

**Approved Minutes**  
**Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board**  
**January 8, 2014**  
**Location: MSU Extension Office**

**Members Present:** Carl Blough (Ag Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest), Michele VanHouten (Conservation Interest), Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Denny Heffron (Ag Interest) and Candace E. Chivis (County Commissioner)

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Stacy Byers, Board Coordinator

**Meeting began at 11:40am.**

- I. **Welcome: Denny Heffron, Vice-Chair.** Commissioner Chivis will be the Board of Commissioner liaison to the Agriculture Preservation Board. She will be taking the seat of Commissioner Antor. Commissioner Chivis introduced herself. The Board was pleased with her interest in Farmland Preservation and welcomed her aboard.
- II. **Public Comment: None.**
- III. **Review Agenda and Declaration of Any Possible Conflict of Interest.** None was heard.
- IV. **Review and Adoption of December 4, 2013 Minutes.**
  - a. **Motion by Robinette seconded by Reinbold to adopt December 4, 2013 minutes with corrections. Motion passed.**
- V. **Old Business**
  - a. *2014 Selection Criteria, Discussion of PA 116 section* - Discussion was heard regarding the 2014 Selection Criteria. For the most part the criteria is in good order. At the January 4, 2014 meeting, Byers suggested removing item #11. Public Act 116 Program – Maximum Points: 4. Heffron pointed out that the PA 116 program has been a good program for Michigan and has helped to protect, at least temporarily, for many years. The intent behind the criteria when it was established was to show intent of the landowner. If a landowner was enrolled in PA 116 they were preservation minded and a good candidate for the program. However, despite these positive outcomes of the PA 116 program, it has recently proven to be a challenge to determine an appropriate value. **Moved by Reinbold, seconded by Robinette to remove #11 from the criteria and redistribute the 4 points equally among #10 A, increasing the max points possible to 6, 5, 4, 3, respectively. Motion carried.** Discussion was also heard regarding the 2014 application timeline. The ordinance requires 90 day notice

from the time of posting to the application deadline. March 1 through May 31, 2014 was discussed.

- b. *Weeks and Hefferan update – farms for 2014* - Byers informed the group that she had been speaking with the Weeks family and they have decided to not proceed with a conservation easement for this round, 2014. Heffron informed the group that he spoke with the Hefferan family, and although they are still interested, they would not be ready to proceed until mid to late summer 2014. Byers reminded the Board of the March 7, 2014 FRPP deadline and that we need to nominate two properties to move forward with the application process. There are four properties on the list from Grattan Township, the Roth, Hall, Malone and Poulias properties. Byers will be contacting the Wege Foundation to determine if substitutions can be made for the Weeks and Hefferan Properties. If yes, the next two priority properties would be the Poulias and Hall Farms. The Board encouraged Byers to proceed with the Poulias and Hall properties and to pursue option agreements if the landowners and Wege Foundation agree.

**VI.** New Business

- a. *Budget 2014* – The Wege Foundation approved using grant funds from 2013 toward the cost of appraisals and contractual services for administration. Byers will be meeting with Swanson to go over a 2014 contract.
- b. *Election of Officers* – Nominations were heard to cast unanimous ballots for Denny Heffron, Chair; Michele VanHouten, Vice-Chair; and Suzie Reinbold, as Secretary. **Motion made by VanHouten, seconded by Robinette to move the slate of officers for the 2014 calendar year. Motion carried.**

**VII.** Public Comment – None was heard

**VIII.** Adjournment – **Motion by Reinbold, seconded by Robinette to adjourn. Motion passed. Next meeting date is February 5, 2014 at the MSU Extension Offices.**

Next Meeting: *February 5, 2014 at 11:30 am at Kent/MSU Extension.*