

Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board

July 1, 2015

Location: Kent/MSU Extension

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

Staff Present: Stacy Byers (Board Coordinator), Debbie Green (Kent/MSU Extension Staff) and Nathan Kark (Administrator's Office)

Staff Absent: Mary Swanson (Administrator's Office)

Public Present: None

Meeting began at 11:33 a.m.

- I. **Welcome and Call to Order** – Chairperson, Dennis Heffron
- II. **Public Comment** – None
- III. **Review Agenda and Declaration of Any Possible Conflict of Interest** – None
- IV. **Review and Adoption of May 6, 2015 Minutes** – Motion made by Robinette to accept minutes with the changes suggested by Slater. Seconded by Van Houten. Motion passed.
- V. **Old Business**
 - a. 2014 FRPP applications – update Hall, Poulias
The Hall property will be closing on Wednesday, July 8 at 3:00 p.m.

The Poulias property is waiting for the technical review, this was applied for three months ago.
 - b. 2013 FRPP status – Frost and Vanoeffelen
The Frost property is completed.

The Vanoeffelen property will not be able to be preserved because the oil and gas company will not allow any changes to the lease. Therefore, the funds from the Frey and Grand Rapids Foundation and federal money set aside to preserve this property will need to be applied to another property. Just a reminder, the end of the application cycle is July 31, 2015.
 - c. 2015 Application cycle – Malone
The Malone property, which is 100 acres, has 56 acres that will be moved to the 2016 cycle for possible preservation.

Byers will be updating the Kruithoff farm property today and that could be a possibility in the 2016 cycle also.

The question was raised if there was any possibility of preserving any properties in the Cannon Township area.

d. 2015 Application cycle

i. May 1 through July 31, 2015

Byers reported that she has not received any NEW applications for the 2016 cycle, but has received a lot of renewals. It was brought up that deed searches should be made on the properties before being accepted into the program because of possible problems with oil and gas leases.

VI. **New Business**

Plans are being made for a celebration for the farms that have been preserved (Frost, Poulias and Hall). The date has been set for October 14 and it will be held at the Hall farm.

Changes in the Federal Farm Bill has caused delays getting all the paperwork completed (currently it takes 2 years) to preserve farm land. Also, there has been a turnover of new staff members learning the process of filing paperwork.

VII. **Other**

Township Workshops - Robinette, who is the current President of the Kent County Chapter of the Michigan Township Association, said that currently there are no chapter meetings scheduled because of the low attendance at previous meetings. Robinette also reported that now the County Supervisors, Treasures and Clerks all meet together once a month and Steve Grim is the head of the County Supervisors currently.

Heffron reported that he was asked by the supervisors to attend their August meeting to give a presentation on farmland preservation.

Ingham County Activity - Byers was asked about the activity happening in Ingham County (Lansing area). Ingham County had applied to and was accepted into the USA (Urban Sustainable Accelerator) program. This program will take place at Portland State University, July 8-14, 2015 and has to do with Farmland & Open Space Preservation. This is a year-long commitment and Ingham County has been paired up with Reno, Nevada as having similar urban growth programs.

Byers will be collecting information and give updates on what is taking place during this program. Some of this information could work well with the agricultural preservation ideas here in Ingham and Kent counties.

VIII. **Public Comment** – None

IX. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

Next meeting is August 5, 2015 at 11:30 a.m. at the Kent/MSU Extension Office