

SUSSEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MINUTES

MAY 19, 2014

The meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. by Chairperson Brodhecker in the Freeholder Meeting Room at the Sussex County Administrative Center, One Spring Street, Newton, New Jersey. The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 of 1975, as amended. Notice has been forwarded to the newspapers and posted on the bulletin board maintained at the Sussex County Administrative Center for public announcement.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Brodhecker, Chairperson
Lori Day, Vice Chairperson
Cece Pattison
Joan Snook Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Autumn Sylvester, Program Manager
Rudy Dragan, Planning Aide
Antoinette Wasiewicz, Recording Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: None

MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:

A motion was made by Lori Day to accept the Minutes of December 16, 2013, January 27, 2014 and February 18, 2014 as presented. The motion was seconded by Joan Snook Smith. All were in favor, with an abstention by Joan Snook for the December 16, 2013 Minutes. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A. CSA DELIVERY PROGRAM:

The NJ Herald published an article regarding a CSA Delivery Program. Willow Brook Farm in Sussex County is running a trial program where businesses can enlist the farm's services for fresh produce delivered straight to the office. Now in its fourth year,

Willow Brook's community supported agriculture (CSA) program offers a variety of produce. In a CSA Program, shareholders buy an interest in the farm.

In Sussex County there are six CSA farms: Catalpa Ridge Farm in Wantage; DanaRay Farm in Frankford; High Breeze Farm in Vernon; Stephens Farm in Wantage and Sunset View Farm in Andover Township. Each CSA establishes its own rates and policies.

B. SADC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART:

An Organizational Chart, dated April 2014, was received from the SADC.

C. STATE DIRECT EASEMENT MONEY AVAILABLE;

A memo was received from the SADC regarding Sussex County's Funding Status for 2009, 2011 and 2013. In 2009, the County was eligible for \$2,000,000, of which \$6,298 is still available. In 2011, the County was eligible for \$1,500,000 of base grant funding, all of which has been encumbered or expended and \$1,000,000 of 2013 base grant funding, of which \$738,302 is still available. The County was eligible for \$3,000,000 of 2009 competitive funding and \$3,000,000 of 2011 competitive funding; however there is no funding left in those accounts.

The County is eligible for \$5,000,000 in 2013 competitive funding, however there is only \$15,000,000 remaining (for all counties,) Many other counties are eligible to compete for that funding.

To encumber base grant or competitive funding, an application must have Green Light Approval, appraisals submitted, values certified and final approval granted.

D. NJDA FERTILIZER & FEED CERTIFICATION:

An e-mail was received from a chemist from NJDA Plant Industry Laboratory regarding a fertilizer and feed testing program. He questioned whether northern farmers are aware of this program because he has not seen any samples from northern New Jersey. He included a copy of a Press Release regarding this program.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture provides filed inspection, sampling and laboratory analysis of animal feed, fertilizers and liming material sold in New Jersey as well as seed certification and control to guard against mislabeled or substandard products in an effort to ensure the integrity of these products in the marketplace.

Farmers who wish to have official samples tested must contact the Department at least 24 hours prior to delivery of the products. They may call or e-mail Janet Stafford at 609-984-8421 or janet.Stafford@ag.state.nj.us. They may also fax at 609-984-2508.

RIGHT TO FARM:

A. BRODHECKER FARM:

Lori Day reported that the Federal Judge upheld the SCADB's decision regarding the Brodhecker Farm and the SADC overturned it. Lori wants to write a strongly-worded letter to the SADC but is not sure whether it should come from her as an individual or from the SCADB. Lori said she will write a letter and e-mail it to Antoinette, who will then send it to the Board (County) members for their input. Lori will then send the revised letter back to Antoinette who will send it to County Counsel. Autumn said because of the Sunshine Law and Open Public Meetings Act, County Counsel should be consulted about this letter before drafts are distributed to the Board.

Lori said she met with the SADC regarding their decision and that they just allowed her to speak; they did not offer any explanation. She said she spoke as a public citizen and as Vice President of the SCADB but not with the knowledge of the rest of the Board. She said an attorney for Hampton Township, the Township Administrator and a Committee member were also there.

When asked, Jane Brodhecker said the next SADC meeting is Thursday and the Brodhecker Right to Farm issue is not on the Agenda. It was also mentioned that the citizens of Hampton Township should know how much of their tax dollars has been and continues to be spent on the complaint of just one citizen.

AG. AGENT'S REPORT:

Steve Komar was unable to attend this evening's meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. APRIL 2014 SCADB E-MAILS:

Since the March and April SCADB meetings were cancelled, the Board members were sent various e-mails, one of which related to the Willow Creek Winery in Cape May County. The winery has been holding events, such as weddings on the preserved

property. The State created a new AMP to define accepted practices on wineries. Legislature did not agree with the State AMP and made changes for the Governor to sign. Jane said the Ag. community has been asking the Governor to veto.

B. AGRITOURISM UPDATES: BROCHURE REPRINTING, BROCHURE REQUESTS AND WEBSITE VISITS:

The new brochures have been printed and are already being distributed. Google has a means to track hits on websites. To date this year there have been 3,640 sessions.

C. FPP UPDATES: GREEN LIGHT APPROVALS, APPRAISALS, PRESERVED FARM OWNER CHANGES, APPLICATION REQUESTS:

Nine out of the ten farms have received Green Light Approvals. The Mulvaney Farm has still not received the approval. The State is questioning the access across a Rail Trail. Dennis McConnell feels he may have a solution to this problem. The Freeholders approved the Resolution for the appraisers this past Wednesday and the packets for the appraisers will be sent out soon. If and when the Mulvaney Farm receives Green Light Approval, it will go out separately.

The Board members were provided with an updated chart showing owner changes on preserved farms. There was some discussion on the challenges of keeping track of current owners when there is no reporting mechanism or requirement.

Farmland Preservation Application requests came in for the Nothstine Farm in Stillwater Township and their neighbor, Floyd Monroe. Rudy provided the application to the Nothstine's and they will give the second application to Mr. Monroe.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. DANARAY COST SHARE

The Board previously decided that they do not wish to pursue the DanaRay farm for preservation. The owners have gone to Frankford Township to preserve the farm under the Municipal Preservation Program. Bob Canance asked Rudy to see if the Board is willing to cost share about 17% of the projected cost, about \$10,000. A brief discussion followed. The Board agreed to the cost share amount of around \$10,000.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Cece Pattison that Sussex County provide \$10,000 in cost share with Frankford Township for the preservation of the DanaRay farm. The motion was seconded by Lori Day and carried unanimously.

Lori Day said there was a Bill that was tabled on the Legislature in the Agriculture Committee a couple of years ago. There is a Bill out that has come up again with wording that anyone who is a rehabber and needs to put an animal down, needs to seek the permission of a Panel. Lori is not sure how far this requirement will go into the Agricultural community.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The Board members welcomed Donna Traylor's replacement, Autumn Sylvester. Autumn said she has lived in Stillwater for 22 years. She attended school for environmental planning and urban planning. She interned for the County Planning for two summers in 2006 and 2007. Upon graduation from Virginia Tech, she worked for a private planning consulting firm in Bergen County for five years and then for a municipality in Bergen County this past year.

ADJOURNMENT:

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lori Day. The motion was seconded by Joan Snook Smith and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.