

**BIRMINGHAM TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY  
RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE (RPOS)**

**February 15, 2021**

Chairman Anne Siemer called the Zoom meeting of RPOS to order at 7:02 p.m. The following were in attendance:

Anne Siemer	Chairman, RPOS Committee
Chuck Feld	Vice-Chairman, RPOS Committee
Bob Socash	Member, RPOS Committee
Brian Bonkowski	Member, RPOS Committee
Kathleen Brecker	Member, RPOS Committee
Dan Hill	Member, Board of Supervisors
Judy Jensen	Secretary, RPOS Committee

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 18, 2021 MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 18, 2021 RPOS meeting were approved, as written; all in favor.

**BILLS**

There were no bills to review at tonight's meeting.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Mrs. Siemer welcomed the two new members, Kathleen Brecker and Brian Bonkowski, to RPOS. Mrs. Brecker and Mr. Bonkowski have graciously volunteered to fill the two vacancies on the committee and RPOS is very grateful for their service to the committee and their help on the various projects planned by RPOS in 2021.

**BIRMINGHAM HILL UPDATE**

Presentation by Linda Kaat: Ms. Kaat attended tonight's meeting to present a proposal for a historical marker to be placed at Birmingham Hill. She noted that she has adequate funding for the sign. A sample of the text being proposed on the marker would read:

*On the afternoon of September 11, 1777, the Marquis de Lafayette was wounded near this spot on Birmingham Hill during the battle of Brandywine. This 20 year old Frenchman risked his life and reputation and spent his fortune to help secure America's independence. He served as General Washington's loyal confidant. After his death, in 1834, he was interred in Paris with soil from America over which an American flag is always present. Congress approved him as the sixth foreign national to be given honorary American citizenship.*

After Ms. Kaat's presentation, Mrs. Siemer noted that there are several entities that currently have signage planned for Birmingham Hill. These include:

- RPOS — RPOS has already installed two interpretive signs at the park. In addition, Mrs. Siemer and Mrs. Jensen have been planning an interpretive sign panel about Lafayette that would highlight both his role at the Battle of the Brandywine and also his return trip to the West Chester area around 1825.
- Brandywine Battlefield Task Force has a signage project earmarked for Birmingham Hill.

- A multi-township interpretive plan is underway that is suggesting signage at Birmingham Hill and at other sites in adjacent Townships that were part of the Battle of the Brandywine.
- Brandywine Conservancy — The Brandywine Conservancy's Master Plan for Birmingham Hill calls for a terrace with the possibility of signage.

Due to the large number of signs already proposed at Birmingham Hill and those already installed at the park, RPOS believes that any future signage, including the signage as presented by Ms. Kaat at tonight's meeting, should be carefully considered, as well as coordinated with the above entities so that the vistas of the park can be preserved. RPOS is concerned that too many signs will be a distraction, rather than an asset, at the park.

In other news, Mrs. Siemer said that the new guideline sign has been installed at Birmingham Hill. The sign has replaced the old entrance sign that was in a state of disrepair.

Mrs. Siemer thanked Mr. Feld for replacing rails along the fencing at Birmingham Hill.

Brian of Land Art has noticed that the pond is overflowing and streaming over the trail and onto Meetinghouse Road. Brian put in some stones to help control the flow of water, but it is still a problem. Mr. Feld said there used to be a pipe that took the water under Meetinghouse Road, but when he looked at the area, he no longer saw the pipe. Mrs. Siemer will let Kevin Fryberger of the Brandywine Conservancy know about the problem.

### **LANDSCAPE BIDS**

Mr. Feld obtained bids for landscape work at Sandy Hollow and Birmingham Hill for 2021. Work at Birmingham Hill would include mowing the parking lot and trail weekly; mulching beds yearly; maintaining beds monthly and string trimming weekly. Work at Sandy Hollow would include mowing the parking lot and trail weekly; string trimming twice a month; mulching beds yearly and maintaining beds monthly. The bids also include weekly mowing at the water treatment plant and weekly mowing at the Township building. The bids were as follows:

- MAJIC: \$17,751.00 (plus a 2 percent increase)
- J. Downend: \$22,800.00
- Andrews: \$22,772.00 (does not include the water treatment plant)
- Harwood: \$20,080.00

Mr. Socash made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that MAJIC be awarded the bid to do the landscape work for 2021 as presented in the bid specifications. Mrs. Brecker seconded the motion. The motion was approved; all in favor.

### **SANDY HOLLOW UPDATE**

The new entrance sign has arrived. RPOS is waiting for good weather to install the sign at Sandy Hollow.

RPOS discussed the lawsuit brought by a Birmingham Township resident who says she was injured when she slipped at Sandy Hollow.

### **PROJECTS FOR 2021**

RPOS discussed proposed projects for 2021, including fence maintenance at Sandy Hollow and Birmingham Hill, new welcome signs for both parks, cannon maintenance at Sandy Hollow, maintenance of the Birmingham Hill trail, and the proposed development of a new interpretive sign panel.

The next RPOS meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2021.

With no public comment, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Jensen  
RPOS Secretary