

## Bondsville Mill Park Committee Meeting, March 27, 2025

In attendance: Rocky Stone, Sandy Moser, Charlie Lindsay, Arne Jensen, Carl Capriotti, Bob Watts, Beth Watts, Nancy Kirchgasser, Dan Tieri, Bruce Rawlings, Luke Reven, Jim Buczala  
Via Zoom: Hud Voltz and David Culp

Meeting start: 7:31

**Volunteer Hours for this month:** Gardens – **NR**; Construction: - **70**

**February Minutes:** Approved (minor edit to correct Capital Budget amount)

**2025 Budget Update:** (based on 03/25 Financial Report from Township)

- General Fund: (\$20,000 budget; \$18,000 Development & Maintenance/\$2000 Events & Marketing)
  - \$4505 spent to date (fuel oil expense removed); March charges:
    - \$1487.50 – Weaver Mulch
    - \$150.98 – Garden Supplies
    - \$249 – Monthly Reoccurring (Blosenski \$189; Verizon \$60)
    - \$189 – Blosenski (port-a-johns)
  - \$15,495 remaining (\$13,495 D&M/\$2K E&M)
- Capital Fund Park Development: (\$23,335 budget; \$10,000 of this has been earmarked for Bld B Masonry).
  - The only charge to this account, to date, is \$2532 for Pennoni’s support of closing the DCNR grant. It was noted that this expense was not an item the BOS specified for this budget (for which there was a very specific list); Luke indicated he had nowhere else to assign it. Frustration was expressed that this grant should have been closed before the end of last year, but was not due to the inefficiency of Pennoni; it never received consideration for this year.
  - \$20,803 remains (excluding \$10K earmarked for masonry work)
- BMP Funds in EB Foundation:
  - Total BMP Funds: \$16,223.16 (unchanged from last month’s report)

The Financial Report was approved by the BMP Committee.

### Trails:

- Removed blockage on White Trail.
- There is a hanging branch in the White Trail section that should be brought down; not an immediate hazard, as it is solidly hung up, but should be brought down (not likely to fall). Jim will talk to Ryan Sipple about how best to handle.
- Two more benches have been put together; these will be put along the Creek in the next few weeks.
- There are more bench ends available from Marsh Creek SP; it was suggested that one be put in the area of the new parking lot.
- The Blue Trail is in good shape.

**Construction:** Volunteer Hours: Construction – **70**

- Building A:
  - Received all requested lumber (Poplar and Sapele).
  - Continued window treatments.
- Requested that the mulch pile at the Park be moved to its “regular” location by Building F. Sandy indicated she was OK with this.

- Shop Use Issue: There are indications of unauthorized use of the Shop. Rocky suggested changing the lock for the shop door (all other locks at the Park would remain key-to-like; won't affect volunteers' access to other areas). This was approved by the Committee.

**Garden Report:** Volunteer Hours: **NR** (no report)

- Work tasks focused on spreading wood chips in Culp Clearing, Spring Clean-up around Building A. It was noted that Hopewell Pack 8 and BSA Troop 1776 helped with the mulching work.
- The Vinegar is due next week.
- Still waiting on the tree puller.
- The four 32 lb bags approved for purchase at the Feb meeting (\$19.95/bag at Lowe's) are waiting for pickup; help is needed to pick it up.
- Amphitheater work is planned for April 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Sandy and Beth did a Podcast last week at West Chester University on How Families Use the Park. WCU is promoting places to go; the program satisfies this goal.
- **Envirothon:** Student groups from DASD's STEM program will be at the Mill to do water, soil, and forestry studies as background for their entry in this State-wide competition ( <https://www.envirothonpa.org> ).
- The **Stroud Center** has submitted a grant request to PA American Water Co. This grant may read to bring elementary students from Clan Elementary to the Mill for water studies; or it might read asking Garden volunteers to partner with Stroud at the school.
- **Grant Items:**
  - AXA XL: Sandy is pursuing a two-year grant to purchase trees and shrubs to be planted in existing gardens, with some trees to be installed in the area to the left of the Yellow Trail. If awarded, the grant amounts would be approximately \$8K per year. The BMP Committee is in support of this grant with the understanding that it won't add to areas requiring maintenance.
  - Wilds Ones: Beth has submitted a grant application for \$1K to support the continued replacement of invasive plants with native plants in the Yellow Trail area. She indicated no maintenance would be required for the plants in this area. The application identifies the EB Foundation as the recipient of the grant.
  - A Beekeeper grant has been applied for.
- **Expenditure report:**
  - Purchases from Sandy's Stipend:
    - The Township has ordered brochure boxes for the new parking lot kiosk (three 9" x 12" boxes for \$59.99, each, and two 4" x 9" boxes for \$27.99, each; total \$87.98).
    - This expense was approved by the BMP Committee, to be paid from the General Fund D&M.
- **Foundation Expenditure Request:**
  - At the March 6<sup>th</sup> EB Foundation Board meeting, Sandy requested approval to spend up to \$2500 from the Foundation's BMP Garden Fund to purchase needed plants. This is consistent with previous approval from the BMP Committee.
  - It was requested an American Holly Tree be purchased to replace the one damaged by the weather this past Winter. This purchase of about \$100 will be made from Harmony Hill Nursery through the Twp's account with them, using the EB Foundation's BMP Garden Fund.
  - Sandy requested that the EB Foundation's BMP Garden Fund be used to fund the \$300 honorarium for Gregg Tepper's Deer Resistant Plant Program on April 11<sup>th</sup>. All donations collected relative to this program would be directed back to this Garden Fund to cover the cost.
  - These purchases were approved by the BMP Committee.

