Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board

Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2026

The Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Board met virtually and in person March 26, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Attendance: The following members were in attendance: Linda Thoma, Board Chair; Jon Lucas, farmer; Bryan McManus, Developer; Jim Doran, farmer; Bruce Trumbower, farmer; 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 9:05 a.m.

The meeting minutes for November 5, 2025, were presented for approval via email prior to the meeting. Jon made the motion to approve the minutes. Bryan seconded it. Motion passed.

An introduction was provided for the recently filled farmer positions. Jennifer provided an update on the remaining vacant board position. Discussion was held around potentially interested individuals to serve on the board. Jennifer will pursue options to fill the vacant positions.

Jennifer provided an update on each farm in process.

Jennifer presented the 2026 state allocation of funds and reviewed annual balance summaries in conjunction with the 2026 application waitlist. After reviewing the top four farms on the waitlist, Jon made a motion to move forward with the Matthew Maylath farm, Tom & Ann Belusko farm, Kaleb Michael farm and the Kevin and Autumn Hacker farm. The motion was seconded by Jim. Motion passed.

Discussion was held around The Lands at Hillside's application due to the parcels size. The farm will be split up to be preserved in phases and re-scored based on the split parcels. The board will review this farm again later in the year.

Discussion was held around the county program per acre cap. Jennifer presented information on relative counties program caps. The Luzerne County program cap will remain at $3,500.

Jennifer updated that Keith Hilliard's subdivision was approved by the State and will need to be recorded.

Jon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 a.m. Jim seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared By:

Jennifer Merryman

For:

Jon Lucas (Secretary)