

MINUTES

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

Meeting Number: 8 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: December 16, 2021

Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair – Little River VAD
Mark Waller – Vice Chair – Farm Bureau Representative
Kenny Browning – 2nd Vice Chair – Eno River VAD
David Heeks – At Large
Jillian Riley – Soil & Water
Nancy Herndon – Cape Fear VAD
Matthew Eagle – At Large
Lindsay White – At Large
Derrick Beasley – Open Space & Trails Representative
Samantha Gasson – At Large
Talmage Layton – Falls VAD

Others Present:

Sherry Scully – Soil & Water
Lisa Marochak – Soil & Water
Celeste Burns – Open Space
Janel Ohletz – Cooperative Extension
David Harris – Soil & Water
Robb Levinsky - Guest

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, December 16, 2021 and called to order at 6:34 pm by the Chair. The meeting was held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **Approval of October and November 2021 Board Minutes** – Motion made by Talmage Layton with second by Samantha Gasson. All members present voted in favor; motion passed.
2. **Financial Report** - Lisa Marochak shared an email request from General Services employee who builds and installs the VAD signage. This request is detailed with an itemized list of tools and equipment for building the signs. The request is for \$914.54. This does not include the cost for the needed signs and lumber to continue our on-hand supply. There is \$3,375.00 currently in the FPAB Budget.

David Harris suggested that Board member meet with the General Services Department Head. Jillian Riley and David will schedule an appointment to speak with Motiryo Keambiroiro at General Services about this request.

Discussion included the option of asking high school or Durham Tech to construct the signage. This has been done in the past.

3. **Easements and Open Space report provided by Celeste Burns.** Celeste was excited to announce that they have closed on Scotty McFarland's 11 acre property. Since approval of Clara Glenn's farm easement, Celeste has been working on the grant application for submittal. Final approval on Lin Needham's farm has been received and expected to close in first quarter of 2022.
4. **Agriculture Economic Development update provided by Sherry Scully** - Farmer Breakfasts are scheduled for January 20th and February 23rd. Both will be held at the Bahama Ruritan Building. Capacity of the building is 250; participants will be limited to 100 for safety purposes. Masks will be required. Topics include the Durham County Comprehensive Plan and Triangle Land Conservancy's Good Ground Initiative on the 20th.

The second breakfast topic will include opportunity for pesticide applicator credits with discussion on fire ants and invasive species.

Wrapped BoJangles biscuits will be provided and served with gloves. Cost of building is \$75 per meeting. Motion was made by Mark Waller and seconded by Samantha Gasson to fund the January breakfast food and rental. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD)** – No new applications or business at this time.
6. **Cooperative Extension Report provided by Janel Ohletz** – Deer ecology study is being conducted by NCSU graduate study to find impact of development on deer. They will be tagging and tracking deer to see cause of death and blood sampling to determine if Covid is present in the deer population. This is a 2-3 yr study.

Janel is planning another “Farmer Meetup” in February.

Janel is looking for suggestions on soil health topics for her soil health series. She plans to present for the upcoming series to make it more enjoyable and understandable.

Farm School will again be offered in the spring of 2022.

7. Video Committee discussion: Samantha and Nicole expressed concern that Soil and Water has begun videos neglecting the Committee’s goals. Nicole asked for Committee to meet again in the new year. Janel will send out a Doodle Poll to Committee members along with file.

Next Meeting – January 20th, 2022 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chair, Nicole Connelly, adjourned the meeting at 7:18 pm.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Sherry Scully
Soil and Water

January 20, 2022
Date approved