

Alloway Township Agriculture Advisory Board

Minutes
July 9, 2020

The meeting was conducted by a Zoom virtual platform. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Schultz at 7:35pm.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Schultz.

Roll call: present - Jack Schultz, Al Mitchell, Lou Joyce, Brian Lorenz, Kurt Sickler, Talia Priore, Warren Morgan, Twp committee liaison.

Absent- Walt Turner

Other present: Katie Mazzella, SADC

The minutes from the March 12, 2020 meeting were discussed. Minutes approved on motion by Mr. Schultz, 2nd by Mr. Lorenz, all in favor, abstain by Sickler.

Old Business:

Report from Salem County CADB: no report

Report from SADC:

Katie Mazzella provided updates on current applications and initiatives from SADC. She reported that the Rieck and Bell applications have received Green Light Approval and NJCF has applied for the federal match and the appraisals will be ordered by end of summer; the Ayars farm is proceeding through State Direct Easement with 100% funding and no match required from the Township PIG grant; the SADC is employing a drone operator to do some pre-preservation inspections since the staff is working remotely and cannot do in person inspections; (Mr. Morgan volunteered that a local person has a drone company that may be available); she reported that the current balance in the Township PIG Grant is \$528,254; she reported that a report from the American Farmland Trust ranked NJ as 1st in the nation in policies to protect farmland. Finally, she explained the PIG Grant program for the new members of the Committee.

The SADC Annual Report for FY2019 was reviewed. The report listed Salem County leading the State in preserved acreage at 39,160 acres on 346 farms. The report indicated that 21 farms totaling 1,819 acres were preserved in the County in FY2019 and citing the Gentile and Sickler farms among those preserved.

Report from NJCF: Mr. Rapa sent an email stating: On July 1, NJCF and Salem County successfully applied to NRCS for ACEP-ALE grants for the Bell and Rieck farms. All indications are that the application packets are in good order and we are optimistic that the farms will receive funding. No timeline yet on receiving approval/denial.

At this time the Committee recognized and welcomed Mr. Kurt Sickler and Ms. Talia Priore as newest members and both introduced themselves.

The Committee moved to proceed with requesting Township Committee to hire the Township Planner to begin work on the 10 year update to the Farmland Preservation Plan. Mr. Joyce will consult with Steve Bruder at SADC on the process for applying for the matching grant funds.

Alloway Township Agriculture Advisory Board

Minutes

July 9, 2020

On motion by Mr. Lorenz and 2nd by Mr. Schultz the Committee approved moving forward with the process to apply for SADC grant funds and requesting Township to contract with Mr. Scheule to update the Farmland Preservation Master Plan Element. Vote was unanimous.

The Township Trust Fund balance report from February 29, 2020 was \$114,271.16. Mr. Joyce reported the Township Committee has approved funding of \$6,000 to NJCF toward the Parave farm soft costs, and \$10,000 each for Rieck and Bell farms closing costs. Therefore, the available balance should be reduced by \$26,000 to approximately \$88,271.

A question on the status of the inquiry by the Reed's was raised and Katie Mazzella will follow up to see if there is still interest on proceeding with an application.

New Business:

No items were presented as new business.

Public Comment:

Robin Bell reported that she had received documents to review from Mr. Rapa and has to return them to him. No other public comments were received.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm on motion by Mr. Mitchell, with 2nd by Mr. Lorenz unanimously approved.

Next Meeting date is September 10, 2020

Louis C. Joyce
Secretary

Approved: September 10, 2020