

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD
MEETING HELD VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

~~Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001~~

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021 – 7:00PM

| Members In Attendance | Members Absent | Visitors in Attendance |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Ken Moniot | Rob Burr | |
| Bill Duncan | Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer, Ex-Officio | |
| John Allen | | |
| Luke Fritz | | |
| Rick Stuchal | | |
| Larry Baumgartel | | |
| Alvin Vogel | | |
| Eugene Bergbigler | | |
| | | Staff in Attendance |
| | | Sheryl Kelly |

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, January 28, 2021. A quorum was present.

1. Election of 2021 Officers

- Chairman Moniot reported that he has been contacted by the Commissioner's office and asked if would like to remain as the Chairman for 2021. He has agreed and will be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Butler County Commissioners at their February 3rd public meeting.
- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to either keep the same officers for 2021 or to have nominations to change. Eugene Bergbigler made the motion to keep the same officers for 2021 with a second by Alvin Vogel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

2. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

3. Commissioner's Report

- Commissioner Geyer was not able to attend but relayed a message through Sheryl Kelly to say hello to everyone and thank all board members for their continued service on the Ag Land Preservation Board.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. There was a motion by Eugene Bergbigler with a second made by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. Old Business

- **2019 #1 Thurber Farm** – Sheryl reported that appraiser Jim Kelly finished the self-contained appraisal and it has been sent to the state and NRCS for review and hopeful acceptance. The board members discussed and will try to meet at the regular meeting location in February in order to review the two appraisals for this farm.

- **2020 #1 Taggart Farm** – This farm was approved by the state board on December 10th.

- **2020 #2 Foertsch Farm** – All information has been submitted and accepted by the state. It will appear on the state board's February meeting agenda for hopeful approval.

- **2020 #3 Riddle Farm** – Mr. Riddle accepted the board's revised offer and this farm has been placed on the schedule for Land Surveyors for survey.

- **2021 Application Round** – Sheryl reported that there were four new applications for 2021 although one does not qualify because of the amount of soil types that don't meet minimum criteria to apply.

- The county has certified \$339,679 in local matching funds for the 2021 program - \$150,000 + \$39,679 in Legacy Funds, plus Clinton Township has certified \$150,000 for their new ag preservation program. Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan reported that \$66,350 was from development fees paid to the township. There was discussion on the great amount of work that Clinton Township officials conducted to try and get farms to apply for the Clinton Township program, including a public program conducted in 2020 and attended by Doug Wolfgang, Director of the state's Preservation Office. Many farms are interested but are not yet in the position to apply because of estate planning and speaking to attorneys. To date, there are two applications on the county list from Clinton Township and unless an application is received before the deadline on January 31st, the township will proceed with those applications.

- Board member John Allen discussed the two applications from Clinton Township and that it had never been the intention of the township to proceed with those two specific applications. But since no other applicants could be found this year the township must move forward. He will abstain from voting on any issues regarding either of those farms.

6. New Business

- **2021 Farm Visits** – the board discussed and it was decided that Sheryl will call all board members in early February to schedule visits to new applicant farms before the February board meeting.
- **Ambrose Farm Application** – Sheryl was contacted by a daughter from the Ambrose Farm whose father and mother had been applicants for many years. With the death of their mother, they weren't sure if they could stay enrolled as an applicant while the estate is being settled. Sheryl spoke with Doug Wolfgang who said it is fine to leave them in the program as an applicant, but at any point where the farm might be chosen for preservation, all owners of record will need to sign a new application form. Sheryl will relay that information to the daughter.
- **Misera Preserved Farm Lot Line Revision** – the owner of the Misera Farm contacted Sheryl to ask if he could do a lot line revision adding property to his currently-preserved farm, then apply for preservation for that additional acreage. Sheryl told him she would confirm with the county board and state office, but believed that he must submit an entire parcel as defined by the tax assessment office when applying for the parcel. There was discussion among board members and it was agreed that this new property must remain as a separate parcel in order to apply. Chairman Moniot believes that the additional property, if chosen for preservation, could eventually be added to the existing property after payment, but that we would need to check with the state on this procedure.

7. Adjourn

Chairman Moniot called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion made by Eugene Bergbigler with a second by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, February 25 at the

Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr.

