

**Ocean County Agriculture Development Board
Minutes of June 11, 2026
New Egypt Town Hall**

Attendance: Doug Hallock, Chair; Jeff Vogel (OCADB); Dawn Corbett-Nivison (OCADB); Glenn Riccardi (OCADB); Timothy Gleason (OCPLD); Mat Thompson (County Counsel); Dr. Stephen Yergeau (OC Ag Ext); Rachel Hammack (OCSCD) Jessica Pinto (OCSCD) Alina Robinson (SADC) Charles Roohr (SADC)

Public Attendees: Diane Vogel

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. Approval of Minutes from May 14, 2026

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Vogel to approve the May 14, 2026 minutes. Mr. Riccardi seconded. Roll call. All in favor, Mr. Lynch abstained, motion carried.

V. Moment of Silence – Mr. Gleason informed the Board that Bill Fox had passed away due to a farming accident. He had been a member of the Ocean County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) from 1984-2004 and the Ocean County Natural Lands Advisory Committee from 2010 until he passed away.

VI. Old Business

- **Annual Farmland Inspections** – Mr. Gleason informed the Board that most of the farm inspections are complete and there are two farms that stand out for possible easement violations.
 - **Delicias Del Campo** – Mr. Gleason informed the Board that the annual farm inspection of 50 Fischer Road in Plumsted Township was conducted on May 21, 2026 with representatives from Plumsted Township, Ocean County Soil Conservation District, and Ocean County Health Department. Staff observed several structures, site conditions, and activities that may not be consistent with the agricultural purposes and restrictions established under the Deed of Easement. The inspection revealed the presence of an RV and a small single-room outbuilding containing a bed and sink. The property owner stated that it was possible to rent out the RV as an Airbnb. Staff informed the owner that additional residencies are not permitted under the deed. Staff have since been informed that the bed and sink have been removed and the structure is now being used as a storage shed.

The inspection identified what appeared to be the construction of a pond within or adjacent to a wetlands area. Aerials show that there appears to be disturbance and excavation activity. The property owner has stated that they did not do any new work and just cleaned the area of debris, garbage, and overgrowth. NJDEP has made staff aware that a portion of the property is within a flood hazard area (FHA), and a verification application would need to be submitted. An application to the DEP has not been submitted. If they do determine it is within the FHA, then the property owner is in violation.

It appeared that there has been importation and deposition of non-native soil material along the creek bed and adjacent areas. It was estimated to be over 5,000 square feet of soil, so approval from the Soils District would be needed. The property owner informed staff that they tried to use it to help with erosion. A letter from the farm owner has since contradicted this as it states that there was no importation of soil along the creek bed.

The inspection also revealed the storage of what appeared to be abandoned or inoperable non-agricultural vehicles and equipment on the premises, including a red Jeep, two boats, and an airplane. The storage of non-agricultural vehicles, aircraft, and recreational equipment on preserved farmland may constitute a violation of the Deed of Easement with the County of Ocean, which limits the use of the property to agricultural purposes and activities permitted under the farmland preservation program. Staff have since been informed that the two boats were being removed on June 2nd.

The inspection also identified a "Farm Market" operating on the premises. At the time of inspection, it could not be determined what portion of the annual gross sales was directly attributable to the agricultural output of the commercial farm. However, it was clearly observed that less than fifty-one percent (51%) of the sales area appeared to be devoted to the sale of agricultural output produced on the commercial farm. The SADC has since voted to provide temporary relief on farm market requirements in response to losses associated with the recent spring freeze. Specifically, this temporary relief is more for orchards and or crops growing on a commercial farm, not for the sale of chickens, eggs, dairy, etc.

Following the inspection, on May 27th staff sent a letter to the property owner requesting a variety of documentation to be submitted within 30 days.

Ms. Pinto of the Ocean County Soil Conservation District stated that the District will be involved with the soil disturbance. She clarified that one of the areas of importation may not be a stream corridor. The farm owner will be encouraged to finish applying for a farm conservation plan. Mr. Roohr of the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC)

encouraged partnership between the SADC and the CADB to stay on the same page if there are violations that need to be enforced with litigation. Mr. Roohr advised that if the CADB determines there is no agricultural purpose for the imported soil, regardless of the NJDEP's findings, the Board can still find them in violation and require the removal of the soil, rather than requiring the owner to meet NJDEP standards. Mr. Gleason said that a follow-up inspection with the SADC will likely be scheduled in the future.

- **Vodak Farm** – Mr. Gleason informed the Board that the Christmas tree fields at 141 Brynmore Road in Plumsted Township are over growing with various non-production trees such as sweetgum. For the last three (3) years, staff have informed the property owner that this is a violation, and the fields need to be maintained. The property owner communicated with staff that they plan to clear the plots of land this summer. Staff will schedule a follow-up inspection for mid-to-late summer to validate the work has been completed.

- **Update of Ocean County's 2008 Comprehensive Farmland Management Plan**

Mr. Gleason stated that staff, including a few Board members, met with The Land Conservancy of NJ (TLCNJ) and the SADC on June 4th to discuss requirements for the Plan. A grant application is being submitted to the SADC once authorized by the County Board of Commissioners. TLCNJ plans to attend the August 13th OCADB meeting. This meeting will offer an opportunity for questions and engagement. TLCNJ may advertise the meeting to the public. A farm tour will take place on the morning of August 13th with a start time around 9:30am. TLCNJ welcomes a CADB member to join. The tour will likely be of Plumsted and Jackson farms.

VII. Public Comment

Mr. Roohr introduced Alina Robinson as a new SADC staff member that will be working with Ocean County. He also informed the Board that New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill declared a State of Emergency due to the unusual freeze that occurred this Spring causing an estimated \$300 million in agricultural losses. The SADC will temporarily suspend regulations that require 51% of on-site farm market inventories to be produced on the preserved farm if they were crops affected by the freeze.

Dr. Yergeau announced that the Ocean County Fair is upcoming and there are opportunities for farmers to sell their products at the fair.

A **Motion** was made by Mr. Vogel to move into closed session at 8:06 pm. Mr. Lynch seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

A **Motion** was made by Mr. Vogel to move into open session at 8:37 pm. Mrs. Nivison seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

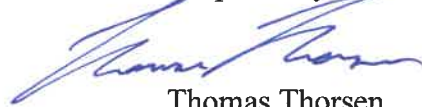
There was no formal action taken on the items discussed in closed session.

VIII. Adjournment

A **MOTION** to adjourn at 8:40 pm was made by Mr. Hallock, Mr. Vogel seconded.
All in favor, motion passed.

Next Meeting: July 8th, 2026 at 7:30pm
New Egypt Town Hall

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas Thorsen
GIS Specialist