

MINUTES

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

Meeting Number: 3 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: April 15, 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
Talmage Layton – Falls VAD
Kenny Browning – 2nd Vice Chair – Eno River VAD
David Heeks – At Large
Lindsay White – At Large
William Sparrow – Business Representative
Samantha Gasson – At Large

Others Present:

Mike Dupree – Soil & Water
Cherri Smith – Soil & Water
Jane Korest – Open Space
Celeste Burns – Open Space
Donna Rewalt – Cooperative Extension
Janel Ohletz – Cooperative Extension
Mary Oxendine – Cooperative Extension

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021 and called to order at 6:32 pm by the Chair. The meeting was held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **Approval of Board Minutes from February 2021** – Motion made by Neil Frank to approve the minutes, seconded by Kenny Browning. Motion passes.
2. **Agriculture Economic Development (AED)** – Mike Dupree reported that the County Manager's budget will probably include a recommendation for \$75,000 for the AED Grant Program. May 10, 2021 is when the County Manager submits his budget to the Board of County Commissioners.

The AED Grant Committee will meet mid-May 2021 to finalize the new application for this program with funds available in July 2021. The deadline for this application is August 31, 2021 with five meetings prior to the deadline to assist farmers with their applications.

3. **Easements/Open Space** – Celeste Burns reported that they will begin working on the second phase of Douglas Daye's easement that will protect approximately 12 acres on two parcels. A vote of support by the FPAB was requested.

Motion made by Kenny Browning to support the easement, seconded by Nancy Herndon. Motion passes.

In addition, work is also progressing on the second phase of the easement on Scottie McFarland's farm as well as Len Nedham's and Michael Garrett's. Work also continues on the National Guard Cooperative Agreement for funding for Bull City Farm in the next cycle January & February 2022. The National Guard is another funding for agriculture easements within a 1-mile buffer around Camp Butner.

4. **Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD)** – Cherri Smith provided an update on the VAD applications that have been received since the last meeting, and those applications are as follows:

- South Wind Produce, LLC – 46.461 acres on Cothran Road in Rougemont.
- Robert and Joyce Honeycutt – 30.085 acres on Cothran Road in Rougemont.

Motion made by Talmage Layton to batch and approve two applications as presented, seconded by Mark Waller. Motion passes.

5. Committee Updates

A. Annual Planning for 2021 – Celeste Burns reported that a virtual farmland tour could include videos of farmers with conservation easements on their farms. Board members agreed that videos highlighting the variety of farming in Durham County are a good idea, and Nicole Connelly recommended that a subcommittee be set up to work on these videos. Volunteers to work on this subcommittee include Samantha Gasson, Janel Ohletz, Lindsay White, Mike Dupree, Nicole Connelly, Ashley Troth, Neil Frank, and Celeste Burns as the point person.

B. FPAB Ordinance Review/Update – No update currently.

New Business:

Janel Ohletz reported that Cooperative Extension is having an open house on Thursday, April 22 at 7:00 pm to introduce the new configuration of agriculture within Cooperative Extension.

Next Meeting – May 20, 2021 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chair, Nicole Connelly adjourned the meeting at 7:38 pm.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Cherri Smith
Soil and Water

8/19/21
Date approved