

MINUTES

Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District

Meeting Number: 7 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: December 12, 2024

Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair, Little River VAD
David Heeks – At Large
Talmage Layton – Falls VAD
Chris Young – Business Representative
Kenny Browning – Eno River VAD
Deborah Luecken – DOST Representative
Douglas Daye – Flat River VAD
David Harris – SWCD Board Representative
John Cowan – Cape Fear VAD
Mark Waller – Farm Bureau Representative

Others Present:

Lisa Marochak – Soil & Water
Sherry Scully – Soil & Water
Helena Cragg
Dustin Brewer – Soil & Water

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, December 12, 2024 at Durham Farm Bureau following Farmer Breakfast. This meeting was called to order at 10:15 am by the Chair, Nicole Connelly.

1. Nicole Connelly opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
2. **Approval of September Board Minutes** – Nicole Connelly requested approval of the November meeting minutes submitted. A motion for approval was made by Kenny Browning and seconded by Mark Waller. Nicole called for vote; motion passed.
3. **Financial Report** – Lisa Marochak provided the financial report. She warned members that if funds remain in the budget later in the year, the county may pull them. Nicole requested members to reach out to schools to determine any ag related needs. Sherry Scully will order VAD sign materials that are needed.
4. **Membership Update** – Lisa Marochak reminded Board that there is still a vacant at-large board appointed position. If members know someone they would like to recommend, please let Nicole, Lisa or Sherry know. Michelle Burton, new Durham County Commissioner, has been appointed to the Farmland Board. Ms. Burton's term will begin on January 1, 2025.
5. **UDO Discussion** – Nicole Connelly led discussion on the New Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) proposed changes. Durham City/County Planning website maps and table of proposed changes were provided on screen. Concerns shared on how agriculture may be permitted, limited and/or not allowed within the Future Urban Growth Boundary. City/County Planner will be presenting to the Farmland Board at the January board meeting. After that meeting, a subcommittee of the board will meet to brainstorm recommendations of agriculture to be proposed to the planners. This subcommittee will meet prior to the February 20th meeting date. Sherry will send dates out to those interested in serving on this subcommittee.
6. **Farmer Breakfast Update** – Sherry Scully let the group know that the morning's Farmer Breakfast went well with a well-received discussion by Farm Bureau agents on farm insurance. Next month's Farmer Breakfast will be held on January 16th, 8-10 am at the Farm Bureau with topic of farm law. The January presentation will be presented by Annette Hiatt with the Land Loss Prevention Project.

7. **VAD Update** – Shery Scully reported that two more signs have been built by Southern School of Energy and Sustainability’s Construction Class. Both signs will be installed by Chris Young.
8. **FPP/Ordinance Update** – Save the date for Farmland Plan Community Engagement Event on February 20th @ 6pm at Bahama Ruritan Bldg – this event will be led by contractor, Foothills Regional Commission.

Staff continues to work on ordinance draft.

9. **Easements/Open Space Update** – Celeste continues to work toward closing easements for Clara Glenn, Bill sparrow and Neil Frank easements. USDA-NRCS funding for Ken Wolfe’s farm and Cliff Teasely’s Triangle Farm is looking optimistic. In January, Celeste will be requesting BOCC approval of National Guard funding for Wesley Poole’s 25-acre addition.

10. **Cooperative Extension Update** – staff not present

Next Meeting – January 16th at 10:15am at the Durham Farm Bureau office or online.

Adjourn – With no additional business, Chair Connelly adjourned the meeting at pm.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Sherry Scully
Soil and Water

January 16, 2025
Date approved