

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday

May 15, 2008 - 7:00 p.m.

County Administration Building, 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 7:11 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Jim Reid, Jim Hayes, Chuck Kwasnik, Terry Gill, Sue Sniegocki

Support Staff: Dave Struck, Senior Planner

Excused: Dianna Seifert, Ken Langmesser

Absent: Steve Simasko, Rick Mills

3. Citizens Wishing to be Heard

None.

4. Approval of March 20, 2008 Minutes

Sue Sniegocki made a motion to accept the March 20, 2008 minutes as presented, Chuck Kwasnik seconded, all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

5. Communications

None.

6. Financial Report

March Report

Dave Struck explained the financial report included in the packet. Chuck Kwasnik made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the financial report, Jim Hayes seconded, all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

7. Old Business

a. Newsletter Update

Dave Struck discussed the updated price quotes from Mail Management and Thorpe Printing based on the new count of 3,300. This is to accommodate expansion of the mailing list to include all landowners with 20 acres or more and only printing the newsletter twice a year. Board members discussed when the newsletter should go out. Jim Hayes made a motion to print and distribute the newsletter to landowners with 20 acres or more twice a year, Terry Gill seconded, all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Jim Hayes made a motion to accept the quotes from Thorpe Printing and Mail Management for the printing and mailing of the newsletter based on the updated counts, Terry Gill seconded, all in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Terry Gill suggested that instead of featuring Board members in the newsletter, the Board should feature local farms. Jim Reid added that perhaps focusing just on centennial farms would be a good idea.

b. 2008 Capital Improvement Program

Dave Struck explained this year's draft CIP proposal for the Ag Board. The request is less than what was requested in previous years and the funds being requested are dependent upon the state awarding Agricultural Preservation Fund grant money to the county. Chuck Kwasnik discussed an issue regarding conflicts of interest that the Macomb County Agricultural Preservation Board is currently experiencing.

c. Donation of Conservation Easement Process

Dave Struck stated that he talked with Tom Valentine of the Lapeer Conservation District, who serves as staff support to the Lapeer County Agricultural Preservation Board. Lapeer went through a conservation easement donation last year. Mr. Valentine provided Dave with a general outline of the process Lapeer used. Dave referred the Board members to the outline and process notes in the agenda packets. There is still some uncertainty about whether an appraisal is needed. Lapeer's donation did not involve an appraisal. In Lapeer, the creation of the easement language was the longest part of the process and the biggest expense to the landowner was the title search, which the county Farm Bureau covered. The Ag Board reviews and ultimately approves the easement and then forwards a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to accept the easement. Dave said he would talk to Tom Valentine some more and find out more about the appraisal and any other uncertainties.

d. International Day Parade

Dave Struck informed the Board of the parade application deadlines and the theme that is required for this year's parade: "Celebrate our Past, Imagine our Future." Jim Reid said he had the big cow reserved from Michigan Milk, but the Board would need to figure out how to fit in with the required theme.

e. Fall Farm Tour Update

Jim Reid said he is still talking to some potential farms for the Farm Tour. Dave said that Ken Langmesser has been talking to some people in the southern part of the county and will update the Board as soon as there are confirmed participants.

f. 4-H Fair Photo Contest

Dave Struck said that he contacted Gilda Schott, the 4-H Coordinator, about the photo contest rules and prize structure. Gilda agreed to share the information with the Fair Board and spread the word about the contest amongst the local clubs and in the 4-H newsletter. The contest is open to 4-H members only and the deadline for submissions is July 11. The Board

agreed that the voting for the contest winners would be different this year, with numbered scores that will be averaged to determine the rankings. The three highest averages will be the winners, in order.

8. New Business

None.

9. Other Business

a. Staff Report

Dave said that everything in his staff report was covered earlier in the meeting.

b. Items for next Meeting

Jim Reid said that the primary focus of the Ag Board right now should be the potential conservation easement donation and getting a clear handle on the process and what the Board needs to accomplish to make it happen.

c. Newspaper Articles (for information only)

There are no articles for this month.

10. Adjournment

Jim Hayes made a motion to adjourn, Chuck Kwasnik seconded, motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianna Seifert
Secretary