

Approved Minutes
Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board
April 2, 2014
Location: Kent/MSU Extension

Members Present: Candace Chivis (County Commissioner), Carl Blough (Ag Interest), Dennis Heffron (Ag Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest), Russ Slater (Ag Interest) and Michele Van Houten (Conservation Interest)

Members Absent: Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest)

Staff Present: Stacy Byers (Board Coordinator via phone), Debbie Green (Kent/MSU Extension Staff) and Kevin Travis (Administrators Office)

Public Present:

Meeting began at 11:35 a.m.

- I. **Welcome and Call to Order – Chair, Dennis Heffron**
- II. **Public Comment – None**
- III. **Review Agenda and Declaration of Any Possible Conflict of Interest – None**
- IV. **Review and Adoption of March 5, 2014 Minutes –** Candace Chivis suggested that Mary Swanson and Kevin Travis be listed as staff because they are county staff and serve in that capacity. **Motion by Robinette and seconded by Blough to adopt March 5, 2014 minutes. Motion passed.**
- V. **Old Business**
 - a. 2014 FRPP applications – update
The Hall and Poulias farms were submitted to the Federal Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program in March. In the past, announcements have taken 3-6 months to be made, so it may be the end of summer before we hear back. Stacy is planning to have the CE's drafted and much of the due diligence completed, in anticipation of the cooperative agreement. Dennis Heffron asked if there were any other farms to submit. Stacy suggested holding off on getting other farms ready for submission due to the cost involved, i.e. appraisal, survey, etc.
 - b. 2013 FRPP Status – Frost and Van Oeffelen
Dennis Heffron talked to Brian Thomas, the Federal Coordinator for FRPP, at a meeting on April 17 to verify the Frost and Van Oeffelen farms. Stacy then updated the board on these two farms. The Van Oeffelen appraisal had to be redone and it came in \$2,500 less this year as compared to last year's appraisal. The Frost family is very anxious to close. Stacy is working on conservation easements and is hopeful that the closings will be in the next 30-60 days.

VI. **New Business**

a. 2014 Application Cycle

The new cycle (April-July 2014) is pending the Board of Commissioners approval. This item will come before the Finance Committee meeting on April 7 and then go to the full Board of Commissioners meeting on April 10.

There will be postcards mailed out to landowners who own 40 plus acres of land around the end of April. In June-July there will be township meetings for the landowners where they can get their questions answered and get help filling out the forms for Farmland Preservation.

Stacy updated the board on the League of Conservation Voters Projects. The Education Campaign will involve networking with 11 groups and stakeholders and the bus tours will hinge on funding of the grant.

VII. **Other**

Carl Blough mentioned that there was a very nice article regarding Farmland Preservation in the Michigan Farmer magazine.

VIII. **Public Comment – None**

IX. **Adjournment – Motion by Russ Slater, seconded by Candace Chivis to adjourn. Motion passed.** Meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Next Meeting May 7, 2014 at 11:30 a.m. at Kent/MSU Extension