AGENDA

BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency Building
625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001
THURSDAY, JANUARY 28 – 7:00PM – CALL IN

Conference Call Dial-In Number – (605) 313-5718
Access Code - 888178

ELECTION OF 2021 OFFICERS

PUBLIC COMMENT

REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER GEYER

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

OLD BUSINESS

1. Thurber Farm (2019 #1)
2. Foertsch (2020 #2 and Riddle Farms (2020 #3)
3. 2021 Application Round Update

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021 – 7:00PM

| Members In Attendance | Members Absent | Visitors in Attendance |
|---|----------------|------------------------|
| Ken Moniot | Rick Stuchal | |
| Bill Duncan | | |
| John Allen | | |
| Luke Fritz | | |
| Rob Burr | | |
| Larry Baumgartel | | |
| Alvin Vogel | | |
| Eugene Bergbigler | | |
| Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer, Ex-Officio | | Staff in Attendance |
| | | Sheryl Kelly |

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, February 25, 2021. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

2. Commissioner's Report

- Commissioner Geyer reported on, and answered board member questions on a variety of topics including:

- Solar panels on farms was discussed at the Conservation District meeting earlier that morning. Many farms and municipalities are being approached by solar companies to sell or lease land bringing up questions about hazardous waste, landfilling and recycling the panels when they are no longer operational.

- The county is exploring the possibility of forming a 5-county regional health department.

- In this round of the county's Infrastructure Bank, there is \$23 million available for municipal water, sewer, road, etc. projects.

- The Glade Run Lake Conservancy has asked for a letter of support from the Board of Commissioners for a DCNR grant. This is being explored.

- The county's new Election Review Commission has met and will review every aspect of the county election system.

- Regarding PennDOT's idea to toll certain bridges in the state, Butler County has not been contacted by about any bridges within the county – the closest seem to be in Allegheny and Clarion counties.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the January meeting minutes. There was a motion by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan with a second made by Alvin Vogel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. Old Business

- **2019 #1 Thurber Farm** – The Board discussed the difference in the regular appraisal on this farm versus the NRCS-required self-contained appraisal that was completed. There was a motion made by Secretary Rob Burr to table this discussion until the March meeting, seconded by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- **2020 #2 Foertsch Farm** – Sheryl reported that this farm was approved for easement purchase by the state at their February 18 meeting.

- **2020 #3 Riddle Farm** – Both survey and title work were ordered for this farm.

- **2021 Allocation** - Butler County's 2021 allocation ended up being \$1,527,565. This includes Clinton Township's match of \$150,000. Vice-Chairman Duncan calculated and explained to the board the formula used to calculate the township's portion which ends up being \$851,658 for the countywide program and \$674,562 for the township program. With this, the two Clinton Township farms in the countywide application will be removed and will be handled within the Clinton Township program.

- **2021 Application Round and Ranking** – The Board reviewed the scores and ranking of the 27 applications for 2021. Three were new applications and were visited by some members of the board on February 18 for final scoring. Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the 2021 ranking and proceed with possible easement purchase of the first two farms on the list – Maple Shade Farms and Pizor. There was a motion made by Vice-President Bill Duncan with a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- Regarding the Clinton Township program which will be operated through the county board but using only Clinton Township match funding and state allocation generated as a result of this match, Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to proceed with the two Clinton Township farms that are on the 2021 applicant list. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan with a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved. Board member John Allen abstained from this vote.

- **Senate Bill 64** – Sheryl reported that Senate Bill 64 is currently in the Appropriations Committee. This is the bill that the Ag Board voted in opposition to in 2020 and sent letters to all local legislators. The bill if enacted directs a portion of state ag easement purchase funding to land trusts in Pennsylvania for farm preservation. There was a motion made by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan to send another letter regarding the board's opposition with a second by John Allen. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- **Western Pa. Conservancy** – There was discussion on the Board's visit in 2019 to Western Pa. Conservancy and whether they may have funding available to help with ag preservation in Butler County. Vice-President Duncan made a motion to contact them again with a second by John Allen. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. New Business

- **Cooper (2002) Farm** – Mr. Cooper contacted Sheryl about the possibility of building a butcher shop on the federally-funded portion of his farm (easement recorded in 2002) in the previously disturbed area where silos, hay storage area and graveled parking area is off West Liberty Road. Sheryl has already contacted the state about this and whether there might be any federal restrictions. They are getting back to her about this. The board discussed the county regulations regarding Appendix N – Permitted Customary Part-Time Off-Season Minor or Rural Enterprises. Sheryl will send this to Mr. Cooper and wait for a reply from the state. She will also advise him to contact the township regarding land development. There was a motion made by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel with a second by Luke Fritz to table this discussion until March.

- Additional Discussion:

- Board member Luke Fritz reported on a grant received by the Armstrong County Conservation District which is being used to preserve a farm in the Buffalo Creek Watershed. Sheryl will contact Andy Gaver about this and report back to the board with the details.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Moniot called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion made by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel with a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, March 25 at the

Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr.

