

Approved Minutes
Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board
June 4, 2014
Location: Kent/MSU Extension

Members Present: Candace Chivis (County Commissioner), Carl Blough (Ag Interest), Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Russ Slater (Ag Interest) and Ed Robinette (Township Interest)

Members Absent: Dennis Heffron (Ag Interest), Kevin Travis (Administrator's Office) and Michele Van Houten (Conservation Interest)

Staff Present: Stacy Byers (Board Coordinator) and Debbie Green (Kent/MSU Extension Staff)

Public Present:

Meeting began at 11:40 a.m.

- I. **Welcome and Call to Order** – In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Carlton Blough took over running the meeting.
- II. **Public Comment** – None
- III. **Review Agenda and Declaration of Any Possible Conflict of Interest** – None
- IV. **Review and Adoption of May 7, 2014** – Meeting minutes were reviewed by members present. **Motion by Robinette and seconded by Chivis to adopt May 7, 2014 minutes. Motion passed.**
- V. **Old Business**
 - a) 2014 FRPP applications update –
 - b) 2013 FRPP Status – Frost and Van Oeffelen
The Frost farm closing, owners are in California, will hopefully take place on Wednesday, June 11. All that is needed are signatures.

Currently the Van Oeffelen farm closing materials are sitting on the Federal Coordinator's desk waiting for the manuals to be written. The hold up with this closing is because of the new Farm Bill law. Hopefully this closing will take place by the end of summer.
 - c) 2014 Application Cycle – update
Postcards have been mailed out and requests are due in the office by Wednesday, July 16. We are receiving a few applications which will be put on the list for the 2014 county application cycle. The people on the waiting list have all been contacted and wish to remain on the listing of farms to be funded.

d) LCVEF – update

The League of Conservation Voters is waiting to find out about a grant for funding the campaigns for 2014 and 2015. The goal is to educate people on the advantages of farmland preservation. Stacy mentioned that people should begin seeing weekly newspaper articles on farmland preservation.

The date for the all day (11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. approximately) bus tour is Wednesday, July 23. Everyone is encouraged to attend this tour to help educate the public on the importance of farmland preservation. This bus tour will be repeated in 2015. There will also be two conversion van tours, but no dates have been set.

There will be a speaker series sometime in either late October or after Thanksgiving. This two day event will be open to the general public on the first day learning about land use and the second day will be for a more specific audience and will be comparable to Train-the-Trainer workshop.

Candace Chivis brought up the suggestion of getting the Grand Rapids Public School students involved and educated about agribusiness and farmland preservation/land use issues. She believes that the Latino, migrants and African American communities are an under informed population when it comes to agricultural issues. She has talked to the editor of the Grand Rapids Times, Dr. Patricia Pullman about this issue.

VI. **New Business**

Stacy was contacted by Teresa from Consumers Energy regarding the Ag Preservation Board having a booth at a festival titled “101 Days of Summer”. Teresa was under the impression that the board had manned a booth at this event last year. Discussion followed regarding the option of having a booth at this festival this year.

VII. **Other** – none

VIII. **Public Comment** – none

IX. **Adjournment – Motion by Slater and seconded by Robinette to adjourn. Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Next Meeting July 2, 2014 at 11:30 a.m. at the Kent/MSU Extension Office