

## **Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board**

### **Meeting Minutes – November 7, 2018**

The Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board met on Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at the Luzerne County Conservation District Office, 325 Smiths Pond Road, Shavertown, PA.

**Attendance:** The following members were in attendance: Linda Thoma, Board Chair, Jennifer Lauri, program administrator, Jim Weber, Luzerne County, Dave Skoronsky, Luzerne County, Heath Eddy, Luzerne County, Jon Lucas, farmer, Rich Yost, municipal, Nancy Snee.

Meeting minutes:

The meeting minutes for December 29, 2017, were presented for approval. Jon Lucas made the motion to approve the minutes with the condition, that names misspelled be corrected. Rich Yost seconded it. Motion passed.

Discussion was held regarding two open farmer Board positions. It was decided Jennifer will contact the two names suggested previously to serve, Tom Wenner and Dennis Zehner. Action will need to be taken immediately by these two individuals to complete and submit an application in order to be invited by the Clerk of County Council in time to attend one of the interview meetings scheduled for November 29 and December 6, 2018

There was also discussion on the expiration of Jon Lucas' and Linda Thoma's seat on December 31, 2018. Both have completed and submitted applications.

Jennifer informed attendees of the status of Ochs, Stanovich/ Kashubski, and Mylet farms. The last item needed for the Ochs farm preservation to go before the State Board in December is the Conservation Plan Agreement. Linda signed the agreement. Stanovich/Kashubski are in the process of contacting an attorney to prepare a like kind exchange sales agreement. Rosemarie accepted the offer of \$3,350 / acre. Jennifer will be meeting with Rosemarie Mylet at the end of November to sign an agreement of sale. Funds for the Mylet farm will need to be encumbered by December 31, 2018. After discussion the Board agreed the appraisal needs to be corrected to match the AOS. There was an error as all the deeded acres are not eligible for easement, therefore the appraisal and AOS currently have conflicting acreage amounts.

The 2018 application rankings were presented along with the overall waitlist. The next farm at the top of the waitlist is Gary Moyer. Rich Yost made a motion to proceed with the Gary Moyer application and survey and Nancy seconded it. Motion passed. The application is based on 100 acres which is subject to change based on the survey.

Dave Skoronsky questioned the eligibility of "The Lands at Hillside" because they are a non-profit. Jennifer was asked to verify their eligibility with the State.

Discussion was had concerning the money to be encumbered by December 31, 2018. A balance of \$52,183.06 remains from 2017 and the 2018 allocation is, \$474,837.00.

Discussion was had regarding a potential farm applicant, Jason Harabin. After review of the property and situation, Rich made a motion to not accept the application and Jon seconded it. Motion passed.

Other Business:

Meeting minutes for January 23, 2017 were presented for approval. Rich made a motion to accept the minutes, Jon seconded it. Motion passed.

Discussion was had regarding an applicant, Linda Yanac. Linda does not currently have an agricultural product or grazing taking place on her farm, therefore the State cannot accept her application. The Board suggested she lease the land then reapply.

After a discussion with Dave, Heath, and Jim the board agreed to provide the planning office with the program's expense estimates for 2020 by August of 2019.

Rich Yost made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 a.m. Jon Lucas seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared By:

For:

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Jennifer Lauri

Jon Lucas (Secretary)