

## **Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board**

### **Meeting Minutes – October 13, 2021**

The Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board met via conference call Wednesday, October 13, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting was held virtually. Anyone interested in attending the meeting had the opportunity to email or call the Conservation District prior to the meeting. At that time, they would have been given the meeting log in information. Documents discussed during the meeting were available on the Conservation District website.

**Attendance:** The following members were in attendance: Linda Thoma, Board Chair; Jon Lucas, farmer; Rich Yost, municipal; Matt Balliet, farmer; Jennifer Lauri, program administrator; Bryan McManus, commercial; Nancy Snee, at-large and Matthew Jones, Executive Director of Luzerne County Planning and Zoning.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Linda Thoma called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The meeting was recorded for minute taking purposes as well as availability if requested. The meeting can be found at [https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/?utm\\_source=transcriptReadyNotification&utm\\_medium=email#/s/3492c4ced14d5dee1e007478cbf88a66d854374c4a213fe11284eba9f94f86d9](https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/?utm_source=transcriptReadyNotification&utm_medium=email#/s/3492c4ced14d5dee1e007478cbf88a66d854374c4a213fe11284eba9f94f86d9).

The meeting minutes for April 16, 2021 were presented for approval via email prior to the meeting, and were also available on the Conservation District website. Bryan McManus made the motion to approve the minutes. Matt Balliet seconded it. Motion passed. Minutes for this meeting will be signed at the next physical meeting.

Matthew Jones shared the 2022 budget proposal he requested at the October 12, 2021, County Council meeting. After reviewing the program's anticipated expenses with Jennifer Lauri, program administrator, and Josh Longmore, Luzerne Conservation District Executive Director, Matthew Jones requested \$24,600 to execute the program in 2022. This is to cover appraisals, surveys, title fees and other miscellaneous expenses to facilitate the preservation of three farms until the reimbursement by the State is received.

Jennifer shared information on the Benjamin Smith farm. The Board reviewed the appraisal information and based on the appraisal completed for their farm, Matt Balliet made the motion to offer Benjamin Smith \$3,400 per acre for the easement of his 132-acre farm. Rich Yost seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jennifer offered an update on the status of the next farm to be preserved, LDF Holdings. LDF Holdings is a 97-acre farm that will unite a large contiguous area in the Conyngham Valley area.

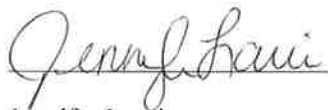
There was a discussion about the most recent farm easement press featured in the Citizens Voice, The Standard Speaker, The Scranton Times and Lancaster Farming. Matthew Jones will offer an invitation to County Manager to attend the next closing and photo opportunity for the program.

Matt Balliet shared an update on a recent question regarding subdivision of a previously preserved farm. He reiterated to the individual that the Board would like a formal request with more information on the subdivision.

Background information from April 16, 2021 meeting: *Matt Balliet proposed discussion of an existing preserved farm and subdivision. He named a case of a farm requesting to subdivide their farm in half to split between two of the sons. The farm will remain preserved but divided between two owners. The State has denied the subdivision based on the Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Guide. After further discussion amongst Board members and referencing the Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Guide all members present agree to Matt reaching out to the landowner and request, that they submit a detailed request for subdivision to the Board for further review.*

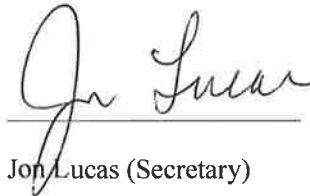
Nancy Snee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 a.m. Rich Yost seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared By:



Jennifer Lauri

For:



Jon Lucas (Secretary)