

**White Township Stewardship Committee**  
**Regular meeting**  
**6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19, 2022**  
Minutes draft 02

Chairperson Barb Hauge called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

Committee: Chairperson Barb Hauge present; Vice Chairperson David Dahlheimer present; Secretary Sierra Davis present; Jeff Geesey present; Matt Klunk present.

Staff (non-voting): Township Manager Chris Anderson absent; Recreation Director Ryan Shaffer present; Recording Secretary Chauncey Ross present.

*(Five people attended in person; four attended online.)*

**Public Comment on agenda items**

- Willard Radell, White Township, opted to comment later.
- Tom Miller, Indiana, presented a message from Friends of White's Woods,
- Rick Ritenour, Lower Burrell, commented on "the supervisors' 2020 plan."
- Carolyn Trimarchi, Indiana, spoke about natural succession of forests and distributed papers.

**Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Geesey, seconded by Mr. Dahlheimer, the committee approved the minutes of the April 21 meeting as presented.

**Mission of the Committee**

Ms. Hauge read the committee's mission as directed by the board of supervisors. Mr. Dahlheimer commented.

**Chairperson Overview**

Ms. Hauge thanked Sara King for a recent letter sent by Friends of White's Woods, which demonstrated aligned goals with the committee. She asked the committee to work within the amounts of time allotted for certain topics on the agenda.

**Discussion/Review:**

Finding Common Ground:

- Mr. Geesey spoke of the good work of the supervisors: providing an information kiosk, providing a document page on the township website, supporting the work of the committee and facilitating community engagement.
- Mr. Dahlheimer spoke of the good work of Friends of White's Woods: working since 1995, educating the public, compiling public input, writing letters to the supervisors, commissioning studies and raising public awareness and award recognition.

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#### **Discussion/Review (continued):**

- Ms. Davis said her goal for joining the committee is to find common ground, make progress in learning to work together and transparency.
- Mr. Klunk said two agencies (Friends of White's Woods and the township) are vested in working toward a better tomorrow for the woods and stewardship that brings us together.

- **Information from Pennsylvania Office of Open Records and Solicitor**

Ms. Davis presented a summary of her communication with the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records. Discussion followed.

- **Draft definition of stewardship and other terms**

Ms. Hauge opened discussion. The consensus was to continue discussion at the June meeting.

- **Walk Whites Woods with Mike Wolf Saturday, May 21 at 9:30am**

Committee members and staff discussed the logistics of a planned visit to White's Woods by Mr. Wolf and committee members. Ms. Hauge presented a list of possible questions for Mr. Wolf, "Criteria for managing natural areas May 18, 2022. By Ellen Yerger." Further discussion concerned rescheduling the planned visit and compiling additional questions for Mr. Wolf.

- **List of potential expert speakers**

Ms. Hauge distributed a paper, "Consultants/Speakers for Stewardship Subcommittee," then opened discussion of the creation of an online prioritization/ranking system for selecting which experts to assist the committee.

- **Community engagement assistance from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Eberly College of Business, IUP Planning Department and others including Penn State Extension**

Ms. Hauge and committee members discussed which agencies to contact and what questions to include on a public survey.

#### **Discussion/New topics, speakers:**

- **Mission and Vision of the Stewardship Plan**

Ms. Hauge cited the "Woods in Your Back Yard" book and opened discussion. Ms. Davis recommended that mission and vision statements should be written. Further discussion followed.

- **Review of FWW letter**

Ms. Hauge opened discussion of the letter from Friends of White's Woods to the committee, concerning: good points, commonalities, the 18-month mission of the committee, grant applications, control of invasive plant species and control of deer. Mr. Dahlheimer distributed a paper, "Steps for Stewardship Planning," to the committee.

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### **Discussion/New topics, speakers (continued):**

- Committee meeting schedule

Committee members discussed the rescheduling of participation by Mr. Wolf and their availability for committee work.

### **Public comment on non-agenda items**

- Willard Radell, White Township, commented on the mission for the care of White's Woods.
- Rick Ritenour, Lower Burrell, commented on the letter from Sara King.
- Carolyn Trimarchi, Indiana, commented on having "open canopy" in White's Woods.

### **Announcements**

- Susan Dahlheimer, White Township, extended an invitation to attend a plant walk, led by Cindy Rogers, from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 21, in White's Woods.
- Ms. Hauge invited all to take part in Indiana County Decathlon events including a self-guided tour of Jimmy Stewart historic sites scheduled Friday, May 20, beginning at Jimmy Stewart Museum; to join a historic tour of Oakland Cemetery led by Stacey and Kevin Patrick; and to take part in active transportation planning open house events scheduled in June throughout Indiana County.

### **Members' comments for the good of the order**

Ms. Davis presented a list of action items based on discussion during the meeting:

- Talk to the township solicitor
- Ms. Hauge to contact Mike Wolf
- Mr. Dahlheimer and Ms. Davis to form a ranking process of experts
- Ms. Davis to provide a list of previous Friends of White's Woods survey questions and data.

### **Next meeting**

6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 16, 2022, at White Township municipal building

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.