



Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board

Wednesday, August 4, 2021 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Kent County Administration Building – Room 311

Minutes prepared by

Matthew Channing, matthew.channing@kentcountymi.org

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Chair Dennis Heffron (Ag Interest), Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Secretary/Treasurer Russ Slater (Ag Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest), Gretchen Mousel (Conservation Interest Representative), Dan Oesch (Ag Interest)

Absent: Matt Kallman (County Commissioner)

Staff: Paul Petr, Matt Channing

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Chair Heffron welcomed everyone to the meeting at 11:35 a.m.
- II. **Approval of the Agenda** – A motion as made by Suzie Reinbold to approve the August 4, 2021 Agenda. Russ Slater supported. UNANIMOUS
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Ed Robinette to approve the June 2021 minutes. Suzie Reinbold supported. UNANIMOUS
- IV. **Sieracki Property Action Request** – Staff informed the Agricultural Preservation Board that the funding for the Sieracki property from the Wege Foundation and the new costs for the conservation easement would need approval from the Board of Commissioners. A motion was made by Suzie Reinbold to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to accept and appropriate the fund from the Wege Foundation, the landowner donation, and to increase the not to exceed amount to reflect the new totals for the conservation easement. Russ Slater supported. UNANIMOUS
- V. **PDR Cycle Update** – Staff updated the Agricultural Preservation Board on the results of the Purchase of Development Rights program's 2021 application cycle. After holding two townhalls, there were a total of three new applications and five applications to remain active.
- VI. **PDR Signs** – Staff reported out about the information gathered for missing signs of preserved properties. Working with Equalization, County staff determined that there were seven signs missing. Michigan State University Extension paid the Road Commission for the signs and their

installation. County staff communicated the theft of the signs to the Sheriff's Office and will be working with them on reporting the issue. Chair Heffron said he would work with County staff and the Sheriff's Office as a connection with the landowners.

- VII. PDR Calendar Alignment** – Staff informed the Board that some farmers at the townhalls found it burdensome to work on the PDR applications in the middle of the summer months. Looking into the issue, Staff discovered that the PDR cycle used to run during the winter, with applications due January 31st. While the reason behind this switch is unclear, staff recommends moving the cycle back to the January 31st deadline. Staff will conduct further research into how this realignment with the farmers' schedule will impact scoring and ranking and grant applications.
- VIII. Staff Update** – Staff gave several updates to the Agricultural Preservation Board including the West Michigan Sustainable Business Form event's success and the increasing importance of the role of agritainment to the financial viability of farms, the donation from the Sr. Janowiak, the Kent Conservation Field District Soil Day, and important upcoming dates from the State and Federal government.
- IX.** There was no public comment.
- X.** Board Member Updates – None.
- XI.** Adjournment – A motion was made by Suzie Reinbold to adjourn the meeting Ed Robinette supported. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, September 1, 2021
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Kent County 3rd floor Rm 311