

Supervisors extend timeline for White's Woods stewardship plan

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Tom Peel / Indiana Gazette

White Township supervisors on Wednesday unanimously approved extending the township Stewardship Committee's timeline until the end of the year to develop a stewardship plan for White's Woods.

The Stewardship Committee, which was formed in 2022, was originally given an 18-month timeline to develop a stewardship plan for the forest, but due to some delays, the committee felt an extension was necessary to refine that plan.

"We missed two meetings, one due to vacations and illnesses and the other due to weather," committee chairperson Barb Hauge said in a letter to the township. "Also, early in our meetings, it took us time to develop rapport that has led to good discussions and building a common mission. At the last meeting, the committee unanimously voted to request six additional months to complete our task."

The committee said their meetings have been "very productive" with forestry- and ecology-related experts giving presentations on how to care for White's Woods, according to township manager Chris Anderson.

With the extension, the committee said they'd have a White's Woods stewardship plan ready for the supervisors either on or before Dec. 31.

In other news, White Township completed its 2023 summer paving project Monday. The project took less than two weeks, according to Anderson, and covered Martin Road, Saltsburg Avenue, Homestead Road, a portion of Gompers Avenue, Church Street, Gates Avenue, Clymer Road and more.

“Every spring and every summer, we do a complete assessment of all of our roads and determine which ones are in the worst condition or which ones need paved, which ones need repaired,” Anderson said. “That’s what kind of dictates what roads we pick for the paving project.”

Although Derry Construction completed the paving project Monday, the township still needs to back-fill areas with gravel, topsoil and grass seed as well as work with PennDOT to stripe Saltsburg Avenue with share-the-road markings.

Also Wednesday, supervisors passed a number of motions and made a number of announcements, including:

- Approving the sale and consumption of alcohol at Tammy Curry’s Fall Festival, which is set to take place Sept. 23 and 24 at the S&T Bank Arena.
- Approving a PennDOT speed study along Route 119 South.
- Approving a \$35,000 reimbursement to the Indiana Fire Association for the recent purchase of a new pickup truck.

“(The IFA) had asked for our assistance in the purchase of a new truck,” Anderson said. “(Their old) truck was 20-plus-years-old. It’s a volunteer fire department. We do provide them financial assistance through our municipality. In times like this, when there’s a true need for a piece of apparatus, we step up and help out.”

- A new group called The Plant Patrol was recently formed to help clear invasive species out of White’s Woods. The effort was led by Friends of White’s Woods, according to township public relations and communications specialist Chauncey Ross, and the group is set to meet from 9 to 11 a.m. every Wednesday, starting July 12, to help remove invasive species.

“It’s a group of people whose main mission is to go out and find invasive species of plants and remove them to protect the asset we already have,” Ross said. “It’ll start July 12, two weeks from today. The crew will be out removing barberry bushes. ... (The township’s) role in this would be to provide supplies and equipment that they may need to do it.”