

Kent County Agricultural Preservation Board Meeting
July 6, 2016
Kent/MSU Extension
11:30 AM

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

Members Absent: Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest)

Staff Present: Stacy Byers (Board Coordinator), Christian Smith (Aid to Stacy and Kent County Ag Board) and Nathan Kark (Administrator's Office)

Staff Absent: Debbie Green (Kent/MSU Extension)

- I. Welcome and Call to Order : 11:41**
- II. Public Comment- None**
- III. Review Agenda and Declaration of Any Possible Conflict of Interest- no comment**
- IV. Review and Adoption of June 1, 2016 Minutes -** Ed moved to adopt the June minutes, Michelle supported, and the motion carried
- V. Old Business**
 - a. Bradford Update- Good news, working with a new representative from AFT, we have been approved to hold the funds for one year. The affidavit on non-production will be recorded at the end of the lease in summer of 2017. We are not required by policy to get a new appraisal, up to landowner comfort. We will run the affidavit by Linda promptly.
 - b. Malone A, B Update - Malone A, 100 acres Federal Easement: Closing date had been set for today for federal easement, but after discussion with the federal reviewer we pushed it back to August 3rd. Waiting for the option agreement for Hefferan to send both through together on July 19th. Will go through the full board at the end of July. Malone B, 57 Acres, local easement will close on the same day.

- c. Hefferan Property Update- held up with our old survey company with technical issues, contracted a new survey company and should get the survey by this afternoon. Discussion was had around the transfer of duties between new and old survey companies. The option agreement can go out soon. The appraisal is being updated, and the exemption acreage has been changed by 1 acre. This will be applied to the 2017 federal program, with an expected deadline in Jan 2017.
- d. 2016 Application Cycle
 - d.i. May 1 – July 31, 2016: Nearing our deadline. Fewer phone calls than in previous years and no applications received yet. The board was encouraged to talk with individuals in person, hand delivering applications. Discussion centered around the lack of application interest. Development pressure was discussed, competition from other preservation programs, the perception that the program doesn't have enough money to preserve many farms or that the program is done. Getting a dedicated funding source would aid public perception of program effectiveness. We need more public education as well. Bradford farm will be a good case study for educational purposes.

VI. Public Comment- None

VII. Adjournment – Russ made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ed seconded the motion and the motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Next Meeting: August 3, 2016 at 11:30 AM at Kent/MSU Extension.