

**Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund
Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting
April 26, 2023**

Present: Alan Avery (Chair), David McKeon (Vice-Chair), John Bacchione, William Fox, Lisa Hodgson, Terry O’Leary, & John Peterson

Absent: Martin Flemming III & Greg Myhre

Also Present at the meeting were: Commissioner Virginia E. Haines, Laura Benson (County Counsel), Geoffrey Lohmeyer (OCPR), Daniel Sindoni (OCPD) Tom Thorsen (OCPD), Mark Villinger (OCPD), and Nicole Leaf (OCPD)

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Mr. Avery called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Minutes**
March 22, 2023

Mr. McKeon asked that the March Minutes be amended to correct a typographical error. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Ms. Hodgson to approve the March 22, 2023 meeting minutes with the noted correction. Roll was called, Mr. Bacchione and Mr. Peterson abstained, rest in favor, motioned carried.

4. **NLT Program Update:** 29,506.14 acres
Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that the County closed on two properties since the last meeting:

#649 Freehold Road South Ext., Jackson Twp., 19.33 acres

Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that the County closed on this property located between Freehold Road and Thompson Bridge Road off of Werko Place. A home and barn remain on site and will be demolished in the near future.

#515 TNC FRM, Lacey Twp., 3,101 acres

Mr. Villinger informed the Committee that the County finally completed the donation of this property located adjacent to the 8,000-acre Forked River Mountain Preserve.

This brings our NLT total preserved acres to 29,506.14.

5. **Old Business**
#687 Country Lane – Jones, Ocean Twp., 0.88 acres—Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that the property owner was contacted to inquire about a donation as the

Committee had previously deemed the property of lower interest due to limited development potential, but would accept a donation of the property. The property owner declined a donation, but provided an asking price of \$85,000.00. The Committee reaffirmed their limited interest in the property and if the owner ever wished to pursue a donation with the County to reach back out.

6. New Business

New Nominations:

#699 TR Ridgeway Branch North, Manchester Twp., 89.57 acres—Mr. Sindoni told the Committee that this property is located off of Route 571 in Manchester Township. The Ridgeway Branch Tributary is near the property and is in close proximity to residential development. Approved through a settlement agreement for 404 housing units, the property has an asking price of \$30,000,000 and an assessed value of \$12,600. The Committee noted that the property has an extremely high asking price and consequentially is of low interest.

#700 Mill Creek Headwaters – Altman, Berkeley Twp., 0.40 acres—Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee this property is located within the existing Mill Creek Headwaters Project Area close to Northern Boulevard and an adjacent residential home. Staff have received an accepted offer for the property which will be discussed in closed session.

#701 Cherry Street – Lennar Homes, Manchester Twp., 34.50 acres—Mr. Sindoni told the Committee that this property is located at the corner of Lacey Road and Cherry Street, adjacent to the Stop and Shop and Venue at Woodlands. The property owner intends to subdivide lot 14.01 as part of the sale for development. Wetlands cover a significant portion of the property. The asking price for the property is \$1,200,000.00 and the assessed value is \$342,500.00. The Committee inquired of wetland buffers on the property in relation to the proposed subdivision and development. The development would be outside of the required 300ft buffer. The Committee asked staff to look further into the development potential of the property to determine whether the asking price is reasonable.

#702 Lakehurst Ave IV, Jackson Twp., 12.75 acres—Mr. Sindoni informed the Committee that this property was a result of staff outreach. Located between Toms River Road and Lakehurst Avenue, the property is in close proximity to the Jackson LLC property already preserved under NLT. The asking price is \$1,800,000.00 and the assessed value is \$244,800.00. The Committee authorized staff to perform a site inspection of the property and Mr. Avery will check on any regulatory or development requirements for the property under the Pinelands Commission.

7. Public Comment

No members of the public were in attendance.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to move into Closed Session at 6:20 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

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A **MOTION** was made by made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione move back into Open Session at 6:54 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Avery stated that in closed session six nominations were discussed. Of those items, three that were discussed will have action taken.

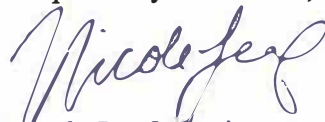
#248 Cold Spring Brook, Ocean Twp., 22.33 acres A **MOTION** was made by Mr. McKeon and seconded by Mr. O’Leary to recommend to the Board of Commissioners in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

#700 Mill Creek Headwaters – Altman, Berkeley Twp., 0.40 acres. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to recommend to the Board of Commissioners in an amount not to exceed \$48,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

Wagenstein Farm, Lakewood Twp., 12.45 acres. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Bacchione and seconded by Mr. Fox to concur with the Ocean County Agricultural Development Board, to further recommend to the Board of Commissioners, the purchase of development rights via farmland easement for \$6,000,000.00. Roll was called, all in favor, motion carried.

Adjournment: A **MOTION** was made by made by Mr. Fox and seconded by Mr. Bacchione to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Nicole Leaf, Environmental Specialist