

Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board

Meeting Minutes – November 19, 2024

The Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board met virtually and in person November 19, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. Anyone interested in attending the meeting had the opportunity to attend as it was announced prior in the Citizen's Voice and Standard Speaker newspapers.

Attendance: The following members were in attendance: Linda Thoma, Board Chair; Rich Yost, municipal; Blakslee Masters, farmer; Jon Lucas, farmer; Bryan McManus, Developer, and Nancy Snee, at-large. Jennifer Merryman, program administrator, was also present.

Public Comment: None

Meeting Minutes:

Linda Thoma called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

The meeting minutes for July 19, 2024, were presented for approval via email prior to the meeting. Nancy made the motion to approve the minutes. Rich seconded it. Motion passed.

Jennifer reminded board members of expiring terms and provided applications for renewals.

Jennifer provided an update on each farm in process as well as the appraisal summary information for each.

Nancy made a motion to offer Joseph A. Disabella Sr. and Deborah A. Disabella \$3,500/ acre for the easement on their 54.28 acres. Jon seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Bryan made a motion to offer Kurt and Holly Michael \$3,000/ acre for the easement of their 90.29 acres not contingent upon any county acceptance of the donation and not contingent upon any like-kind exchange. Rich seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jon made a motion to offer Raymond and Corrine Barchik \$3,000/ acre for the easement of their 114 acres, pending the completed survey acreage. Blakslee seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Discussion was held regarding Kurt and Holly Michael offering 40.37 acres for donation to the Farmland Preservation program. Along with the discussion the board reviewed proposed donation language to be added to the county program guide. Board members agreed that Kurt and Holly should exhaust other donation options first before pursuing a donated easement with Farmland Preservation. Rich made a motion that the donation language, as presented be added to the county program guide with no changes and Nancy seconded it. Motion passed.

Discussion was held regarding an easement violation related to a neighbor placing a shed on land preserved in the program. Due to the unique nature of the situation the program administrator was seeking additional direction. Rich made a motion to send the neighboring landowner a certified letter informing them of the violation. Jon seconded it. Motion passed.

Discussion was held regarding the increased cost for appraisals from \$1500 to \$1750. Our current appraisal deposit is \$1500. Rich made a motion to raise the appraisal deposit to \$1750. Blakslee seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Nancy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. Rich seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared By:

For:



Jennifer Merryman



Jon Lucas (Secretary)