

FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 25, 2022

The regular meeting of the Lower Makefield Farmland Preservation, Inc. (Farmland) Board of Directors (Board) was held remotely on January 25, 2022. Mr. Blank called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Those present:

Farmland Preservation, Inc.: Michael Blank, President
Dennis Steadman, Vice President and Acting Secretary
Daniel Bankoske, Treasurer
Sean Carney, Member
George Heinze, Member

Absent: James McCartney, Supervisor Liaison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Steadman

Mr. Blank moved, Mr. Bankoske seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of December 9, 2021 as written.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER, GEORGE HEINZE: Mr. Carney

Mr. Blank stated this is the first meeting for Mr. George Heinze, the newest member of the Board who was just appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Carney introduced George Heinze, a fellow resident of Farmview Drive. Mr. Carney stated he believes that Mr. Heinze can add to what the Board is doing given his passion for the outdoors and preserving Lower Makefield Township.

Mr. Heinze stated he has lived here almost twenty-five years and has had the benefit of living near the preserved farmland. He appreciates how important that land is to the Township and benefits from it when walking, bike-riding, etc. He stated he would like to help out where he can.

All members welcomed Mr. Heinze.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Mr. Blank

Mr. Steadman moved, Mr. Bankoske seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Michael Blank as President for 2022.

Mr. Blank moved, Mr. Carney seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Dennis Steadman as Vice President for 2022.

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Mr. Carney moved, Mr. Blank seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Dan Bankoske as Treasurer.

There was discussion regarding the position of Secretary, and Mr. Steadman agreed to continue to serve as Acting Secretary at this time.

Mr. Blank moved, Mr. Carney seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Dennis Steadman as Acting Secretary for 2022.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Mr. Bankoske

An invoice is on hold for the fencing work adjacent to the Doug Wright property. Mr. Blank stated the invoice from Apex may have gone to the Township. Mr. Steadman will follow up with Apex.

Rent checks for 2022 have been received from everyone except Bob Colavita who has indicated that the check has been mailed. There was discussion about the discount if the rent is been paid by a specific time and whether the farmers took advantage of that. Mr. Bankoske agreed to look into that and discuss this further in the future. Mr. Heinze will be advised how to access the files with regard to the parcels and Lease details as well as prior year financials. Mr. Steadman asked if Dr. Strnad, the beekeeper, paid the \$10 rent for 2022, and Mr. Bankoske stated he did not. It was noted he is not on the Lease list.

Farmland Preservation is further on in the process than previously with respect to taxes and financials for 2022 purposes. Robert Small is well under way on 2021, and the review may be able to be done earlier this year.

Mr. Blank will make sure that Mr. Heinze is able to access all the files and apps.

APPROVE CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY AND SIGN INDIVIDUAL STATEMENTS: Mr. Blank

These can be e-signed and will automatically be e-mailed to Mr. Blank. Mr. Bankoske was reminded to look for an e-mail in this regard. All other Board members have signed their statements.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF BOARD OPERATING PRINCIPLES: Mr. Blank

The Board Operating Principles were shown. Mr. Bankoske stated documents on file include Conflict of Interest, Document Retention, and Public Inspection and Disclosure. There was discussion about Code of Conduct and Ethics, but this was not found in the files. Mr. Small had provided the Board with a number of documents to consider for approval, and Mr. Bankoske

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will look at Mr. Small's original list of documents to see if a Code of Conduct is available which the Board may want to adopt.

Language was noted regarding the Board's ability to move funds to pay expenses, and Mr. Blank and Mr. Steadman can authorize up to \$500 worth of work to be done by contractors. That would come back to the Board under this Operating Principle at the next meeting at the latest. Board members who spend their own money can be reimbursed when the expense is approved by a majority of the Board.

Language was noted with regard to agreeing to return voice or e-mails within two days.

With regard to exchange of documents and to track revisions, e-mail is to be used for working documents. For documents of record the Microsoft Office SharePoint site is to be used.

With regard to inter-personal issues, phone or face-to-face should be used as opposed to e-mail. When responding to e-mails "reply all" should not be used unless appropriate. "Farmland" should be used in the Subject Line.

With regard to Meeting Management, it indicates the Board will take the time to evaluate the effectiveness of meetings, both process and people, whenever appropriate for purposes of continually improving. With regard to Conflict Management, differences should not be settled over e-mail, and the Board member should be spoken to directly. This issue has not come up for this Board in the past.

With regard to Decision Making, the Board tries to make sure that all have the same understanding of any decision or action item.

The Board welcomes input from observers and guests during Board meeting with decisions made strictly by the Board. Board members are to conduct themselves professionally and treat each other with respect. If a Board member misses a deadline, the Board will follow up with the member to understand the reasons. When a Board member is not "pulling their weight" the issue is brought up with the member one-on-one.

Mr. Steadman stated the Board spent a fair amount of time discussing these issues in the past, and with the currently-configured Board it has been a smooth-functioning, teamwork-effort and he is confident that will continue. Mr. Blank stated he feels it is good to review these at least once a year especially when a new member joins the Board.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF OTHER POLICIES, AS NEEDED: Mr. Blank

Policies including Conflict of Interest, Document Retention and Destruction, and Public Inspection Disclosure were formally approved by the Board on November 15, 2021. Mr. Bankoske noted the Property Line Trees Policy which is in the same file although it is

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different from these other organizational and structural policies. This Policy is available as a reference when needed.