PA Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Farmland Preservation
2021 Allocation of Funds

| County | County Approp | Total Grant | Total Match | Redistributed | State Funds | Pct of Total | Total | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| | | | | | | | State & County | |
| Adams | \$400,077 | \$254,639 | \$544,802 | \$39,814 | \$839,255 | 2.21% | \$1,239,332 | |
| Allegheny | \$0 | \$1,206,202 | \$0 | \$40,036 | \$1,246,238 | 3.28% | \$1,246,238 | |
| Armstrong | \$8,964 | \$61,526 | \$12,207 | \$8,012 | \$81,745 | 0.22% | \$90,709 | |
| Beaver | \$194,000 | \$266,820 | \$264,179 | \$10,800 | \$541,799 | 1.43% | \$735,799 | |
| Bedford | \$3,184 | \$66,504 | \$4,336 | \$14,304 | \$85,144 | 0.22% | \$88,328 | |
| Berks | \$1,068,664 | \$946,842 | \$1,381,382 | \$81,094 | \$2,409,318 | 6.34% | \$3,477,982 | |
| Blair | \$100,000 | \$145,101 | \$136,175 | \$15,522 | \$296,798 | 0.78% | \$396,798 | |
| Bradford | \$3,659 | \$74,012 | \$4,983 | \$15,895 | \$94,890 | 0.25% | \$98,549 | |
| Bucks | \$1,601,297 | \$1,206,202 | \$1,495,950 | \$75,098 | \$2,777,250 | 7.31% | \$4,378,547 | |
| Butler | \$339,679 | \$701,665 | \$462,556 | \$23,664 | \$1,187,886 | 3.13% | \$1,527,565 | |
| Cambria | \$7,000 | \$242,323 | \$9,533 | \$9,210 | \$261,066 | 0.69% | \$268,066 | |
| Carbon | \$26,461 | \$150,019 | \$36,033 | \$3,343 | \$189,395 | 0.50% | \$215,856 | |
| Centre | \$89,548 | \$367,205 | \$121,942 | \$16,504 | \$505,650 | 1.33% | \$595,198 | |
| Chester | \$3,219,575 | \$1,206,202 | \$1,844,037 | \$165,752 | \$3,215,991 | 8.46% | \$6,435,566 | |
| Clearfield | \$3,211 | \$88,762 | \$4,373 | \$2,983 | \$96,118 | 0.25% | \$99,329 | |
| Clinton | \$35,025 | \$47,306 | \$47,695 | \$5,993 | \$100,994 | 0.27% | \$136,019 | |
| Columbia | \$15,085 | \$97,835 | \$20,542 | \$8,066 | \$126,442 | 0.33% | \$141,527 | |
| Crawford | \$5,000 | \$97,710 | \$6,808 | \$16,884 | \$121,402 | 0.32% | \$126,402 | |
| Cumberland | \$1,117,923 | \$779,778 | \$1,391,977 | \$52,756 | \$2,224,511 | 5.85% | \$3,342,434 | |
| Dauphin | \$77,861 | \$661,843 | \$106,027 | \$22,114 | \$789,984 | 2.08% | \$867,845 | |
| Erie | \$50,000 | \$352,446 | \$68,087 | \$19,455 | \$439,987 | 1.16% | \$489,987 | |
| Fayette | \$3,371 | \$120,826 | \$4,590 | \$6,096 | \$131,512 | 0.35% | \$134,883 | |
| Franklin | \$299,365 | \$282,914 | \$407,659 | \$48,981 | \$739,554 | 1.95% | \$1,038,919 | |
| Fulton | \$3,776 | \$22,119 | \$5,142 | \$5,372 | \$32,633 | 0.09% | \$36,409 | |
| Greene | \$6,678 | \$46,910 | \$9,093 | \$2,161 | \$58,164 | 0.15% | \$64,842 | |
| Huntingdon | \$50,977 | \$56,409 | \$69,418 | \$11,019 | \$136,846 | 0.36% | \$187,823 | |
| Indiana | \$13,000 | \$77,643 | \$17,702 | \$11,125 | \$106,470 | 0.28% | \$119,470 | |
| Juniata | \$15,249 | \$27,174 | \$20,765 | \$13,393 | \$61,333 | 0.16% | \$76,582 | |
| Lackawanna | \$60,000 | \$329,584 | \$81,705 | \$7,310 | \$418,598 | 1.10% | \$478,598 | |
| Lancaster | \$1,757,654 | \$1,206,202 | \$1,529,581 | \$187,782 | \$2,923,565 | 7.69% | \$4,681,219 | |
| Lawrence | \$36,227 | \$100,881 | \$49,332 | \$8,630 | \$158,843 | 0.42% | \$195,070 | |
| Lebanon | \$217,837 | \$331,034 | \$296,638 | \$40,341 | \$668,013 | 1.76% | \$885,850 | |
| Lehigh | \$2,178,987 | \$1,023,527 | \$1,620,209 | \$68,472 | \$2,712,208 | 7.14% | \$4,891,195 | |
