

## **Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board**

### **Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2022**

The Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board met in virtually, October 28, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Anyone interested in attending the meeting had the opportunity to attend as it was announced a week prior in the Citizen's Voice newspaper.

**Attendance:** The following members were in attendance: Linda Thoma, Board Chair; Jon Lucas, farmer; Rich Yost, municipal; Jennifer Lauri, program administrator; Nancy Snee, at-large; and Martin Smith, farmer.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Linda Thoma called the meeting to order at 9:07 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/#/s/be9257c476616e51be2ac447eba8d35bde57fcc88df62aa5a3b1d74b1c655e72>

Linda thanked Martin Smith for joining the Farmland Preservation Board. She also announced that Bryan McManus's position expires 12/31/2022. If he would like to continue to serve on the board, Bryan will need to complete and submit an application.

The meeting minutes for July 12, 2022, were presented for approval via email prior to the meeting. Nancy Snee made the motion to approve the minutes. Rich Yost seconded it. Motion passed.

Jennifer provided a brief summary on the L.D.F Holdings farm. This is a farm in Black Creek Township, it adjoins the GansII farm. A completed survey shows the farm consists of 102.47 acres. A recently completed appraisal indicated the highest and best use value as \$5,600/acre and agricultural value \$2,500/acre with the easement value \$3,100/acre. Nancy Snee reminded the board of the \$3,500/acre maximum per acre. Jon Lucas made a motion to offer LDF Holdings \$3,100/ acre on the 102.47-acre farm. Martin Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jennifer also provided a brief summary on the Matthew Balliet farm, originally Thomas Schaffer. This is a farm in Butler Township. The farm consists of 53.58 acres. The development pressure in this area is very high. No survey was needed for this farm. A recently completed appraisal indicated the highest and best use value as \$8,300/acre and agricultural value \$4,500/ acre with the easement value \$3,800/acre. Nancy Snee suggested to offer \$3,500/acre as a starting place and Matthew would have the option to have his own appraisal completed. Rich Yost made a motion to offer Matthew Balliet \$3,500/acre for the easement on his 53.58-acre farm. Jon Lucas seconded the motion. Motion passed.

As the agenda led to "other business" Jennifer provided information on subdivision of preserved farms. Currently our program only offers a one-time two-acre residential subdivision. Collectively, we reviewed documents the state provided to compare statewide subdivision allowance. After review and discussion, it was discovered that the board would be open to expanding our subdivision language to allow subdivision down to 52 acres. Jon made a motion to allow subdivision of a preserved parcel up to one time and down to as little as 52 acres in size. Rich seconded the motion. Rich also suggested creating a draft of the new language for the board to review prior to deciding to add it to our guide.

Rich discussed a topic he was approached with by a fellow farmer, the proposed UGI gas line through a preserved farm. Jennifer had been working with the state to gain more information on how to proceed with the request to install an additional gas pipeline through a preserved farm. The farm currently has an easement on it for an existing gas pipeline. UGI is proposing a second line and requesting permission to proceed through preserved farms with the line. Rich informed Jennifer and the board that a regulation station is also proposed. The board decided more information as far as exact locations and areas of disturbance is needed to move forward with a decision.

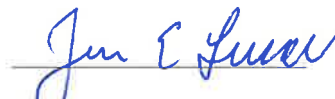
A brief discussion was had regarding the open seat on the board. Jennifer mentioned a few attempts she made to fill it, to which none prevailed. Members of the current board will make suggestions if any come to mind.

Rich Yost made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 a.m. Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared By:

For:

  
Jennifer Lauri

  
John Lucas (Secretary)