

MINUTES

Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District Virtual Zoom Meeting

Meeting Number: 1 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: January 21, 2021

Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair – Little River VAD
Mark Waller – Vice Chair – Farm Bureau Representative
Heidi Carter – BOCC Representative
Nancy Herndon – Cape Fear VAD
Neil Frank – At Large
David Heeks – At Large
Talmage Layton – Falls VAD
Jillian Riley – SWCD Board Representative
Derrick Beasley – DOST Representative
Matthew Eagle – At Large
Samantha Gasson – At Large
Lindsay White – At Large

Others Present:

Lisa Marochak – Soil & Water
Mike Dupree – Soil & Water
Cherri Smith – Soil & Water
Jane Korest – Open Space
Celeste Burns – Open Space
Ashley Troth – Cooperative Extension
Janel Ohletz – Cooperative Extension

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, January 21, 2021 and called to order at 8:02 am by the Chair. The meeting was held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **Approval of Board Minutes from November and December of 2020** – Motion made by Mark Waller to approve the minutes, seconded by Nancy Herndon. Motion passes.
2. **FPAB Membership** – Nicole Connelly reported that the Nominating Committee recommends the Board fill the three vacant At Large positions with the three applications submitted by Matthew Eagle, Samantha Gasson, and Lindsay White.

Lisa Marochak reported that Heidi Carter was reappointed to the FPAB by the BOCC.

3. **Agriculture Economic Development (AED)** – Mike Dupree reported on the following:
 - Three Virtual Winter Informational Sessions have been scheduled and include:
 - 1) January 21, 2021 at 6:00 pm – Agency staff will present the local, state, and federal funding opportunities for farmers.
 - 2) February 9, 2021 at 6:00 pm – Farmer Food Share – Marketing opportunities for Durham farmers will be presented.
 - 3) February 18, 2021 at 6:00 pm – The North Carolina Department of Agriculture will present information on the management of fire ants.
 - * Attendees can receive 1 hour of pesticide credit.
 - In response to the Board's request to research agricultural education opportunities for spending some of the remaining funds in the budget, Jordan and Northern High Schools have identified some needs for funding.
 - 1) Jordan High School FFA requests \$300 for lamb grooming supplies.
 - 2) Northern High School FFA requests \$800 for equipment for virtual trainings and \$300 for animal husbandry supplies such as rabbit hutches and feed.Motion made by Neil Frank to provide \$300 in funding to Jordan High School FFA and \$1,100 in funding to Northern High School FFA, seconded by Mark Waller. Motion passes.

4. **Easements/Open Space** – Celeste Burns reported that the easement on 81 acres of the Scotty McFarland farm closed on December 30, 2020 with the easement on a second parcel in the works. A total of four easements have closed in 2020 with more in the pike for 2021.
5. **Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD)** – Cherri Smith reported that the Board needs to vote on one VAD application. The application includes three parcels at 1218, 1222, and 1297 Sherron Road in Durham totaling 50.856 acres of forested land currently owned by Leah Ashley-Huff.

Motion made by Mark Waller to approve the application, seconded by Neil Frank. Motion passes.

New Business:

A. Election of Officers – The following officers were elected:

- Chair – Motion made by Samantha Gasson to elect Nicole Connelly as Chair, seconded by Neil Frank. Motion passes.
- Vice Chair – Motion made by Neil Frank to elect Mark Waller as Vice Chair, seconded by Talmage Layton. Motion passes.
- 2nd Vice Chair – Motion made by Samantha Gasson to elect Kenny Browning as 2nd Vice Chair, seconded by Talmage Layton. Motion passes.

B. AED Grant Committee – Mike Dupree reported that the Board needs to appoint two members to serve on the AED Grant Committee. The next meeting of this Committee is January 26, 2021 at 9:00 am.

Matthew Eagle and Talmage Layton volunteered to serve on this Committee.

Motion made by Mark Waller to elect Matthew Eagle and Talmage Layton to serve on this Committee, seconded by Neil Frank. Motion passes.

C. Set FPAB Meeting Dates for 2021 – There was discussion regarding changing the meeting day and time for a variety of reasons. Neil Frank suggested that Lisa Marochak send out an email survey to Board members to determine the best course of action for future meetings.

Next Meeting – February 18, 2021 at 8 a.m. The meeting will be held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chair, Nicole Connelly adjourned the meeting at 8:51 a.m.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Cherri Smith
Soil and Water

February 18, 2021
Date approved