

August 24, 2022

The Franklin Township Supervisors met on the above date at the Franklin Township Administration Building located at 889 Fairyland Road. Township Officials present were Supervisors Fred Kemmerer, Jason Frey and Secretary Brenda Cressley. Supervisor Robin Cressley was absent. A list of others in attendance is attached to the Minute Book. Chairman Kemmerer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Chairman Kemmerer began by emphasizing the workshop meeting was intended to only find solutions to the traffic issues and concerns with Beltzville State Park and Pohopoco Drive. He then asked the people present what they thought were the most important problems that need to be solved.

Kevin Christman began by saying every weekend you travel down one lane of traffic heading east and it becomes a "Game of Chicken" of who will get the right of way. He also said the newest development/problem this year is people start showing up at 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. and the park does not open until 8:00 a.m. causing a traffic back up.

Michelle Delello was present and said her backyard is right across from the beach entrance and once the traffic stops moving the party begins. Everyone gets out of their cars and they start to party, blaring music etc. Then when the park closes and the cars are stopped the people do not know what to do so they start getting their grills out and start their own picnic right on the (Pohopoco) road.

Supervisor Frey said last year they had no parking signs placed along other Township roadways and it seemed to help.

A discussion was held between the residents and officials as follows:

When asked the audience all agreed the license plates were a mixture of Pa and out of state. Why doesn't the park open earlier; Park hours signs 8:00 a.m. to 8:00p.m. and also a sign says Dusk to Dawn.

Questioned why the Pull offs do not have NO PARKING SIGNS.

Officer Green stated the Franklin Township Police, State Police, and the Park Rangers have all been trying to show more of a presence at the gate and have been using the loud speaker as well. He also stated when the LPR that was obtained through an LSA grant that Doyle Heffley helped to secure gets up and running it will be an asset.

There were four Franklin Township Fire Police members present and they all agreed when they were out directing traffic last year it was helpful, but there is no way they can direct traffic every weekend. If the State Park needed them for a major issue they would be there to help in that case.

Supervisor Kemmerer suggested asking the County (EMA) if they have a plan in place to help if something major would happen at Beltzville State Park.

Residents present were all in agreement the traffic being at a standstill and causing traffic to be backed up as far back as Platz's is the major issue.

Kevin Christman said when the State Police chase the patrons off the street they just start to filter into the neighboring properties and just push their way into our community.

Open up the gate as soon as it starts to back up.

Construct an access road for Park traffic only

Funnel the cars in another way to get the cars off Pohopoco Drive and make three new lots (A,B,C lots)

Staging the cars inside the park

Towamensing Township Supervisor Guy Seifert stated Towamensing Township also stopped mowing along the roadway to the park and placed No Parking Signs up as well, he thought that it has helped. He said they had people renting their front yards for parking and had to get zoning involved to stop that from happening. He feels raising the fines for No Parking may help too. He also agreed it is not fair for Franklin Township to spend the money on having the police officers on Pohopoco Drive because of a State Park traffic issue. He feels unless the Park changes something, there is nothing else we can do. We need to get the State to help make changes.

Barry Hoffman (Fire Police) suggested calling the head of the State Parks and Recreation and Rep. Doyle Heffley and again let them know we need their help.

Chairman Kemmerer agreed this a not only a Township concern but it is an EMA and State issue and we all need to pull our resources together and make a stand. He stated we got a good start collectively and we need to move forward now by leaning on the State letting them know we are all here to help but we need them to work with us. He plans on moving forward by setting up another workshop meeting with the State Park Officers, Rep. Heffley and any other office that will be willing to attend a meeting. We will start with the three main ideas the workshop attendees came up with.

1. Adding a lane
2. Staging inside the Park
3. Open the park gates right away (before 8:00 a.m.)

Chairman Kemmerer adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Jason Frey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Cressley, Secretary