

# AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD

## MINUTES

Thursday

November 16, 2006 - 7:00 p.m.

CONFERENCE ROOM B

200 Grand River Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Port Huron, MI 48060

### 1. Call to Order

Chairman Jim Reid called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

Present: Chuck Kwasnik, Dianna Seifert, Sue Sniegocki, Jim Reid,  
Jim Hayes, Ken Langmesser, and Terry Gill

Excused: Rick Mills

Support Staff: Dave Struck

### 3. Citizens Wishing to be Heard

Cheryl Collins from Brown City – here to listen.

### 4. Approval of October 19, 2006 Minutes

Chuck made a motion to accept the October 19, 2006 minutes as presented, Dianna seconded, motion passes unanimously.

### 5. Financial Report

#### a. October Report

Motion to accept the October financial report made by Jim Hayes and seconded by Sue; motion passes unanimously. Jim Hayes made a motion to allocate \$1000.00 for parade costs for 2007, Ken seconds, motion carries unanimously.

### 6. Old Business

#### a. Subcommittees

Cheryl Collins said she is interested in being on the open space subcommittee. Ken suggested recruiting subcommittee members via the newsletter. Dave sent out 30 – 35 letters to the larger group and there were no phone calls in response.

#### b. Newsletter Update

Jim Reid talked to Miranda Jerlecki's mom and she gave the ok for a picture and article to be written about Miranda winning the poster contest. The next newsletter will be sent out in December which will include Ken's article, a Jeff Tuller article and a section of questions to solicit help to find out who is the oldest working farmer and where is the oldest farm in the county. Jim Reid talked to the Wiseman Farms; start date = 1840's to 1850's.

#### c. Agricultural Preserve Boards of Michigan Meeting Recap

Ken gave a synopsis on the meeting. Scott Everett and Bill Bobier have formed an LLC whereby they will sell a newsletter to any county or township entity that holds a land preservation ordinance for \$2500

per year. This money will be used to lobby the state government. Scott will start off choosing five members to sit on the board. These five members along with Scott & Bill will hold five regional meetings throughout the state to garner support during the month of January. Then a statewide meeting will be held in Lansing in March inviting all Farmland Preservation (FLP) Board members across the state including other interested parties with the hopes of gathering at least 400 people. Scott will have a motivational speaker attend and hopes to get the governor to attend as well. This meeting is intended to motivate the FLP boards and to get the attention of legislators. The time to act is now because millage campaigns are just not working as we have seen across the state. This LLC along with the five member board will serve to:

1. Push Ag as the #1 industry in the state with the legislature – we are loosing jobs because we are loosing land, farms do not move to Mexico.
2. Lobby and educate the legislators.
3. Hold politicians to their promises – make them accountable.
4. Lobby the legislature for funding.
5. Be a watch dog of the State Ag Board and try to get key people on that board.
6. Convey that this is NOT a land preservation issue, but an economic issue. Gerber is threatening to leave Michigan because they are loosing too much fruit ground in Kent County.

Jim Hayes made a **motion** to approve \$2500 to the Agricultural Preserve Boards of Michigan LLC, Chuck seconds, motion carries unanimously. The LLC and the five-member board will also pursue creating a non-profit organization at the same time so that grant money can be acquired.

d. MSU Urban Planning Practicum Project

See packet for a copy of the project application Dave compiled and sent to MSU. Funding includes a mini-grant from Scott Everett of \$2500, \$300 from our finances and \$500 from Kathy Hale MSU Extension - giving a total of \$3300 that we can use to help increase our chances of being selected as a project for a group of MSU students.

e. Meeting with Macomb and Lapeer Counties

Because of the regional meeting to be held by Scott Everett in Lapeer County come January, Ken has changed his mind and does not want to have an extra meeting with Lapeer and Macomb in December.

f. Township Resolutions – Clyde Township

Jim Reid wants to revisit Brockway Twp. We need to revisit the targeted townships during the months of January through March to get them to sign a resolution. Sue will set up a meeting with Clyde Twp. in January.

## 7. New Business

- a. County CIS Website – New Agricultural Preservation Board Site  
Dave created a new Ag Preservation Board web site that can be found at [cis.st.claircounty.org](http://cis.st.claircounty.org). He gave a presentation showing all the links and how all of the past newsletters can be accessed along with pictures from the first farm tour with more to be added in the future. Everyone thought Dave did an awesome job!!! Thank you Dave.
- b. Entrepreneurial Agriculture in St. Clair County  
Metropolitan Planning has been targeted for more economic development training. They have attended workshops and meetings with other community members to discuss how to keep St. Clair County competitive with this changing economy. Objective is to get local people together to work on creating entrepreneurial ideas. For example the RESA culinary program – would farmers be willing and able to provide locally grown food for the kitchen as a new market for their products?
- c. Board Reappointments  
Mike Lauwers has declined his re-appointment to the Ag Preservation Board who represents townships. Rob McCue was asked if he would like to replace Mike – no definite answer from Rod yet. We will also need to fill Pat Anger's vacancy with another county commissioner. Rick Mills would like to be re-appointed to the seat he fills when it is up for renewal after December.

## 8. Other Business

- a. Staff Report  
Already discussed – see packet.
- b. Items for January Meeting  
Chuck would like to see an urban county commissioner occupy Pat's vacancy. Howard Heidemann was suggested; he is from the south end of Port Huron and has an agricultural background.
- c. Newspaper Articles  
See packet.

## 9. Adjournment

### Adjournment

- a. Adjournment  
Jim Hayes made a motion to adjourn; Sue seconds; motion passed unanimously. Next meeting in January at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianna Seifert  
Secretary