

MINUTES

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

Meeting Number: 5 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: October 15, 2020

Advisory Board Present:

Will Wilson – Chair – At Large
Nicole Connelly – Vice Chair – Little River VAD
Heidi Carter – BOCC Representative
Jillian Riley – SWCD Board Representative
Nancy Herndon – Cape Fear VAD
Neil Frank – At Large
William Sparrow – Business Representative

Others Present:

Eddie Culberson – Soil & Water
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
John Monroe – former Board Member

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, October 15, 2020 and called to order at 8:01 am by the Chair. The meeting was held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **Approval of Board Minutes from June and August 2020** – Motion made by Neil Frank to approve the minutes, seconded by Nichole Connelly. Motion passed.
 2. **FPAB Membership** –
 - Will Wilson announced that he would be resigning as an At Large member on the board and that this would be his last meeting. Lisa Marochak asked Will Wilson to send her an official email indicating that he is resigning from the Farmland Board and the effective date of his resignation.
 - Lisa Marochak reported on the following:
 - John Monroe turned in his resignation on the FPAB. He was serving as an At Large member. The effective date of his resignation was 10-13-2020.
 - Reviewed the membership requirement section of the Ordinance. Lisa reported that the board can appoint up to five at-large members to the FPAB, and there will be three at-large vacancies (Will Wilson, John Monroe, and another vacancy). Three applications for at-large vacancies have been received to date with known interest from another farmer.
- Motion made by Nicole Connelly to create a Nominating Committee, seconded by William Sparrow. Nicole Connelly will Chair the Committee with other members including Jillian Riley, Neil Frank, and Lisa Marochak. Motion passed.
3. **FBAB Budget** – Lisa Marochak reported that there is \$3,375 in the budget that needs to be spent by the end of June 2021. Some ideas for spending this money are VAD signs as well as support for school agricultural programs.
 4. **Durham Open Space & Trails (DOST) Representative on the FPAB** – Lisa Marochak reported that the new chair of DOST will appoint a representative at the next meeting.

5. **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:
- George and Julanda Woods – 24.81 acres on Patterson Road.
 - Easihorse Farms, LLC Attn. Dave Pullen – 157.98 acres on Wilkins Road and 32.64 acres on Cassam Road.
 - Paul Adcock – 32.43 acres on Adcock Road.

Neal Frank motioned to approve the three VAD applications, and William Sparrow seconded the motion. Motion passed.

6. **Easements/Open Space** – Jane Korest reported that federal funding from the Natural Resource Conservation Service for the Garrett Farm on Harris Mill Road has been approved. Also, the final budget for the McFarland Farm at the intersection of Snow Hill and Infinity Roads will go to the BOCC for approval.
7. **Agriculture Economic Update** – Mike Dupree reported on the following:

Agriculture Economic Development Grant (AED)- that 13 farms received funding from the \$50,000 AED Grant. The funded projects represent a variety of farm types and products.

Breakfast Series Topics – Mike Dupree requested ideas for virtual farmers’ breakfasts this winter. Ashley Troth offered to set up a virtual presentation through NC State about fire ants. Mike Dupree suggested how to better network growers’ markets with buyers as a topic.

Hub Farm – Mike Dupree reported that the Hub Farm is conducting a membership drive as well as an on-line auction to raise the money needed to assemble their greenhouse.

Durham County Nonprofit Agency Funding Program Announcement – Mike Dupree provided an update on this new program whereby up to \$75,000 can be requested by nonprofits to address COVID response and recovery issues.

Funding for Farmers- Will Wilson reported that there is also funding for farmers through the Farm Service Agency from the COVID Food Agricultural Program.

Next Meeting – November 19, 2020 at 8 a.m. The meeting will be held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chair, Will Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

Will Wilson
Chairman

Cherri Smith
Soil and Water

Date approved