UPDATE ON CORCORAN LANDSCAPING WINTER JOBS: Mr. Carney

Mr. Carney toured the farm buffer areas in mid-December with Mr. Corcoran and looked at the projects that are listed in the Excel file. Mr. Corcoran has ten working days to complete the projects per the budget. He will begin the projects tomorrow, January 26, 2022. A slight buffer area was added behind Sunnyside Lane that Mr. Blank had noted where there had been some bamboo in the past. While there is no bamboo on the Farmland property, there is some overgrowth in the buffer area; and when Mr. Corcoran is in that area, he will work on that as well. It is anticipated the work will be completed by the next Board meeting. Another buffer area pointed out by Mr. Steadman at Makefield Brook/Brentwood Road that needs attention with overgrowth and trees is a stretch adjacent to approximately nine homes. More detail is needed from Mr. Steadman as to those areas that need attention.

Mr. Corcoran has advised that all the local dumps now have fees associated with dumping. The minimum fee in the area is \$50 per truckload. This is a new cost incurred by Mr. Corcoran. When he is able to chip material, he will do that leaving the material scattered in the buffer, which will save Farmland money. Mr. Bankoske noted there may be an appropriate place for this material at Clearview if it can be trucked there. It may be necessary in some instances to take material to the dump and pay the \$50 fee. While use of the Township facility was discussed, it is open for individuals only eight days this year.

The Board will be kept updated on Mr. Corcoran's progress on Teams. Board members were asked to look at their parcels once the work is completed.

REDISTRIBUTION OF PARCEL MANAGEMENT: All

Mr. Blank stated each Board member is responsible for looking at specific parcels regarding buffers, trespassing, etc. That Board member will be the point person for the adjacent homeowners if there is an issue. Mr. Carney stated he had Mr. Heinze accompany him on Stackhouse and Leedom the last time he checked those properties.

There was discussion about the various parcels and farms. Mr. Steadman stated there is one tenant farmer who farms every parcel with the exception of three parcels that are contiguous with their own land. Bob Colavita rents seven acres surrounding his own land. Tom McGowan farms the Farmland property that is contiguous to his farm, and Doug Wright farms a Farmland parcel that is contiguous with his own fields. Every other Farmland parcel is leased by Sam Stewart and Tim Stewart of Charlann Farms.

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There was discussion about the different names of the various farm parcels. Farmland Preservation uses the names of the development attached to the preserved farmland.

Mr. Steadman stated the Stewarts farm over 1,000 acres in Bucks County, including the ~200 acres leased from Farmland Preservation. He stated while this is a business relationship, the Board needs to support them when possible as we are unable to maintain preserved farmland without a farmer working the land.

Management of the parcels was discussed and the following assignments were accepted by the Board:

Mr. Bankoske: Heather Ridge, Farmview/Bethel
Mr. Blank: Farmview II, Longshore
Mr. Carney: Leedom, Colavita
Mr. Heinze: Stackhouse*, Bridle Estates
Mr. Steadman: Clearview, Makefield Brook
*Mr. Carney – back-up for February and March

Mr. Blank will advise Mr. Wright that Mr. Heinze will now be the contact for Bridle Estates, and Mr. Heinze will be introduced to Mr. Wright at a future time.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Blank
There was no public comment at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS: All

Mr. Carney stated there has not yet been a buffer discussion with the farmers so that is still an Action Item.

Mr. Carney stated he would still like to work toward a list of approved hunters on the properties. He noted there has been a lot of activity on Stackhouse, but without a list of approved hunters and license plates, it is difficult to know exactly what is going on. Mr. Steadman agreed to work on a list, adding that he knows who the Red Tag hunters are; but during regular hunting season, he does not know if everyone on the properties have permission.

Mr. Steadman stated he sent in the Application to the Game Commission on January 5 for the Red Tag season that starts February 1. He hopes to have the Red Tags by February 1 so that they can be distributed to the hunters.

Mr. Carney noted that there had been a very visible hunting blind on Stackhouse that the Board had asked be taken down after the crop was removed. He stated shortly thereafter a ground

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hunting blind showed up on Longshore that is very visible from the road. Mr. Blank agreed to look into this. Mr. Carney stated there is also a deer stand at the corner of Sunnyside Lane.

Post Meeting Note: The Board exchanged emails during January regarding the potential change in ownership and use of the Torbert Farm on Rt. 332 and Creamery Rd. This parcel of 108 Ac is currently farmed. Farmland Preservation is interested in seeing some or all of this enrolled in a farmland preservation easement. The Farmland Preservation Board is willing and able to get involved in helping to secure such a status.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS: All

1. Mr. Steadman – Follow up with Apex on the fence repair
2. Mr. Bankoske – Check on Code of Conduct
3. Mr. Steadman – Follow up on list of approved hunters
4. Mr. Steadman – Contact the Stewarts about meeting on buffers
5. Mr. Blank – Advise Mr. Wright that Mr. Heinze will be the contact
6. Mr. Carney – Verify communication among Board members with Mr. Heinze
7. Mr. Bankoske – Check on discounts for early rent payments
8. Mr. Steadman – Remind Dr. Strnad about rent payment. (Note: at next meeting, Board to discuss a proposal to support his honeybee hive expansion.)
9. Mr. Blank – Look into Longshore deer blind situation

There was no public comment at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Blank, President