

**Ocean County Agriculture Development Board
Minutes of January 23, 2025
Manchester Township Town Hall**

Attendance: Doug Hallock, Chair; Kathleen Sucharski, Vice Chair; Jeff Vogel (OCADB); Martin Lynch (OCADB); Glenn Riccardi (OCADB); Timothy Gleason (OCPLD); Thomas Thorsen (OCPLD); Mat Thompson (County Counsel); Jessica Pinto (Soil Conservation District); Dr. Stephen Yergeau (OC Ag Ext);

Public Attendees: Diane Vogel, Robert Bowen, Dale Parsons, Lauren Dooley, Esq., Eric Hansen Robert Rue, Esq., Edward “Ned” Gaine, Charles Roohr (SADC)

I. Flag Salute

II. Call to order and Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act- Mr. Hallock (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm by stating the Open Public Meetings Act requirements had been met.

III. Roll Call

IV. Reorganization

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Vogel to re-nominate Doug Hallock as Chairman of the Ocean County Agricultural Development Board. Mrs. Sucharski seconded. Roll Call. Mr. Hallock abstained. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Hallock stated a nomination for Vice-Chairman of the Board was needed.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Vogel to nominate Kathleen Sucharski as Vice Chair of the Ocean County Agricultural Development Board. Mr. Riccardi seconded. Roll Call. Ms. Sucharski abstained. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Hallock stated a nomination for Secretary of the Board was needed.

A **MOTION** was made by Kathleen Sucharski to nominate Glenn Riccardi as Secretary of the Ocean County Agricultural Development Board. Mr. Hunter seconded. Roll Call. Mr. Riccardi abstained. All in favor, motion carried.

V. Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2024

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Vogel to approve the December 12, 2024 minutes. Lynch seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

VI. Public Hearing - Maritime Marina, et al. v. Parson's Mariculture, LLC

Mr. Gleason informed the Board that the SADC resolution determining the air curing of shellfish shells as a generally accepted agricultural management practice was memorialized. This hearing will focus on the nature of the activities protected under the Right-to-Farm act. It is now up to the Board to determine the operations impact on the neighboring properties and balance the parties conflicting interests. The Board was informed that they must issue their findings at tonight's meeting as there is a 60 day time period starting from when the findings from the SADC were received.

Maritime Marina's legal counsel, Mr. Robert Rue, Esq., made arguments on behalf of his client. Mr. Rue introduced Mr. Eric Hansen, the owner of Maritime Marina and the neighboring marina of Parson's Mariculture. Mr. Thompson swore in Mr. Hansen, and Mr. Rue questioned him on the effects of the air curing of clam shells on his business. Mr. Hansen claimed that there were financial losses due to seagulls being drawn to the shell pile found on Parsons' property and the smell of the shell pile. Mr. Rue presented to the Board pictures of other shellfish air drying operations along with annual reports from the Marine Resources Administration Shell Recycling Program.

The owner of Parson's Mariculture, Mr. Dale Parsons, was represented by Ms. Lauren Dooley, Esq. Ms. Dooley presented the case for Parson's Mariculture and the right to the process of air curing shells. She argued that there has been no proof of public health and safety being effected by Mr. Parsons's operation. Mr. Thompson then swore in Mr. Parsons and he testified about the nature of his operations.

Mr. Edward "Ned" Gaine of the New Jersey Shellfish Association was sworn in by Mr. Thompson. He described his background and testified about the process of air curing shells.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Lynch to move into closed session at 9:32 pm. Mr. Vogel seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Vogel to move out of closed session into open session at 9:45 pm. Mrs. Sucharski seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Thompson read the resolution of the Board's finding that the compelling interest in the Parsons Mariculture, LLC air curing of shell is permitted under the balancing of interests.

VII. Public Comment

Charles Roohr provided updates from the SADC in regards to legislation, policy changes, and farming grants.

Jessica Pinto from the Ocean County Soil Conservation District reminded the Board that there is an upcoming local working group regarding farmland.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Lynch to move back into closed session at 9:58 pm. Mr. Vogel seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Lynch to move out of closed session at 10:00 pm. Mr. Vogel seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

There will be action taken on the farmland preservation application discussed in closed session:

Cameron Farm Application, Plumsted Twp. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Riccardi to approve the purchase of the Cameron Farm for a development easement of approximately 18.92 acres at a cost not to exceed \$375,000.00. Ms. Sucharski seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

VIII. Adjournment

A **MOTION** to adjourn at 10:06 pm was made by Mr. Lynch and Mr. Vogel seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Next Meeting: March 13th, 2025 at 7:30pm
Manchester Township Council Meeting Room/Courtroom

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Thorsen', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Thomas Thorsen
GIS Specialist