

# **Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board**

Regular Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2022

7:00 p.m.

Attendance: John Fendrick, Margaret Giblin, Chuck Gingrich, Michael Jamison  
Staff: Mike Scheffel

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

1. Approval January meeting minutes

Fendrick made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes as submitted, Jamison seconded, motion passed.

2. AEP Easement Program

a. Grateful Gardeners- Sarah Daken and Tom Precht

3. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

a. FY22 Matching Funds request

Scheffel reported he has worked with the Department of Finance to get a letter approved. After he received the approved letter, it was sent to staff at MALPF.

4. RLP Easement Program

a. FY22 update

The grant agreement was signed by CE staff and the completed grant agreement was sent to DNR. Once it is approved by DNR/BPW, there is a 1-year timeline to spend the funds.

b. FY20 Remaining funds

Scheffel sent the grant fund extension request letter to DNR. Once approved, we must use the remaining funds to purchase a RLP easement. As the Board approved last month, the funds will be used to purchase an easement on the top priority property from the FY22 RLP application in the UPRRW RLA. Scheffel then showed the Board what funds will be used to purchase the easement.

c. FY23 Application

Jamison recused himself from this discussion.

Scheffel described the application, when it was due to DNR and what he had done to contact landowners in both RLAs. Scheffel has received interested in being on the application from only one landowner between both RLAs. The landowner operates an equestrian operation in the UPRRW RLA. The property meets the eligibility criteria for the program. Scheffel recommended to include this property as the applicant for the eastside RLA.

Scheffel then discussed how no westside landowners wanted to be included in the application. He asked the Board to consider the following: after reaching out and not getting an interested landowner, would they consider allowing the FY23 application to use the #2 priority farm from the FY22 application? This applicant would be the same one that has been the priority for the past MMM RLA applications. Scheffel said he realizes this is a unique opportunity that not many other farmers have, the farmer has the ability to acquire one farm at a time from a landowner who does not give this opportunity to anyone else. Scheffel then described the challenges he has with funding – we still have limited County funds, bigger properties are limited to apply to the RLP and with the uncertain timeframe set by DNR it is hard to plan for these funds to come in any specified timeline. Fendrick explained his concern and the appearance it gives the Board.

After discussing, Giblin made a motion to include both properties in the FY23 application and if selected for funding, the Board would decide then how to utilize the grant award, Deluca seconded, and the motion passed.

- d. Inspections- Jamison (Leet Farm), Stabler, Magliato (Dickerson Quarry), Simms

Scheffel said he inspected the above properties and found all were in good condition with no issues except to update their conservation plans.

## 5. Legislative activities

- a. RM-56 Community Solar Pilot proposed changes  
Scheffel shared the RM-56 document with the Board. He explained briefly what the new rules would do: expand the capacity in years 5 to 7 of the Community Solar Pilot and require the electric providers to have more up to date information related to the queue for projects and capacity within each year on their websites.

## 6. Other business

- a. BLT Easement Inspections – Stanley, Hartsock, Boyce(Lynwood Farm), Stabler

Scheffel said he inspected the above BLT easements and found no issues with the farms.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.