

FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2024

The regular meeting of the Lower Makefield Farmland Preservation, Inc. (Farmland) Board of Directors (Board) was held remotely on January 16, 2024. Mr. Blank called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Those present:

Farmland Preservation, Inc.: Michael Blank, President
George Heinze, Secretary
Sean Carney, Member

Others: Daniel Grenier, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Dennis Steadman, Vice President
Dan Bankoske, Treasurer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Heinze

Mr. Blank moved, Mr. Carney seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of November 21, 2023 as written.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS: All

Mr. Blank stated it is a requirement of the By-Laws to have the annual election of Officers at the first meeting of the year.

Mr. Carney moved and Mr. Heinze seconded to elect Michael Blank as President. Mr. Blank stated Mr. Bankoske had indicated that he was in agreement with this. Motion carried unanimously.

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

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

Mr. Blank moved, Mr. Carney seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect George Heinze as Secretary. Mr. Blank noted Mr. Bankoske agreed to provide the third vote for this position.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2024

TREASURER’S REPORT: Mr. Blank

While Mr. Bankoske was not present this evening, Mr. Blank advised that he and Mr. Bankoske had a telecon with the Fidelity money manager about our account. The annual review was to see if the risk profile had changed, and it was advised that, based on discussions with the Board, it would not. The existing asset allocation will remain the same at 60/40 stock to bonds.

PROPOSAL FOR RE-NAMING OF PARCELS: Mr. Carney, Mr. Heinze

Mr. Carney stated he and Mr. Heinze believe that some of the parcels could be re-named so that it is more consistent for the Board and when speaking with the farmers, and contractors. Mr. Carney stated he had a discussion with Sam Stewart and would like to continue that discussion with Sam Stewart and Tim Stewart to understand more of the history of the farms. Deeds were also provided which will be reviewed. It will take time before names for some of the farms are brought before the Board for consideration.

Mr. Heinze stated since this is not a pressing issue, he feels this should be done once and done right.

Mr. Blank suggested speaking to Tom McGowen as well.

Mr. Grenier joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Grenier asked if any of the name changes would affect the Easements or official documents. Mr. Blank stated they checked the Deeds which were deeded to Farmland from the developers. It seems that the developers chose names that were consistent with the names of the developments. Mr. Blank suggested checking with the Historical Commission as well. Mr. Carney stated while the Board is considering re-naming them, it would not involve any official documents; and it just to provide consistency for the Board and those we work with on these farms. Mr. Grenier suggested speaking with Dr. Helen Heinze who is on the Historical Commission and has a lot of knowledge about the Township.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2024

FINAL WINTER SCHEDULE FOR BUFFER MAINTENANCE: Mr. Carney

Each winter the Board contracts with a third-party contractor for ten days at a set price to have work done during the off-season for work that cannot be done during the crop season. Costs for this work is less during the winter than during the summer. Each farm is evaluated, and an amount of days is given for each project. This year there are only nine days to allocate instead of ten because one of the days was used for maintenance when it was needed on the buffer during the growing season. The nine days have been allocated and the contractor was shown each of the jobs on site, discussing what work needed to be done and the hour expectations. The jobs can be done by the contractor whenever he wishes. While rain this year has impacted the contractor's ability to do work yet, the work will be done during January, February, and March. The contractor will advise when a job finished so that the Board can go out and look at it.

Mr. Carney stated he contacted Mr. Corcoran about the downed tree at Longshore from the recent wind storm. Mr. Corcoran saw it, and feels that they can save us money by cutting it up, and stacking the wood in the woods as opposed to having to haul it away or chip it which would be a substantial cost. While there is not yet a quote, Mr. Carney assumes it will be a half day to one day's work; and once he has a quote, he will provide it to the Board. Mr. Carney added that it will not be part of the nine days of work already allocated, and this will be outside of that. He stated while the tree is laying in the farming area, it would not need to be picked until Mr. Stewart is there with equipment in April.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Blank

There was no one wishing to make public comment at this time.

