

## MINUTES

### Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District

Meeting Number: 7 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board)    Date: November 16, 2023

#### Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair, Little River VAD  
Chris Young – Business Representative  
Nancy Herndon – Cape Fear VAD  
Douglas Daye – Flat River VAD  
Heidi Carter – County Commissioner  
Shakira Campbell – DOST Representative  
Matthew Eagle – At Large  
Kenny Browning – Eno River VAD  
Samantha Gasson – At Large  
Talmage Layton – Falls VAD  
Mark Waller – Farm Bureau Representative

#### Others Present:

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

*The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, November 16, 2023 in a hybrid format. This meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by the Chair, Nicole Connelly.*

1. **Approval of September Board Minutes** – Nicole requested approval of September minutes submitted. Motion made by Mark Waller; second by Kenny Browning. Nicole called for vote; motion passed.
2. **Financial Report** – Lisa Marochak informed board that there is approximately \$3,000 remaining in account. Future expenses to plan for include \$1,000 grant match, one VAD sign payment and upcoming Farmer Breakfast costs. Discussion of possible expenses before end of year: FFA program needs and board retreat to plan FPP/Ordinance.
3. **VAD Update** – VAD update provided by Sherry Scully. Two applications have been received this past month:
  - David and Roby Heeks – 72 ac on Coley Rd
  - John Cowan – 35 acres on Kepley Rd

Motion made by Matthew Eagle to approve both VAD applications with a second by Kenny Browning. All voted in favor of this motion.

4. **Easements/Open Space Update** – Celeste Burns reported on Triangle Land Conservancy's acquisition of Newsom property in the northeastern part of the County. To permanently protect this land Durham County purchased and holds a conservation easement on this 178 acre parcel adjacent to Camp Butner.

Neil Frank dismissed himself from meeting. Celeste informed that Neil is adding another 30 acres to his existing 300 acre Caywood farm easement. Most of this 30 acres is in pasture. USDA will supply 50% of the funding to permanently protect this acreage. Motion made to move forward with this conservation easement by Kenny Browning; seconded by Nancy Herndon. All in favor; motion passed.

5. **Ag Economic Development Grant Committee Update** – Sherry Scully reported that all FY 24 contracts are complete or are being finalized with the county. Work has already begun for a few of these and work continues with the FY 24 contracts.
6. **Cooperative Extension Update** – John Lyttle and Donna Rewalt provided report.

- Making great progress on Farm Campus Feasibility Study reviewing different pieces of land as options and beginning the Community Engagement segment of the process.
- John working with NCSU and Neil Frank on a native grasses project at Caywood Farm.
- John working with CEFS to produce another small fruits webinar training. Recording is available for those interested.

**New Business** – Sherry reported that the January 18<sup>th</sup> Farmer Breakfast will be on topic of Durham County Programs. All speakers have confirmed. February 15<sup>th</sup> Farmer Breakfast will discuss estate planning. Both events will be held from 8-10am. March meeting will possibly be in support of the Farmland Protection Plan and held at night. This will be determined at next meeting.

**Next Meeting** – January 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am at the Durham Cooperative Extension office or online. This meeting will follow the FPAB sponsored Farmer Breakfast.

**Adjourn** – With no further discussion or business, Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

Nicole Connelly  
Chairman

Sherry Scully  
Soil and Water

January 18, 2024  
Date approved