

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday

June 15, 2006 - 7:00 p.m.

CONFERENCE ROOM B

200 Grand River Avenue, 2nd Floor, Port Huron, MI 48060

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jim Reid called meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Dianna Seifert, Sue Sniegocki, Jim Reid, Jim Hayes,
and Chuck Kwasnik

Support Staff: Dave Struck

Excused: Ken Langmesser Mike Lauwers

Absent: Terry Gill (Pat Anger Alternate)

3. Citizens Wishing to be Heard

None.

4. Approval of April 20, 2006 Minutes

Chuck made a motion to accept the May 18, 2006 minutes as presented, Jim Hayes seconded, motion passes unanimously.

5. Financial Report

March Report

No change from last month. Next month will show a donation made recently from DTE, and a disbursement for registration fees for four board members to attend the June 22, 2006 meeting in Lansing. Sue graciously offered to donate the prize of \$100 for the poster contest from her realtor business.

6. Special Guest

Penny Peck – Blue Water Land Conservancy

a. Penny Peck – Blue Water Land Conservancy

Penny shared with us the process that the Blue Water Land Conservancy went through as it came into being, and the time it took to get to where they are today. Due to a lack of funding they have not conserved any land as of yet, but are always researching grant monies and looking for donors. They are not limited to any political boundaries when it comes to the location of potential land conservancies; articles have been drawn up for the establishment of the organization; a set of selection criteria has been determined; and are 501 C3 designated. Penny provided us with Blue Water Land Conservancy booklets that explain their organization. No regular meetings have been held in the last three years, but Penny will call a meeting to ask for the board's approval to partner with us collaborating our efforts. Penny felt both groups would gain from each other's strengths and resources. An

official letter will be drafted and sent to Penny stating our intent to partner with the Blue Water Land Conservancy. Gordon Ruttan also joined our meeting offering many good ideas and is also a board member of the Blue Water Land Conservancy. Dianna wondered if this may be the answer to our "open space" program for our county.

7. Old Business

a. Newsletter

Delayed until the end of June. Ernie Kafcus was unable to get an article together at this time, so Ken wrote an article concerning the need for St. Clair County cities to preserve farmland for biosolids application. Penny and Gordon will be added to the newsletter mailing list. Dianna will drop some copies of the newsletter off at FSA. Dave said he has approximately 400 copies left after the mailing list has been sent out.

b. Fundraising/Donors Update

A letter will be sent out each January thanking previous donors for their past contributions; asking for a renewal of their contributions, and will include a list of our accomplishments from the prior year – especially noting our partnerships with other conservation groups.

c. Statewide Ag Board Summit

Dave, Jim Reid, Ken and Dianna will be attending the meeting.

d. Parade of Farms Tour for 2006

Jim Hayes sent each board member a copy of Lapeer's flier from their farm tour. Jim Hayes and Jim Reid meet with Tim Maxwell who is the chairman on the St. Clair County Conservation District Board and he said their board is all in favor of partnering with us to support a St. Clair County farm tour, helping our advertising needs up to \$1500. Suggested farms, though they all have not been contacted yet, are Reid Dairy Farm, Louis' Beef Farm, McCullum's Orchard and Wood's Herb Farm. The date has been tentatively set for the 1st or 2nd Saturday in October. Suggestions for advertising are radio, Times Herald, fliers distributed at the schools, our newsletter and the tree sale mailing list.

e. International Day Parade

Jim Reid has spearheaded the securing of the Michigan Milk "Daisy the Cow" for the parade. Jim has lined up 20-25 people who will be walking with the float in costume (Got milk? T-shirts) passing out MMPA goodies to the crowd. We discussed the wording, display and construction of signs. Dave said Met-Plan can print the signs on poster board and they can be mounted on foam board; costs will have to come out of our budget. Signs could be worn as sandwiches or hand held. The theme should target cities needing farmland preservation; for example "Cool Cities Support Their Local Farmers". If

anyone has any ideas forward them to Dave. One banner should say “Sponsored by St. Clair County Agricultural Preservation Board.” Jim Reid will collect milk production statistics for St. Clair County to display on the float as well. Dianna needs the County’s tax I.D. number for the parade application form.

f. Regional Collaboration

Dave provided a handout explaining the “how-tos” of creating regional collaboration efforts. The State is looking to reward such efforts with grants and other funding – partnerships, partnerships!

g. Farmer’s Market

Will hold off on the sticker effort until maybe August giving us more time to survey growers in the area as to how well they would like using stickers; it will give us a chance to see what other communities are doing at the June 22, 2006 meeting; if we create partnerships with neighboring counties we could create a sticker that serves a broader area; and it will give us more time to be more creative. Need to make a contact with the marketing person for the St. Clair Farmer’s Market. Dianna saw that Capac has stated a “Backyard Farmer’s Market” in the town of Capac on Saturday mornings.

h. Formation of Subcommittees

Dave made a list of potential subcommittees. Think on these and we will act on an official list at the next meeting. Gordon suggested calling the larger group individually to see who would be interested in serving on a subcommittee. They should also be invited to sit on our meetings if they would like to participate further.

8. New Business

a. Locally Grown Campaign

If we took a regional approach to promoting local farmers, Gordon suggested using the thumb area, “Thumbs up to Farming.”

b. Farm Directory

Dave provided two handouts showing what the Traverse City area and western Massachusetts has done to promote their local farms by using a farm directory. These communities have done a great job of providing easy to use information.

9. Other Business

a. Staff Report

Dave is still looking to find a university student who would like to embellish their resume by helping our board with promotion and/or marketing ideas.

b. Items for July Meeting

Official establishment of subcommittees.

c. Newspaper Articles

Articles included in the handouts are: "Rochester Hills seeks to buy parcels for open space"; Ann Arbor – Ice cream social celebrates land preservation deals; Kalamazoo Gazette – Ethanol E85 blend coming to Oshtemo.

10. Adjournment

Chuck made a motion to adjourn; Jim Hayes seconds; motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianna Seifert
Secretary