



1. Call to Order

Board Members:	X	Corey Carothers	X	Denny McCullough
	X	Barry Frantz	X	Phyllis Nye
	X	Mike Klinepeter	X	William Piper
	X	Scott Mack		
Planning Department Staff:	X	Jessica Cohick	X	Kirk Stoner
	X	Elizabeth Grant via Zoom	X	Stephanie Williams
Solicitor	X	Robert Frey via Zoom		
Advisory Members:	X	Commissioner Liaison – Kelly Neiderer	X	CAEDC - Stacey Cornman
	X	Conservation District -Carl Goshorn	X	Penn State Extension - Anne Miller

Reorganization:

Solicitor Robert Frey led the reorganization process beginning with seeking a recommendation for Chair. Barry Frantz nominated William Piper, Phyllis Nye seconded. There were no additional nominations.

Solicitor Frey asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Phyllis Nye nominated Mike Klinepeter, Corey Carothers seconded. There were no additional nominations.

Solicitor Frey asked for nominations for Secretary. Scott Mack nominated Denny McCullough, Barry Frantz seconded. There were no additional nominations.

The vote for Mr. Piper, Mr. Klinepeter and Mr. McCullough was made by Phyllis Nye and seconded by Scott Mack. The vote approved unanimously.

The appointment of Mr. Piper as Chairman will move to County Commissioners for final approval as per the Board bylaws.

As Chair, Mr. Piper introduced Commissioner Kelly Neiderer as the new liaison for the Agricultural Land Preservation Board.

2. Agenda Modifications and Approval

ACTION: A motion to approve the agenda “as is” for the January 10, 2024 meeting was made by Denny McCullough and Mike Klinepeter seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

ACTION: A motion to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2023 board meeting was made by Phyllis Nye and Corey Carothers seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Unfinished Business

Update on 2022-2023 Farms

Ms. Williams referred the Board to the 2022-2023 status update sheets for review and provided the following highlights:

To date, there is approximately 23,050 acres preserved and another 2,260 in various stages of processing.

2022 Farms:

The Boyce, Weaver, Wadel and Nealy farms are scheduled to settle in the first quarter of 2024.

2023 Farms:

Title searches are wrapping up with Frey & Tiley in February and surveys will be the next step in the process.

Member Mack questioned the status of the Asper Farm, which site on the Franklin/Cumberland line. Ms. Williams indicated that conversations continue between PDA and the two counties on a partnership to preserve the farm.

Holl Farm Offer

Ms. Williams reviewed a draft offer for the Holl Farm with the Board. The farm is 5 parcels that total 592.8 acres. At settlement, a deed of merger will be executed combining the parcels to become one easement and one parcel. The Holl's are willing to accept federal funding, which includes stricter guidelines. Program guidelines contains provisions to offer 100% of the easement value if federal funds are approved. The request for federal funds to the NRCS RCPP was \$1,138,176 or 50% of the purchase price.

The staff recommendation is to offer 100% of the easement value (\$3,840 per acre or \$2,276,352) contingent on federal funding approval. If the federal funds are not approved, the offer would be reduced to 90% of easement value (\$3,456 per acre or \$2,048,716.80)

Staff noted that federal funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis. The 2023 program budget accounts for the 50% non-federal (state) share. 2024 State funds will be used to cover the remaining 50% federal share until reimbursed by NRCS (likely 2025). This obligation should be factored into decisions on 2024 selections.

ACTION: A motion to approve the Holl Farm offer of 100% easement value, contingent on federal funding approval, or 90% of the easement value without federal funding, was made by Scott Mack and Barry Frantz seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.

6. New Business

Informational Presentation – Silver Spring Township Land Preservation Program

Laura Brown, Silver Spring Township Manager, was unable to attend today's meeting. She has asked to move the presentation to February or March.

ACTION: A motion to table the presentation was made by Scott Mack and Phyllis Nye seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.

Reports

Solicitor Report:

None.

Staff Updates:

Stephanie Williams reported the certification of funds to the Department of Agriculture have been submitted to the Board of Commissioners to approve \$878,463 that includes the general fund contribution, private donations and the 2023 Clean and Green rollback taxes. Ranking for the 2024 farms will take place in April or May. Scott Mack, Denny McCullough and Phyllis Nye volunteered for the ranking committee.

For 2024, there have been 21 new applications received and 12 will carry over from 2023.

Ethics forms are due by May 1st to the Board of Commissioners. Paper copies are available if needed.

Elizabeth Grant reported that the INSR grant is helping to fund conservation plans. There is a workshop coming up on March 5th for farmers. Flyers will go out to all preserved farmers.

Kirk Stoner reported that our new full time staff member starts on January 16th. Food Processing Residual (FPR) issues are increasing, and the County is hoping to meet with municipalities and work on a plan to address with legislators. Commissioner Neiderer added that a resolution is being reviewed and the process will not be quick, but it is a start. Carl Goshorn is working with a group, including Representative Barb Gleim, to discuss options and best practices as well.

Advisory Member Updates:

Commissioner Liaison – Commissioner Neiderer reported that PA House Bill 913 has been approved by the house. This bill is “an act authorizing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the local government units thereof to preserve, acquire or hold land for open space uses, and further providing for local taxing options.”

Penn State Ag Extension - Anne Miller reported there is a new agronomist that has been hired and will be available for soil and crop questions.

CAEDC – None

Conservation District – None

Adjournment

ACTION: Scott Mack made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mike Klinepeter seconded. Vote was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35am.

Minutes Submitted By: Jessica Cohick, Office Manager