**Events:**

- Galanthus Gala in Downingtown – March 1<sup>st</sup>
- Birding Program, by a freelance organizer – April 6<sup>th</sup>

- Dear Resistant Plant Program, by Gregg Tepper – April 11<sup>th</sup> (sponsored by BMP)
- Beekeepers program – April 19<sup>th</sup>, May 17<sup>th</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup>, July 21<sup>st</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup>, September 20<sup>th</sup>, and October 18<sup>th</sup>. They will be meeting at the hives for these events (Building A is not needed).
- SPOOM (Society for Preservation of Old Mills) will visit the Park on April 25<sup>th</sup> as part of their Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference this year. They expect to be here around 5:00. Jim, Rocky, Arne, and Carl will participate to support their visit.
- Garden Club visit – April 25<sup>th</sup> (previously the 26<sup>th</sup>; their visit will be earlier in the day from the SPOOM visit, so there should be no conflict); Sandy is working on something for Arbor Day (being planned by the Arboretum Board)
- Longwood Gardens bus visit – May 17<sup>th</sup>
- Garden Club visit – May 22<sup>nd</sup>
- AXA XL Global Day of Giving – June 18<sup>th</sup>
- Monarch/Endangered Species event in August
- PawPaw Festival – Mid-September

#### Miscellaneous:

- **Arboretum Board:**
  - Sandy and Dan are working on an arboretum brochure. Luke commented that there should be one comprehensive brochure for the Park, and that the labels (Park name and logos) used on the brochures should be consistent with what has previously been used.
  - Planning an Arbor Day event on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Tentative plans are to have a table in the picnic area behind the memorial.
- **Culp Clearing Maintenance:**
  - Bruce asked about maintenance of the trails in this Garden. Debris needs to be raked or blown from the trails, and some low spots should be dressed from the extra stone from last year's work. Jim B will talk to Ryan Sipple, who is storing the extra path stone.
- **Tractor Service:** Some of the hydraulic lines need to be replaced. Carl will get a ballpark estimate for next month's meeting (would be paid from the General Fund D&M account).
- **Art Exhibit:** Vanessa Werring was looking to use the Park for an art exhibit she would like to present in July/August. It would be associated with the County Lines Magazine, which would bring good attention to the Park. This was discussed at length but, while is a good exposure opportunity for us, it is unclear whether Building A will be ready for use (no guarantee); it was decided to pass on this.
- **Building A Interior Layout:** Rocky's proposed layout was reviewed and discussed.
  - Displays are proposed for around the room to cover subjects about the Park, including:
    - Bondsville Mill, and regional mill activity
    - Mill history and development (water wheel development; power conversions to steam and electric).
    - Examples of fabrics over time and Mill artifacts (e.g., boiler doors)
    - Trail System display
    - Park wildlife
    - Arboretum information
    - Park Gardens information
    - Reference books on history and natural/environmental subjects
  - The center area would remain fairly open and flexible for use, including programs.
  - The concept was approved by the BMP Committee. Rocky will provide a detailed design for further review.
- **Town Tour Program:** The BMP was offered a slot on the Chester County Planning Commission's Town Tour program for 2026. This was discussed by the Committee:
  - Excellent opportunity for exposure of the Park in a County-wide program.
  - The theme will be the Nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

- This will actually work out better than being on the schedule for this year's event, as the buildings will be finished, including Building A being available, and the Culp Clearing garden will be better established.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at about 9:21 AM.

**Next BMP Committee meeting:** April 24, 2025.