

MINUTES
**CONSERVATION AND NATURAL
RESOURCES ADVISORY
COUNCIL (CNRAC)**
October 2, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ephraim Zimmerman, Chair
Gary Kribbs, Member
Clifford David, Member
Greg Goldman, Member
Joanne Kilgour, Member
Bob Kirchner, Member
Janet Sweeney, Vice Chair
David Trimpey, Member

DCNR

Gretchen Leslie, CNRAC Adviser

ADMINISTRATOR

Katrina Harris, Administrator

GUESTS PRESENT

Paul Zeph, DCNR Bureau of State Parks (Presenter)
Scott Randoli, Scag Burners Snowmobile Club
Doug Wolf, Glendale Lake Snowmobile Club
Alan Graefe, Penn State
Andrew Mowen, Penn State
Samantha Dowers, Penn State
Tom Livingston, State Camp Association
John Confer, California University of Pennsylvania
Tim Herd, Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society
Emily Gates, Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society
Charles Walter, Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association
Sarah Corcoran, Sierra Club
Jim Laird, PATAC
Frank Maguire, Pennsylvania Environmental Council

WELCOME

Chairman Zimmerman called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests.

Chairman Zimmerman stated the Council meets every other month to provide input to DCNR and act as a conduit between the public and DCNR. He noted the meetings typically included presentations by DCNR staff and are usually held in Harrisburg. Chairman Zimmerman said the Council occasionally holds meetings in other locations to hopefully involve more members of the public and stakeholder groups in the meetings.

Chairman Zimmerman reviewed the meeting agenda and stated there would be an opportunity for public comment at the end of the Council's meeting. He invited guests present, as well as Council members, to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Zimmerman advised the Council did not have a quorum present so a vote on the minutes could not be conducted. He asked for any comments and none were offered. He stated they would be approved at the November meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Zimmerman stated the Council's 2018-2019 annual report had been prepared and highlighted the Council's significant activities for the past year. He advised copies were available on the registration table, and the report is also on the Council's website.

COMMITTEE/WORKGROUP REPORTS

Bob Kirchner, Chair, Motorized Recreation Workgroup

Mr. Bob Kirchner stated the workgroup had published a report in January 2019 which had been distributed to Council members and is available on the Council's website. He noted the workgroup had 15 key recommendations and is tracking progress on the recommendations; he provided copies to Council members of a spreadsheet showing the recommendations and progress. Mr. Kirchner advised the work group will be soliciting input prior to the November meeting, re-visiting the report at the November meeting, and presenting on the progress at the January meeting.

Clifford David, Chair, Communications Workgroup

Mr. Cliff David noted the Communications Committee is a relatively new committee with goals of expanding the visibility of CNRAC and supporting DCNR. He reviewed current activities which have included reviewing CNRAC's website and planning for an update to expand available information and adding links to other relevant websites, working on increasing public attendance at Council meetings, preparing articles for DCNR's newsletter, planning for meetings with state legislature staff, and conferring with David Hess, a former secretary of Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection on ideas for outreach and communication with constituents. Mr. David also noted the Committee had worked with Katrina Harris, Council Administrator, on a brochure about the Council which was available on the registration table; he stated any comments on this first version of the brochure are welcomed.

Infrastructure and Strategic Planning Workgroups

Chairman Zimmerman noted the chairs of these two committees could not be present for the meeting, although both groups had worked on putting together this meeting.

DCNR ADVISER REPORT

Gretchen Leslie, CNRAC Adviser

Ms. Leslie stated DCNR's Secretary regretted not being able to participate in today's meeting. She stated Secretary Dunn is visiting many state parks, forests and local communities needing funding to support recreation and conservation programs and discussing Restore PA, a proposal of Governor Wolf to invest \$4.5 billion over four years in Pennsylvania's infrastructure,

including providing DCNR with funding to acquire land and improve recreational facilities.

Mr. David asked about Energize PA. Ms. Leslie advised it is a Republican proposal in response to the Governor's Restore PA proposal, and she would ask DCNR's legislative director to provide an update to Council on this bill package before next meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

Paul Zeph, Bureau of State Parks, DCNR Penn's Parks For All Strategic Plan Draft

Mr. Paul Zeph stated this was the first meeting since the *Penn's Parks for All* Strategic Plan had been released. He noted that what is learned from today's interactions and comments will be helpful with other meetings to be held during the public input process.

Mr. Zeph reviewed the types of surveys conducted to gather information for developing the plan which included an online survey, a hard copy survey distributed at parks, and telephone surveys. He noted the initial surveys were primarily completed by park users which led to the telephone survey that partially targeted non-parks users as well as underrepresented groups for more diversity. He advised more than 14,000 surveys were completed. Mr. Zeph stated the surveys are not the end of the input process, as the information will be used to delve deeper on some topics with specific audiences.

In response to a question about whether park surveys were given different weights based on the number of park users, Mr. Zeph stated the surveys completed at a park were coded by park names, and while this factor was examined, the analysis did not find much difference.

Mr. Zeph advised state parks have historically done a new strategic plan about every 25 years. He noted the preliminary report is available on the website, and some hard copies are available at the registration table. He explained several ways to submit comments including online (can submit comments on each of the five categories of recommendations) or by mail. He stated comments are being accepted through the end of December 2019. Mr. Zeph said the goal is to have a final report in late 2020, which will incorporate new recommendations and ideas received through public input.

Mr. Zeph explained there would be presentations throughout the fall at state parks, and he was available to meet with stakeholder groups, even into the early months of 2020.

Mr. Zeph stated other information available online includes data from the surveys and some initial comments and recommendations from stakeholders, such as CNRAC.

Mr. Zeph noted the report had recommendations divided into five categories: Outdoor Recreation Opportunities; Overnight Accommodations; Protecting the Park's Natural and Cultural Resources; Paying for State Parks; and Improving Services and Facilities.

Mr. Zeph said the plan will still be fairly general once it is finalized; work will then be needed to develop specifics to implement the ideas and recommendations.

In response to an observation that a 25-year strategic plan seems like a long timeframe, Mr. Zeph advised that some of the recommendations could take a long time to implement statewide. He added that state parks also have individual plans that are updated on a three-year cycle.

Ms. Leslie said DCNR and the Council are very interested in hearing from the public to both help Mr. Zeph with producing a final plan and to help the Council formulate their position and comments on the plan. Ms. Leslie invited all present to participate in one of three small groups to discuss the recommendations in the report. Attendees divided into groups with each group having Council members participating in the discussion and notes being taken in each group.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Zimmerman invited public comments, noting there is a five-minute maximum per person.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Zimmerman asked for any other business topics, and none were offered.

MEETING ADJOURNED

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Notice of the October meeting was published in a newspaper of general circulation in Dauphin County and mailed to individuals and offices in compliance with the Sunshine Act (1986-84). These minutes constitute the official record of the Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council; no official transcript is provided.