

Thomas E. Boldin, Chair
Cindy B. Harding
Ralph Wheland



Joseph Homan
Thomas Songer III
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Dennis E. Buffington
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CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

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MEETING AGENDA

7:30 pm Thursday

January 27, 2022

Room 146, Willowbank Building
420 Holmes Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting is being recorded.

INTRODUCTION OF CHAIR, Tom Boldin

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

INTRODUCTION OF ALPB APPLICANTS

Sam Grove and Diane Homan

A MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR CARL HOMAN

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 23, 2021

NEW BUSINESS

1. BOARD REORGANIZATION ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ELECTIONS

Narrative: The ALPB will nominate and appoint its 2022 officers. The following positions are vacant and open for nominations:

Vice Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

2. APPROVAL OF 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE

Narrative: The ALPB will review and approve the attached 2022 meeting schedule.

3. OPENING OF FARM APPRAISAL BIDS

Narrative: In keeping with its past practice of publishing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for farmland appraisers every 2- 3 years, the Board at its last meeting voted to publish an appraisal RFP in time to select an appraiser beginning in 2022. The ad was published in the Centre Daily Times on November 22, 2021. As of 5 pm January 27, the attached appraisal bid(s) have been received and will be opened publicly at this time.

Discussion: Review of Submitted Bids

Recommended Action: The Board will vote to select an appraiser for a period of two years, with the option to retain for a third year.

4. REQUESTED REVIEW OF CONSERVATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Comparative Analysis of an NRCS approved plan versus an Ag E&S Control Plan, as well as Conservation Plan Requirements in other Pennsylvania Counties

A summary of conservation plan policies of comparable Pennsylvania agricultural land preservation programs is attached.

Co-presenters of this presentation are Diana Griffith and Allyson Ulsh of the Centre County Conservation District Office.

Discussion: An Amish PACE applicant requests that the ALPB consider making an exception for plain-sect landowners who have implemented and are adhering to approved Ag E&S and Manure Management Plans. How do the NRCS and Ag E&S/Manure Management Plans compare? Is the ALPB open to considering exceptions to conservation plan requirements -- provided they are acceptable to the PA Agricultural Land Preservation Board and to the Centre County Conservation District?

Recommended Action: The Board will discuss and vote to decide whether exceptions will be made and in what instances – for smaller farms or plain-sect farmers, for example, whose beliefs may prevent them from working with federal agencies like the NRCS. If the Board agrees to make exceptions, the language in the Centre County Guidelines will be revised and submitted to approval by the State Board.

5. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Farmland Preservation 101, Board Retreat, Review of Bylaws

Centre County ALPB bylaws and those of two other Pennsylvania counties are attached as a means of comparison

Discussion: 1. It has been suggested and encouraged that the ALPB participate in an orientation about the PACE program – not only as a refresher for existing members but as an introduction for new members. It has also been suggested that the ALPB engage in a review of its bylaws to improve its self-governance and promote its mission. How would the ALPB like to engage in a review of the farmland preservation program – as one large group or in smaller groups? In a Board retreat? Would the ALPB like to schedule this “orientation” at the February meeting?

2. Is the ALPLB interested in reviewing and perhaps updating its bylaws to improve its self-governance and promote its mission?

Recommended Actions:

1. The ALPB will discuss and vote on when and how they would like to participate in a farmland

preservation program orientation.

2. The ALPB will vote on whether it would like to review and consider updating its bylaws
3. The ALPB will decide whether it can benefit by having a Board retreat, at which time the Board could participate in a farmland preservation course and/or review and potentially update its bylaws.

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION COORDINATOR'S REPORT

1. Certification of 2021 Agricultural Preservation Funds (see attachment)

Narrative: At the **January 25** Centre County Board of Commissioners meeting, Ms. Griffith requested approval of the 2022 funding for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. The BOC voted to approve the certification of \$112,561 as part of its consent agenda on **January 18**. The total reflects County match funds of \$80,000, the collection of \$32,659 of 2021 County Clean and Green Rollback Tax Penalties, and a minimal contribution from Ferguson Township of \$1.00 each for the two Ferguson farms being preserved in 2022. The minimal contribution was advised by the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation as a way to use as many encumbered 2020 Commonwealth funds as possible by leaving the bulk of the funding to the State. This was an unusual circumstance in that these two farms are smaller than average, and no other PACE applicant met requirements in time to meet the State's encumbering deadline. Ferguson will put a placeholder on its committed funds to use next year and the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation will redistribute the balance of funds next year. Ms. Griffith submitted the Commissioners' signed certification to the Bureau of Farmland Preservation on January 25, prior to its deadline of January 31.

2. Financials – The County met the Commonwealth's requirements to encumber 2020 funds. These funds are being encumbered to pay for both the Burket and Miller agricultural conservation easements.

3. PACE Applicants' Status

Pauline E. Cooper Estate (closed)
Larry F. and Suzanne M. Harpster (closed)
Nancy A. and Webb C. Miller
David G. Burket
Benuel Zook

4. Meeting Minimum Requirements: an action plan

5. Education and Communication:

2021 Annual Report (attached)
Brief Review of Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law
Soil Health Stewardship Plan and Training Presentation
Save-the-Date for Soil Health Field Day, September 13 at Happy Valley Winery
Farm Inspection Photo Presentation

Recommended action on these items: None

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

ADJOURNMENT

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 7:30 pm in Room 146 of the Willowbank Building on Thursday,

February 24, 2022.