

## **Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board**

### **Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2025**

The Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board met virtually and in person July 17, 2025, 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; Jon Lucas, farmer; Bryan McManus, Developer; Dan Reese, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning. Jennifer Merryman, program administrator, was also present.

**Public Comment:** None

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Linda Thoma called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

The meeting minutes for April 4, 2025, were presented for approval via email prior to the meeting. Rich made the motion to approve the minutes. Bryan seconded it. Motion passed.

Jennifer informed all that there are two farmer seats open on the Farmland Preservation Board. Discussion was held around potentially interested individuals to serve on the board. Jennifer will pursue those individuals suggested to fill the vacant positions.

Jennifer provided an update on each farm in process and a farm that recently closed.

Jennifer presented Keith Hilliard's application for subdivision. The farm applying for subdivision was originally preserved in 2004 by Foster and Blanche Hilliard and consisted of 171.98 acres. The farm will be separated into two separate parcels: Parcel 1 – 97.532 acres and Parcel 2- 74.445 acres. Parcel 2 will carry the residential subdivision and additional residential structure right. Rich made a motion to approve the application for subdivision. Bryan made a motion to second the motion with the condition that the land must remain in Farmland Preservation and not be developed. Motion passed.

Discussion was held regarding the process for submitting a subdivision application. Dan suggested adding formal language to the County's SALDO (Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance) as an example for municipalities that administer their own zoning. This effort will allow all parties to be cohesive in the review process for subdivision requests of permanently protected farmland. As a result of the discussion related to inspections and required plan verification, it was suggested to have a tiered enforcement policy involving the board correspondence with the preserved farm owner.

Jennifer discussed with the board the inspection process and the importance of having current and implemented Conservation Plans and if applicable Nutrient Management Plans to not only address resource concerns but to be compliant with the program requirements. It was also discussed that applications received for the program are being approved based on their overall

score but have significant resource concerns on the farm. Bryan suggested mandating applicants to be in compliance with Chapter 102 Erosion and Sedimentation Control and Chapter 91 Manure Management. It was also suggested to poll other counties to determine how they handle this situation.

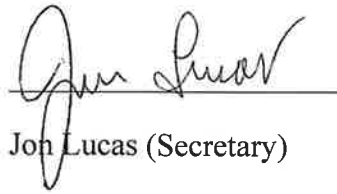
Bryan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 a.m. Rich seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared By:

For:



Jennifer Merryman



Jon Lucas (Secretary)