

**Ocean County Agricultural Development Board
Minutes of January 11, 2023
Manchester Courtroom, Manchester Township**

Attendance: Doug Hallock, Chairman; Casey Hunter, Vice Chair; Martin Lynch (OCADB); Kathleen Sucharski (OCADB); Glenn Riccardi (OCADB); Jeff Vogel (OCADB); Mark Villinger (OCPLD); Timothy Gleason (OCPLD); Thomas Thorsen (OCPLD); Dr. Stephen Yergeau (OC Ag Ext); Charles Roohr (SADC); Katie Mazzella (SADC). Public Attendees: Diane Vogel

I. Flag Salute

II. Reorganization

Mr. Villinger informed the Board that a nomination for Chairman of the Board for 2023 was needed.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Lynch to renominate Doug Hallock as Chairman of the Ocean County Agricultural Development Board. Mr. Hunter 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. Lynch to renominate Casey Hunter as Vice Chairman of the Ocean County Agricultural Development Board. Mr. Vogel seconded. Roll Call. Mr. Hunter abstained. All in favor, motion carried.

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

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

III. Call to order and Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act- Doug Hallock (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm by declaring a quorum and stating the Open Public Meetings Act requirements had been met.

IV. Roll Call

V. Approval of Minutes

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Hunter to approve the December 14, 2022 minutes. Ms. Sucharski seconded. Roll Call. Mr. Riccardi abstained. All in favor, motion carried.

VI. Program Updates

- 58 Farms/3,466 acres preserved – Mr. Villinger informed the Board that there has been no new closings since the last meeting. Murray Farm in Lakewood Township

and Huie Farm in Plumsted Township are all currently in the process of receiving appraisals.

VII. New Business

- Status of Farm Conservation Plans – Mr. Villinger informed the Board that the deed of easement for most preserved farms requires a farm conservation plan within a year of preservation. Enforcement of this has been relaxed because NRCS has been backed up with work and there was no assistance to get these plans completed. The backlog of work is now gone and the Soil District also has somebody that is able to write plans. The Board was informed that they have received a list showing the preserved farms in Ocean County that have a plan and do not have a plan. Staff suggested an outreach to all preserved farm owners with a copy of the NRCS Introduction to Conservation Planning workbook.

Mr. Vogel questioned if this was something required by preserved farm owners and Mr. Villinger informed that if it is in the deed of easement then it should be done within a year of preservation.

Mr. Hallock questioned why some preserved farms are not required to have a conservation plan and Mr. Thorsen informed that if it is not written in the deed of easement then it is not required, but it is still encouraged as it is needed for grants.

Ms. Sucharski questioned how often a preserved farm needs a plan and Mr. Thorsen informed that they are made initially and should be updated every time a farm changes its agricultural type.

Mr. Lynch questioned if the farm owner receives any assistance in creating a conservation plan and Mr. Villinger informed that the NRCS office in Columbus, NJ has staff that will write the plan for free.

Mr. Villinger questioned if the Board had any concerns with staff doing outreach and Ms. Sucharski stated that she thinks it will be a good thing to send all preserved farm owners a letter encouraging them to create a conservation plan. Mr. Hunter questioned if this outreach can be done with the farms notification of yearly farm inspection and he was informed that this was the plan. The Board also agreed that when a new property owner moves in they should receive information going over what it means to own a preserved farm and to be apart of the program.

VIII. Public Comment

Mr. Villinger encouraged opening up the meeting to Public Comment before Closed Session. Mr. Hallock opened the meeting to the public. Mr. Roohr informed the Board that the SADC has had the same issue regarding conservation plans and the NRCS being too backed up to complete them. He stated that the SADC uses the plans when they discover an issue on a farm. They will ask the farm owner if the issue is part of their conservation plan and if it is part of the plan then the SADC no longer has an issue. Mr. Roohr then informed the Board that at the last SADC meeting cannabis was discussed and there was a determination made that cultivation of cannabis on preserved farms is permitted and it is considered an agricultural product. Mr. Roohr also informed the Board

that the State Board of Agriculture made comments on the Soil Protection Standards and the SADC is still looking over them. Finally, Mr. Roohr informed the Board that the SADC does not see a downside in Assemblyman Sauickie's A4729 which would provide an alternative funding formula for farmland preservation.

Ms. Mazzella informed the Board that the Filippone and Krowicki farms are currently under green light review and they should hopefully be done within a couple weeks.

Mr. Hallock questioned Mr. Roohr if he can get a new state preservation sign and he was informed that the SADC currently has a stock of signs that they can provide. The only difference now is that farms have to install the sign on their own.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Lynch to move into Closed Session at 7:25 p.m. Ms. Sucharski seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Hunter to move back into Open Session at 7:45 p.m. Mr. Lynch seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

There will be no action taken on the single farm application that was discussed in closed session.

Mr. Hallock stated that an individual asked him how long farmland preservation is good for. He is informed by staff that farmland preservation is for perpetuity or until the legislative body changes the rules.

IX. Adjournment

A **MOTION** to adjourn at 7:52 pm was made by Mr. Lynch and seconded by Mr. Hunter. All in favor, motion passed.

**Next Meeting: February 8, 2023 at 7PM
Manchester Council Meeting Room, Manchester Township**

Respectfully Submitted,



Tim Gleason
Planner Trainee