| Luzerne | \$14,000 | \$544,108 | \$19,064 | \$11,081 | \$574,254 | 1.51% | \$588,254 | |
| Lycoming | \$54,608 | \$122,647 | \$74,362 | \$11,008 | \$208,017 | 0.55% | \$262,625 | |
| Mercer | \$45,000 | \$147,614 | \$61,278 | \$14,811 | \$223,703 | 0.59% | \$268,703 | |
| Mifflin | \$50,996 | \$56,157 | \$69,443 | \$12,350 | \$137,950 | 0.36% | \$188,946 | |
| Monroe | \$70,402 | \$509,174 | \$95,869 | \$9,648 | \$614,691 | 1.62% | \$685,093 | |
| Montgomery | \$90,575 | \$1,206,202 | \$123,340 | \$44,940 | \$1,374,483 | 3.62% | \$1,465,058 | |
| Montour | \$0 | \$34,368 | \$0 | \$3,551 | \$37,919 | 0.10% | \$37,919 | |
| Northampton | \$996,127 | \$944,970 | \$1,356,470 | \$40,598 | \$2,342,039 | 6.16% | \$3,338,166 | |
| Northumberland | \$10,000 | \$85,928 | \$13,617 | \$14,101 | \$113,646 | 0.30% | \$123,646 | |
| Perry | \$50,047 | \$59,230 | \$68,151 | \$15,714 | \$143,095 | 0.38% | \$193,142 | |
| Pike | \$1,611 | \$282,450 | \$2,194 | \$4,494 | \$289,138 | 0.76% | \$290,749 | |
| Potter | \$13,480 | \$32,883 | \$18,357 | \$4,448 | \$55,687 | 0.15% | \$69,167 | |
| Schuylkill | \$57,293 | \$231,749 | \$78,019 | \$17,768 | \$327,536 | 0.86% | \$384,829 | |
| Snyder | \$0 | \$51,821 | \$0 | \$16,415 | \$68,236 | 0.18% | \$68,236 | |
| Somerset | \$0 | \$107,832 | \$0 | \$14,263 | \$122,095 | 0.32% | \$122,095 | |
| Sullivan | \$5,683 | \$15,021 | \$7,738 | \$1,686 | \$24,446 | 0.06% | \$30,129 | |
| Susquehanna | \$54,494 | \$65,239 | \$74,207 | \$8,050 | \$147,495 | 0.39% | \$201,989 | |
| Tioga | \$132,546 | \$59,486 | \$180,493 | \$11,971 | \$251,950 | 0.66% | \$384,496 | |
| Union | \$338,295 | \$78,474 | \$460,671 | \$19,787 | \$558,932 | 1.47% | \$897,227 | |
| Warren | \$864 | \$42,642 | \$1,177 | \$3,588 | \$47,407 | 0.12% | \$48,271 | |
| Washington | \$25,718 | \$524,184 | \$35,022 | \$12,398 | \$571,605 | 1.50% | \$597,323 | |
| Wayne | \$50,075 | \$192,678 | \$68,189 | \$7,293 | \$268,161 | 0.71% | \$318,236 | |
| Westmoreland | \$200,000 | \$643,809 | \$272,348 | \$20,896 | \$937,054 | 2.47% | \$1,137,054 | |
| Wyoming | \$32,717 | \$33,678 | \$44,552 | \$3,100 | \$81,331 | 0.21% | \$114,048 | |
| York | \$1,266,181 | \$1,206,202 | \$1,423,867 | \$69,458 | \$2,699,527 | 7.10% | \$3,965,708 | |
| | 16,570,045 | 19,924,717 | 16,623,886 | 1,451,397 | 38,000,000 | 100% | 54,570,045 | |

AGENDA

BUTLER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

**Butler County Staff Development Center
227 West Cunningham Street, Butler 16001**

THURSDAY, MARCH 25 – 7:00PM

PUBLIC COMMENT

REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER GEYER

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

OLD BUSINESS

1. Thurber Farm (2019 #1)
2. Foertsch (2020 #2) and Riddle Farms (2020 #3) updates
3. Maple Shade Farm (2021 #1) and Pizor (2021 #2)
4. Allen, J.&Al. (2021 Clinton #1) and Allen, J.&An. (2021 Clinton #2)
5. Cooper – possible addition of butcher shop
6. Powell – recording a new easement
7. Follow-up meeting with Western Pa. Conservancy
8. Conservation Grant – Armstrong County

*No
Quorum*

NEW BUSINESS

1. Additional appraiser approved for Federal ACEP program
2. County Hazard Mitigation Plan
3. County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

ADJOURN

