

Approved Minutes
Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board
Wednesday, September 5, 2012
Location: Kent / MSU Extension

Members Present: Carl Blough, Bryan Harrison, Gabe Hudson, Dennis Heffron, Sr. Lucille Janowiak, Suzie Reinbold

Members Absent: Tom Antor

Staff Present: Kendra Wills

Meeting called to order at 11:34 AM by Hudson.

Public Comment

Hudson noted that he has some medical issues coming up and he would not be active with the Ag Board for a few weeks.

Review of Agenda for Possible Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Adoption of August 1, 2012 Minutes

Motion by Janowiak with support from Reinbold to approve the minutes with one spelling correction on page two. Unanimous.

Preservation of the Lovins Farm

Wills gave an overview of the funding earmarked for the preservation of the G & L Orchards property and the Lovins farm. Wills stated that there appears to be a shortage in the amount required to preserve the Lovins farm as the Grand Valley Biosolids Authority (GVRBA) will not be allocating the full \$40,000 they have earmarked in their budget to one farm. At this point, the GVRBA is in the process of creating a scoring system to determine a contribution amount and they hope these funds will help preserve at least two farms.

After some discussion, the Preservation Board determined that Grattan Township will be sent a letter requesting a \$12,300 contribution (their remaining PDR allocation balance) toward the Lovins farm. This would leave a shortage of approximately \$4,000. Motion by Reinbold with support from Heffron that this should be taken in equal portions from the Kent County, Grand Rapids Community Foundation funds and Frey Foundation funds earmarked for the G & L Orchards property and put toward the Lovins farm. Unanimous.

This leaves approximately \$32,000 to be raised at the September 27 fund raiser event to preserve the G & L Orchards property. The Preservation Board was comfortable with this amount as it is calculated to be \$1,000 per acre to be raised to preserve the G & L Orchards property. Wills agreed to notify the Frey and GRCF Foundation of this arrangement to make sure they were in agreement with the usage of their funds in this manner.

Next, the Preservation Board reviewed the draft biosolids application easement as amended by the City of Wyoming attorney and the GVRBA. The Preservation Board had several questions about the easement and several suggestions for revisions. It was determined that a meeting would be requested with Kim Hackbardt and any other GVRBA officials to discuss this easement. Mr. Heffron would like to attend the

meeting with Wills. Wills will notify all Preservation Board members of this meeting after the date and time are set.

The Preservation Board also reviewed the draft PDR easement for the Lovins as drafted by Wills based on the USDA NRCS's template. The Preservation Board made some edits to this document and requested Wills research the some provisions in the easement drafted by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as the Preservation Board felt the MDARD language may be more suitable for this property. Wills will provide information for the next monthly meeting.

Regarding the ordering of a Phase 1 environmental assessment of the Lovins and G & L Orchards property Heffron moved with support from Janowiak that a Phase 1 report be conducted for both properties to ensure that neither property is significantly environmentally contaminated to prevent preservation for agricultural purposes. Unanimous.

Wills will also request that a conservation plan for both properties be conducted by the local USDA NRCS office.

Preservation Board Facebook Page

Wills reported that she would no longer be able to serve as the Administrator of the Kent County Agriculture's Facebook page. After some discussion, the Preservation Board agreed that they would like to ask Paula Blough, a college student majoring in agricultural communications and daughter of Carl Blough, to serve as the Administrator of the Facebook page. This will be an unpaid volunteer position but may give her valuable experience to add to her resume. Wills agreed to contact Ms. Blough to transfer this responsibility. Preservation Board members will have to email Ms. Blough if they want items posted.

November Beer, Wine and Food Festival

Wills asked the group if they would like to get a table at the Beer, Wine and Food Festival at DeVos Place again. The group agreed this was a valuable public education and networking activity. Wills will inquire if free space can be secured.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Next meeting: October 3, 2012 11:30 a.m. at Kent/MSU Extension

Meeting notes written by Kendra Wills