

Approved Minutes
Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board
February 6, 2013
Location: Kent/MSU Extension

Members Present: Tom Antor (County Commissioner), Carl Blough (Ag Interest) Gabe Hudson (Ag Interest), Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Michele VanHouten (Conservation Interest)

Members Absent: Denny Heffron, Ag Interest

Guest: No Guests Present

Staff Present: Stacy Byers, Board Coordinator and Jennifer DeHaan, County Administrators Office

Meeting called to order at 11:33am by Hudson.

I. Welcome and Call to Order: Gabe Hudson, Chair

- a. Chair Hudson introduced Michele VanHouten, the newest member appointed to the Agriculture Preservation Board. VanHouten is replacing Sister Lucille as the Conservation Interest Representative. VanHouten briefly introduced herself and shared her background. She hales from Parnell, Michigan and has deep love of open space and farmland preservation and feels very strongly about seeing it protected. She received a Bachelors degree in Biology from Calvin College and went on to receive a Masters Degree from Aquinas College. VanHouten has extensive experience in the environmental field and was an engineering consultant for many years working on health and safety issues. In her most recent employment, she deals with purchasing and supply chain related projects. She is looking forward to working with the Agriculture Preservation Board.

II. Public Comment: None.

III. Review Agenda and Declaration of Any Possible Conflict of Interest. None was heard.

IV. Review and Adoption of January 9, 2013 Minutes.

- a. The January 9, 2013 meeting minutes were discussed. **Motion by Reinbold, second by Antor to approve the January 9, 2013 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.**

V. Old Business

- a. 2013 Kent County PDR Application Cycle – Legislative Committee Meeting January 22, 2013 approved selection criteria and application cycle. – Chair Hudson, commented that he felt using the term “PDR” had a negative connotation to it. Discussion followed about re-branding the name of the Agriculture Preservation Board. Reinbold suggested simply continuing to use “Agriculture Preservation Board” in all material and communication and discontinue using “farmland”. The Board agreed. Commissioner Antor gave a brief update of the

Kent County Board of Commissioners meeting to approve the selection criteria. Brief discussion followed.

- b. 2012 Application Cycle update
 - i. BOC Meetings – February 5, 2013 Finance Committee
 - 1. Review of option agreements for 2013. Byers informed the Board that the Action Request for the February 5, 2013 Finance Committee meeting had been pulled from the agenda and added to the February 19, 2013 meeting. Byers explained that the numbers presented on the first action request reflected the 2011 appraisal amounts and that the 2012 numbers should be used, (updated appraisals were conducted in the fall of 2012 on the properties.) Byers presented a spreadsheet with the update appraisal information. In light of the new information, only two properties would be able to be sent forward for consideration due to the budget. The Board discussed the three properties and decided to pursue option agreements on the Frost Property, as it was being funded with matching dollars from the Wege Foundation and the VanOeffelen property as the landowner was willing to give a \$300 per acre donation toward the purchase of the Conservation Easement. **Motion by Antor, seconded by Reinbold to recommend approval by the Kent County Board of Commissioners to enter into Option Agreements on the Frost Family Trust and VanOeffelen Properties. Motion passed unanimously.**
- c. Updates of (Pending) Closings
 - i. Lovins Farm closed January 2013. Byers gave a brief update of the Lovins Farm closing that was held in January 2013.
 - ii. Patterson Farm – still pending oil and gas lease termination – Byers commented that the attorney of the landowner had discovered a section in the lease that allowed the Conservation Easement to be purchased without need to have it subordinated or terminated. The Title Company agreed and the closing is set for the end of February 2013 sometime.

VI. New Business

- a. 2013 FRPP Announcement – Byers discussed the upcoming FRPP 2013 Application deadline of March 8, 2013. She is working with the landowners, USDA-NRCS and FSA to gather all the appropriate documents to determine landowner eligibility for the program and compiling the grant information. She is confident she will have all the information by the application deadline. The Board also discussed hosting workshops around the county to assist interested landowners with questions about the program and fill out their application.

Consensus for a date fell around mid-April. Blough offered use of the Lowell Township Hall, at no cost. The Board agree that, that would be a nice location to host one of the workshops.

VII. Other. None.

VIII. Public Comment. No Public present.

IX. Adjournment. Motion by Antor, seconded by Reinbold to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Next Meeting: March 6, 2013 at 11:30 am at Kent/MSU Extension.