

MINUTES

Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District

Agricultural Building
721 Foster St Durham, NC 27701

Meeting Number: 1 (Farmland Advisory Board) Date: February 20, 2020

Advisory Board Present:

Will Wilson- Chairman
Nicole Connelly- Vice Chair & Little River VAD
Douglas Daye- Flat River VAD
Heidi Carter- BOCC Representative
David Harris- SWCD Board Representative
Talmage Layton- Falls VAD
Neil Frank- At Large
Kenny Browning- Eno River VAD

Others Present:

Eddie Culberson- Soil & Water
Mike Dupree- Soil & Water
Cherri Smith- Soil & Water
Jane Korest- Open Space
Celeste Burns- Open Space
Ashley Troth- Cooperative Ext
Darnell Parker-Cooperative Ext
Matthew Eagle-guest
William Sparrow-guest

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, February 20, 2020 and called to order at 8:04 am by the Chairman. The meeting was held at 721 Foster St, Durham, NC 27701.

1. **Approval of Board minutes from October and November of 2019-** Motion made by David Harris to approve minutes as presented, seconded by Talmage Layton. Motion passed.
2. **Membership- Election of Chair, Vice Chair, 2nd Vice Chair**
 - Motion by Neil Frank for Chair, Vice Chair, and 2nd Vice Chair to stay the same.
 - Motion by Talmage Layton for Ken Browning to be Chair with Vice Chair and 2nd Vice Chair to stay the same.
 - Heidi Carter moved to close the nomination with two nominations for Chair.
 - Nicole Connelly conducted two votes for Chair with a tie each time.
 - Nicole Connelly recommended postponing additional voting until the March 2020 meeting when there may be more or an odd number of members.
3. **Agriculture Economic Development Grant Committee-** Will Wilson provided an update on the new application for this grant program and asked for two volunteers to serve on the review committee. Will Wilson would like to continue to serve on this review committee, and Talmage Layton also volunteered to serve.
4. **Soil & Water Appointment to FPAB-** David Harris was appointed to serve on the FPAB at the Durham Soil & Water Conservation District Board Meeting on February 3, 2020.
5. **Vacant Positions for one At Large, Business Representative, and Cape Fear VAD-** William Sparrow and Nancy Herndon have agreed to serve on the FPAB as Business Representative and Cape Fear VAD, respectively. These positions are both appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

6. **FPAB Budget-** After purchasing VAD signs and funding two Farmer Breakfasts, the FPAB has \$1,489.19 remaining for the fiscal year. Various ideas for using the remaining money were discussed including the Tri-County Pasture Management Field Day, Plant-A-Row Potluck, nutrient management training for growers, and the Friends of the Hub Farm Spring Fundraiser Dinner. In addition, the Board agreed that staff should continue to try and secure a venue for a third Farmer Breakfast. The following actions were taken to allocate the remaining money:

- David Harris motioned to provide \$500 for a Gold Sponsorship to the Friends of the Hub Farm Spring Fundraiser Dinner, and Nicole Connelly seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- Kenny Browning motioned to pledge \$250 for the Tri-County Pasture Management Field Day, and Nicole Connelly seconded the motion. Motion passed.

7. **Easements/Open Space-** Jane Korest provided the following update on pending conservation easements:

- The Herndon Farm easement donation of approximately 20 acres closed at the end of December 2019.
- Alston Glenn's easement is scheduled for closing on March 3, 2020.
- Paul Adcock's easement should close before April 15, 2020 with John Monroe's closing sometime after that.

8. **Agriculture Economic Development update-** Mike Dupree stated that since the Hub Farm, breakfast series, and new grant application were previously discussed, no further update was necessary. Will Wilson requested that in the future, it's best not to schedule the Farmer Breakfasts on the same morning at the FPAD meetings.

9. **VAD Update-** Cherri Smith provided an update on the VAD applications that have been received since the last meeting, and those applications are as follows:

- Ellen Ziemer and Jerry Waddle- 165.362 acres on Harris, Rougemont, and Johnson Mill Roads.
- Merle Richey- 25.135 acres on Hampton Road.
- Kenneth and Janine Wolfe- 29.846 acres on Bacon Road.
- Michael and Steven Biggs- 42.345 acres on Stallings Road.
- TAFNC, LLC- 81.828 acres on Woodstock Road, Jennifer Drive, W. Cornwallis Road, and Erwin Road.
- RK International, Inc.- 88.652 acres on Russell Road and Kelvin Drive.

David Harris motioned to approve the applications, and Talmage Layton seconded the motion. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Farm Campus-** Will Wilson stated that a funding source for a feasibility for this facility is still being investigated.
2. **County Stormwater Fee-** There was discussion around the new County Stormwater Fee and its potential impact on farmers. Eddie Culberson suggested that the FPAB invite Ryan Eaves with County Engineering's Stormwater and Erosion Control Division to a future meeting to inform the FPAB about this new fee and hopefully hear input from the

farming community. Members agreed that having him come to a meeting was a good idea.

3. **Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Plan-** Mike Dupree discussed the possibility of applying for a grant from the NC Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund to update the county's Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Plan since it was previously completed in 2009. Members thought that was a good idea.
4. **Large Farm Committee-** Will Wilson discussed forming a Large Farm Committee to look at additional ways large farms can be assisted and hopefully remain in agriculture. Neil Frank motioned to create this committee, and Nicole Connelly seconded the motion. Motion passed. Neil Frank, Douglas Daye, Celeste Burns, Ashley Troth, and Matthew Eagle have agreed to serve on this committee.
5. **Small Farms Week-** Darnell Parker updated the FPAB on the upcoming Small Farms Week at NC A&T University on March 22-28, 2020. Cooperative Extension from throughout the state will be involved and hopefully there will be good attendance by Durham farmers.

Next Meeting– March 19, 2020 at 8am. The meeting will be held at 721 Foster St, Durham, NC 27701.

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chairman, Will Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:33 am.

Will Wilson
Chairman

Cherri Smith
Soil and Water

Date approved