

ADAMS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD
Minutes of Hybrid Meeting (In-Person/Virtual/Conference Call)
April 7, 2021

Attendance:

Members – Attending in-person:

Chair Craig Yingling, Vice-Chair Dave Wenk, Deb Kammerer, Sidney Kuhn, Wayne Smith, Doyle Waybright

Members – Attending by phone or computer:

Chad Collie

Absent:

Dave Boyer, George Taughinbaugh

Staff – Attending in-person:

Mark Clowney, Ellen Dayhoff, Kelly Koch, Cindy Sanderson

Staff – Attending by phone or computer: None

Absent: None

Guests: None

The April 7, 2021 meeting of the Adams County Agricultural Land Preservation Board commenced at 7:33 p.m. in the Adams County Agricultural & Natural Resources Center lower-level meeting rooms for in-person attendees and via conference phone.

I. Board Business

A. Approval of March Minutes

Mr. Wenk made a motion that the ACALPB approve the March 3, 2021 Minutes. Mr. Waybright seconded the motion; motion was approved unanimously.

B. Public Comments – none present

C. Board Member Replacements

* The New Member Sub-Committee met on March 24th to review the nine applications and determine the ‘Top 3 or 4’ for the ACALPB to present to the ACC for a final decision.

* The decision was to recommend Rick Crouse, George Weikert and Ben Mearns or Sam Fletcher.

Much Discussion

* Most current members are not familiar with Ben or Sam, so a second meeting was set up (March 31st) to interview the two younger applicants. During this meeting, Sam Fletcher stated he recently accepted a new job, based in the Lancaster area. As a result, he may not be able to attend meetings regularly.

* After this second meeting, the Sub-Committee decided to advise the ACALPB recommend Rick Crouse, George Weikert and Ben Mearns to the ACC (placing strong emphasis on Ben Mearns for his youthful outlook and possible longevity on this Board.)

Mr. Waybright made a motion that the ACALPB submit Rick Crouse, George Weikert and Ben Mearns to the Commissioners as candidates to fill the two pending vacancies on this Board. Ms. Kammerer seconded the motion; motion was approved unanimously.

* Ellen will request a meeting with the Commissioners to discuss the candidates. The meeting will probably be held via conference call/Teams; Mr. Yingling & Mr. Waybright both stated they would be willing to attend.

D. Program Updates

1. Stewardship/Insurance issues and C&G Funding

* This will probably be discussed at the PFPA Spring Meeting in May; input will be received from other counties that have similar circumstances and/or experience.

2. Guidelines – Solar Language

- * Previously Molly suggested Ellen draft verbiage to add to the Guidelines as to what can/cannot be done with solar panels. Ellen will do this and send it to Molly for review.

E. Legislative Updates

1. Farm Bureau Policy Committee

- * The Farm Bureau met on March 31st; discussions included various Bills that Mark sent information on via email after the February ACALPB meeting.
- * Mark & Mr. Wenk reviewed status of several Bills.

2. Land Trust Bill (SB64)

- * Will probably be discussed at the PFPA Spring Meeting in May.
- * Ellen reviewed details of this Bill. The amount available to reimburse Land Trusts for expenses would go from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per project. In addition, funds would be diverted from the regular State Match to a grant to Land Trusts to purchase Ag Easements. It would reimburse up to 50% or \$2,500/acre (whichever is less).
- * Ellen explained her concern with this Bill - there are no guarantees that a Land Trust will receive the reimbursement after settlement. There needs to be a 'pre-approval' process of some sort so they know if the project goes to completion they are guaranteed the reimbursement. If this change is made, the Board would support this Bill.

II. Updates

A. Township

1. Solar

- * Mr. Yingling stated, Mt Joy Twp is voting on Solar Projects in their municipality next month (smaller area than originally thought.)

2. Cumberland Twp

- * The Links is building more houses; other things are moving slowly due to COVID.

B. LCAC

1. Annual Dinner

- * The Art Auction was held virtually on BiddingOwl.com – closing on April 21st.
- * Items were on display at the Arts Council in Gettysburg; appointments are required.

C. PFPA

- * The Spring Meeting is scheduled for May 13th and will be 'virtual' meeting; hosted by WeConservePA.
- * Board members that would like to attend should contact Cindy to register.

Executive Session opened, 7:56 pm

III. Round 13

A. Refer to the Round 13 Status/Financial Reports.

IV. Round 14

A. Refer to the Round 14 Financial Report.

1. Remaining balances are better than originally thought

2. Union & Conewago Townships Discussions

- * Possible partnering – Ellen will meet with them after the Equine Study is complete

B. Round 14 / Round 15

1. Applications XIV-68 & XIV-77 / Reading Township

V. Motions on Discussions during Executive Session

Section IV, A, b, iii

Mr. Yingling made a motion that the ACALPB authorize Ellen to contact Reading Township to see if they are interested in partnering with this Program in contributing funds (10% or \$25,000, whichever is greater) toward preserving XIV-68. Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

Much Discussion

- * If move forward with contacting Reading Township, and they are interested, then several farms in the ranking order will be jumped over and possibly reducing Program funds that would have been available to purchase their easement(s).
- * Several options were discussed for the landowners to consider.

Mr. Yingling and Mr. Smith withdrew this motion and second to allow time for further consideration.

- * Ellen will contact Reading Township to see if they are interested in partnering with the Ag Land Preservation Program to assist with preserving one of the three farms in Round 14 located in Reading Township. Ellen will be sure to clarify that the minimum amount needed would be 10% or \$25,000; however, the ACALPB could request more funds depending on the position of the farms that ranked in the top 50%.

VI. Inspections, Transfers, Subdivision, Rural Enterprise Applications, Other Issues

A. LCAC Trail Project – nothing new at this time

B. Fletcher Farms – additional residence

- * Ellen recently learned about a small ag structure that was torn down and rebuilt with a larger structure, which includes housing.
- * Originally the housing area was to be used for farm workers but is currently being used by a family member.
- * The landowners did not think about contacting us regarding the new residence portion of the ag structure. The owners have indicated that they are ok with this being their permitted additional residence. Ellen is in the process of obtaining all the information needed for the Board to approve this use.
- * Ellen noted, information cards will now be included each year with the Inspection Notices as a way to help preserved landowners remember to check with office staff before any building occurs.

C. Other issues:

- * Ellen received a call from a preserved landowner stating he does not want the drone used as part of the inspection on his farms. Mark noted that we have the right to use the drone to do our job; however, if a landowner asks not to fly the drone over their property, we will respect their wishes unless there is a possible violation, etc.

VII. Staff Updates & Comments – Nothing new at this time.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Waybright made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35pm. Ms. Kuhn seconded the motion; motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Sanderson, Secretary