



Township of Pittsgrove

Agriculture Advisory Committee

Reorganization Meeting Minutes
January 15th, 2020

Facsimile:
(856)
358-3055

1. Meeting called to order by Secretary Eileen O'Hara at 7:30 p.m.
2. Flag Salute
3. Open Public Meeting Statement: in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the date of this meeting was duly advertised by a notice published in The Daily Journal, South Jersey or Elmer Times.
4. Attendance: Herb Wegner, Roger Ward, Deb Wegner, Eric Harz, Katie Mazzella and Eric Davis.

Due to a lack of quorum, committee needed alternate, Deb Wegner, to vote tonight. *Motion to approve by Roger, 2nd by Herb, all in favor.*

5. Membership & Officer Appointments (Chairman & Vice-Chairman):
 - a) Byron Dubois re-appointed as Chairman and Millard Paulus re-appointed as Vice-Chairman. *Motion to approve by Herb, 2nd by Roger, all in favor.*
 - b) See township resolution No. 25-2020 for full committee appointments.
6. Approval of the 2020 Ag Advisory Meeting Dates: 3/18, 5/20, 7/15, 11/18, 1/20/21 (Reorganization). *Motion to approve by Deb, 2nd by Herb, all in favor.*
7. Approval of the minutes of the minutes of the November 20th, 2019 Regular Meeting: committee reviewed. *Motion to approve by Roger, 2nd by Deb, all in favor.*
8. New Business:
 - a) SADC Partner Update included with tonight's handouts.

b) Katie Mazzella/SADC Planning Discussion

Committee discussed some details of the next 10-year preservation plan. Katie stated that the entire municipality cannot be designated a target area because a lot of it is woodlands. Steve Bruder is now the only planner in Trenton and he was unable to attend tonight's meeting to discuss the best way forward for preservation in Pittsgrove.

c) Land Conservancy quote reviewed for new preservation plan. Delaware Valley Regional Planning unable to quote, they agreed to do a new plan for Woolrich Township and don't have the staff to do more. Katie will ask Steve Bruder about who else might be able to offer a proposal and Eileen will reach out to the South Jersey Land and Water Trust to see if they interested.

9. Old Business: status of current preservation efforts.

Rizzo and Helig awaiting survey completion.

E. Mihalecz – contract has been signed by all parties and returned to Kris Alexander.

Teresa Mihalecz – land clearing has begun to meet minimum. Will visit site when done.

Bauman – has accepted the offer, contract needs to be signed by all parties. ROW question from the county sent to the Planning Board.

Dennis Crisanti – still trying to contact concerning questions on his application

JWP has received their offer and Eric Davis was here to discuss it with the committee.

Eric received an offer that was considerably lower than other comparable farms surrounding him. His land also has some positives that should make it equally, if not more, valuable than some other farms. He wanted to know why this happened and what can be done about it in the future. Katie explained that once the state certifies a market value (CMV) it cannot be changed unless there was an error. She checked with the state official and all the information is factually correct so there is no recourse but to accept, or decline, it.

Katie stated that if the offer is declined, they can re-apply in April 2021. There is no guarantee the offer would be better then. Committee wanted to know how certification could occur without someone reviewing it first. It was suggested that all appraisals be seen by the applicant, and the Ag committee, first in order to ensure a fair price and

avoid this occurring in the future. Final certification at the state level should occur after that review has happened.

There is precedent for the township adding to the per acreage price. Katie said the most Pittsgrove could add would be \$700.00/acre. The committee thought the process to be unfair and was sympathetic to Eric's plight. Roger suggested we take this up again at our March meeting. He and Deb thought the entire committee should decide if this is an offer we want to make. There is money available if the committee wishes to use it.

10. Correspondence: none
11. Member Comments: none
12. Public Comments: none
13. Adjournment: 8:20 p.m. *Motion by Deb, 2nd by Roger, all in favor.*

NEXT MEETING IS MARCH 18TH, 2020