PROPOSED LETTER TO NEIGHBORS: Mr. Blank

The Board sends out a letter every other year to the neighbors bordering Farmland parcels identifying the Board and reminding the neighbors that yard waste, limbs, etc. should not be thrown onto the Farmland property as it is private property; and there is no trespassing allowed. They are also invited to join the public meetings.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2024

Mr. Blank showed a draft of the letter to be sent. He stated they try to identify new neighbors. Included in the letter is where neighbors can find more information about Farmland Preservation. The farms that participate in the program are identified, the amount of acreage, and the number of neighbors bordering Farmland property, which is about 200. The regime instituted a few years ago for maintaining the buffer areas is also described.

Mr. Carney stated he is in favor of sending out the letter given the amount of turn-over in the area with new neighbors moving in who are unsure who owns the other side of the fence. He asked if this could also be posted on the Township Website, and Mr. Blank agreed the letter could be put on Farmland's Web page. Mr. Heinze stated he agrees in doing it proactively by sending it out to the neighbors and passively by putting it on the Township Website.

Mr. Grenier stated he assumes the buffers are an issue with the neighbors, and he asked if there is a description of how the buffers are defined or where the neighbors could go to see what the buffer is on the Farm that they are adjacent to. Mr. Blank stated he will explain Mr. Grenier how the buffer is defined following the meeting.

UPDATE ON NEIGHBORS' DUMPING ON HEATHER RIDGE AND FARMVIEW: Mr. Blank

There are neighbors putting yard waste over the Farmland side of the fence on Heather Ridge and Farmview, and Mr. Blank drafted two letters which had been provided to the Board. Mr. Carney stated he is a proponent of trying to meet the neighbors first, which Mr. Blank did; but follow-up letters are needed to document what has been done. Mr. Carney stated there is also help at the Township level if needed with repeat offenders. Mr. Carney stated in recent years he has noticed that the more we take care of the fence line, less yard waste is being thrown over.

Mr. Blank stated he spoke to Mike Kirk to ask if he had any suggestions on how to get neighbors to answer the door, and he indicated that he leaves a door hanger; and we could consider doing that if a neighbor does not answer the door. Mr. Carney stated he felt that Mr. Kirk had indicated that if the Board was

FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2024

having an issue with someone, we should provide him with the name and address and a description of what is happening, and that he would then go out to the property.

Mr. Grenier stated if there is anything the Township can do in way of a PSA, social media, etc. to educate people as to what they can and cannot do, and where they can get more education, the Board should advise him, and he can work with the Township staff to do this. Mr. Blank stated he felt possibly we could include something in the Township Newsletter. Mr. Grenier recommended that he contact Mr. Kratzer and that he be copied on anything sent about having something put in the Township Newsletter. He stated information can be put on all Township social media as well as in the next Newsletter.

UPDATE ON THE HOUPT SIGN: Mr. Blank

In the early days of Farmland Preservation, Mr. Houpt was one of the first Board members, and a sign was installed at the corner of Dolington and Woodside that said “Houpt Farm”, and it is decaying. There are Farmland Preservation signs on other Farmland parcels, and a new sign has been made similar to those honoring Mr. Houpt’s service. The existing sign will be replaced with the new sign.

OTHER BUSINESS: All

Installation of Gate at Clearview – Mr. Blank stated Mr. Steadman sent out a text about people driving onto the Clearview property at Woodside and Taylorsville Roads, putting ruts in the area and making it difficult for farming. We have agreed with the Township to split the cost of a gate, and Farmland’s share is \$1,000. Mr. Heinze stated he responded to the proposal and gave his approval on the text message to proceed with our \$1,000 portion. Mr. Carney stated we are not really splitting the cost; and the Board will be paying the \$1,000 cost of the materials, and the Township has agreed to use their manpower to install the gate. Mr. Carney stated he is in favor of the Board paying for the materials. He added that two times this year someone drove in there and did significant damage; and the second time they did it was during the crop season and took out about half of the soy crop from the small field by the road. He stated he feels the gate will be a deterrent.

Mr. Heinze moved, Mr. Blank seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve spending \$1,000 for materials to put up a gate on Clearview.

FARMLAND PRESEVATION, INC.
MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2024

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one wishing to make public comment at this time.

Mr. Heinze moved, Mr. Blank seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Heinze, Secretary