

PTHS Advisory Board Meeting

October 17, 2018 * 5:00 PM

This quarterly meeting of the PTHS Advisory Board took place in the John James Audubon House at Mill Grove located in the Municipality of Lower Providence Township.

PTHS Members Present:

Don Orcutt
Leigh Altadonna
Carl Kelemen

Jim Webb
Herb Miller
Beth Pilling

Cathy Gauthier

Staff:

David Clifford
Michelle Harris

- **CTO** - Meeting called to order at 5:05 PM by Board Chair, Don Orcutt.
- **July 25th * 2018** - meeting minutes were motioned for approval by Leigh A. and seconded by Don O.
- **Region 1 & Host Site Updates** – Michelle Harris (R-1 Manager) opened her regional summary update by (re)introducing (herself), the site, the region, current happenings, and invasive insects. Additional updates of importance included:
 - Region 1 was able to transition Part Time (PT) positions to Full Time (FT), however the remaining PT positions were extremely difficult to fill and even a few FT positions, in which our division has not experienced in over ten years with FT vacancies. This discussion led the Board members to generate ideas/guidelines for the County to consider a hiring vision template, create an actual promotional structure, and compare better analytical salary studies. Additionally, the Board raised the questions regarding the true impacts to the County’s daily operations, visitor’s experiences, safety, and the internal strains on dedicated employees and resources with consistently high turnover year after year. PTHS staff responded that the County’s fragmentary approach has temporarily addressed a few retainer positions and boosted some morale, however the effects are wearing off and agree with the Board that a comprehensive approach would have been better suited and worth the additional time/resources.
 - LPVP experienced many and long awaited upgrades to the office cottage, the visitor restrooms, the main pavilion w/ ADA improvements, and all internal roads/parking areas/trails were repaved and with new storm water facilities installed.
 - At the County level, Mill Grove saw smaller restoration efforts at the barn, stone walls, and at the house. Plus new exhibits were created for the house.
 - Pottsgrove Manor purchased new exhibit cases and lighting fixtures, Public Property completed additional restorations internally/externally, and staff implemented a virtual 360 tour of the house for folks that have mobility issues or would like to view from a digital device.
 - Lock 60 & SRT both experienced upgrades pertaining to the lock, the lock tenders house, and approximately two miles of the SRT was repaved and/or widened.

- **PTHS Divisional Update** – DC discussed updates to the Freight Station (CVT connector built on-site to link to SRT + hardscaping/landscaping) in Norristown alongside the larger Lafayette Street reconstruction project; attendance and fees down, however special use permits (SUPs) up (primarily due to weather events); PTHS Ranger training complete to deal with opioid abusers within our sites/trails; and the Spotted Lanternfly epidemic which sparked a lively debate. The insects are so prevalent (and as usual, it takes a few years to understand their impacts and formulate (safe) solutions) that now everyone is paying attention and want a quick fix. PTHS will meet the Montco Conservation District and PA Agricultural Department to conduct inventories, workshops, and develop a treatment plan over the winter months.

- **PTHS Board Sunrise Mill Committee**

Sunrise Mill Board Committee – The Board is working on an outline that will detail everything from the bottom line to action steps to potential costs to assist with opening the site for special visits/events to the ultimate public opening.

- **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM