

## MINUTES

### **Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District** Hybrid Meeting

Meeting Number: 7 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: September 15, 2022

#### **Advisory Board Present:**

Nicole Connelly – Chair – Little River VAD  
Heidi Carter – County Commissioner  
Mark Waller – Farm Bureau Representative  
Matthew Eagle – At Large  
Jillian Riley – SWCD Board  
Samantha Gasson – At Large  
Talmage Layton – Falls VAD  
Nancy Herndon – Cape Fear VAD  
Kenny Browning – Eno River VAD  
David Heeks – At Large

#### **Others Present:**

Sherry Scully – Soil & Water  
Lisa Marochak – Soil & Water  
Celeste Burns – Open Space  
Jane Korest – Open Space  
Donna Rewalt – Cooperative Extension  
John Lyttle – Cooperative Extension

*The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, September 15, 2022, and called to order at 6:05 pm by the Chair. The meeting was held in a hybrid manner from the Farm Bureau Meeting Room.*

1. **Approval of July 2022 Board Minutes** – Motion made by Matthew Eagle and seconded by Talmage Layton. Motion passed with unanimous vote.
2. **Wildlife Conservation Land Program (WLCP)** – presentation by David Heeks. Concern of necessity to fulfil forestry management plan, David looked for other avenue to protect his land and land of others for wildlife. The WLCP of the Wildlife Resources Commission is a good fit. David met with Wildlife Biologist. Acreage minimum is 20 acres, land must meet certain criteria to qualify and be managed according to plan. Once approved, land in this program is eligible for Present Use Value program. This program may lead to enrollment for funding for carbon sequestration. Pdf on the WCLP was shared with those present.
3. **Financial Report** – Lisa Marochak shared the upcoming expenses of the Farm Tour (planning for 48 people): coffee and donuts, Box lunch at \$10.95, drinks, Bus driver is \$100 and \$2.50/mile round trip from Northern HS. Motion made to support the food and bus expenses of the farm tour was made by Kenny Browning and seconded by Talmage Layton. All present were in favor of motion; motion passed.
4. **Farm Tour Update** – The Farm Tour will be held on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Sherry and staff have met with all tour participants. Map shared on screen with those present. 5 Board of County Commissioners and County Manager have confirmed. Jillian recommended we send invites to other dignitaries as City Council or School Board members decline.
5. **Easements and Open Space** – Celeste Burns and Jane Korest are continuing to work with Alston Glenn on an additional 12 acres to his easement area. They are waiting for final federal approvals before closing on Lin and Cindy Needham’s conservation easement. They just received and are processing agreement documents that will fund an ACEP-ALE conservation easement on Clara Glenn’s farm on Hampton Rd, a project that funding was applied for in January 2022.

Celeste announced that she was notified that the deadline for the NRCS ACEP-ALE (Agricultural Lands Easement Program) application process has been announced with a November 4<sup>th</sup> deadline. With this deadline upon us, Celeste and Jane presented a project for William and Margie Sparrow, Jr's 41-acre sheep farm on Red Mill Rd. The land is part of the Sparrow family lands and is adjacent to US Army Corp land for Falls Lake. Motion made by Matthew Eagle to proceed with this recommendation; seconded by Kenny Browning. All voted in favor.

6. **Voluntary Ag District Update** – Celeste also requested William and Margie Sparrow's application for VAD be approved pending signature. Motion made by Talmage Layton and seconded by Kenny Browning to approve this VAD application. All voted in favor of the motion; motion passed.
7. **Agriculture Economic Development Report** – provided by Sherry Scully. August 31<sup>st</sup> was the deadline for the Ag Economic Development Grant Program. 33 Farmer and 3 School applications were received; requests amounted to \$200,391. Applications are in the process of being ranked by the AED Grant Committee. The committee will meet on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September to review the ranked applications and allocate funds. Applicants will be notified of approval by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Upcoming Events:

- 1) Tri- County Pasture Field Day hosted by Durham, Orange, and Person County Soil & Water and Cooperative Extension offices will be held September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Van Ellis farm. 100 people are expected.
  - 2) Soil & Water is also holding their Farmer Appreciation Dinner at Matthew Eagle's farm on October 27. Due to limited space, this event will be by invitation only.
8. **Cooperative Extension Report** – Donna Rewalt was available for report and began with an introduction of Durham's new Agriculture Agent, John Lyttle. John told a little about himself and everyone welcomed John.

John plans to provide a webinar series along with Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS) in October. Cooperative Extension has successfully acquired a Mobile Poultry Processing Facility along with Orange County. Trainings will be provided soon and unit will become available.

**Next Meeting** – October 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm at Farm Bureau or online.

**Adjourn** – With no further discussion or business, Chair, Nicole Connelly adjourned the meeting at 7:22pm.

Nicole Connelly  
Chairman

Sherry Scully  
Soil and Water

October 20, 2022  
Date approved