state government, responded affirmatively to approve the Resolution, Mr. Cartica made the requested disbursement. Having been presented to the Board with no objection, Mr. Hall motioned to affirm the Resolution. Mr. Cecil seconded the motion and the Resolution was unanimously affirmed by a vote of 11 to 0.

Ms. Wild presented the **Draft 2019 Annual Report**. It was requested that the Board provide any comments/changes on the draft report within the next thirty days. Mr. Eisenhower motioned to approve the draft report subject to Board members and staff having the flexibility to incorporate relatively minor changes. Mr. Hall seconded the motion and the 2019 Annual Report was unanimously approved by a vote of 11 to 0.

The 2019 Board meeting dates for the remainder of 2019 are:

**June 26th, September 18th and December 4th, 2020**

Mr. Hall motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Mr. Cecil seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:37 PM by a unanimous vote of 11 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,



Secretary/Treasurer