

**Minutes
Hope Township
Agricultural Advisory Committee
Wednesday, January 6, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Chairman, Bob May.

Open Public Meetings Act:

Under the provisions of the "Open Public Meetings Act" adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by publishing notice in the legal section of the Express Times and by posting notice in the Hope Post Office and on the Township bulletin boards—all by December 20, 2015.

Present at this meeting were members: Bob May, Richard Goodbody, and Sandy Urgo of the Land Conservancy of New Jersey.

The election of officers for the calendar year 2016 was conducted. Richard Goodbody nominated Bob May for Chairman; the nomination was seconded by Bob May and approved by the Committee. Bob May nominated Richard Goodbody for Secretary; the nomination was seconded by Richard Goodbody and approved by the Committee.

Mr. May made a motion to approve the minutes from both the October 21, 2015 and August 5, 2015 meetings. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goodbody and both sets of minutes were approved by the Committee.

The committee then decided on the meeting schedule. It was determined that the board would meet on the third Wednesday of February 2016 after which meetings would be held on the first Wednesday of each even-numbered month.

Old Business:

- Ms Urgo first provided an update on the Campbell Foundry property.

Correspondence:

- Correspondence from Barbara Heskins of The Land Conservancy to the Warren County Office of Land Preservation and the SADC regarding an amendment to Project Area 2 to include an interested property.

Update on Farmland Preservation Efforts:

- Ms. Urgo confirmed that after a few years of slow development, the number of interested, and qualified farms has increased to suggest that 2016 will be a robust year in the Township's farmland preservation efforts.
- Ms. Urgo commented on the need for the Township to move quickly on the active applications as the State will review such activity and "committed" funds, when it does its annual review of PIG to determine whether funds should be re-appropriated to other municipalities that are more active with their farmland preservation programs
- Ms. Urgo reviewed the increasing number of interested and qualified farms in Hope Township. She noted that as these properties move through the application process and ultimately achieve preservation, the Township's financial responsibilities (20% of total) will be significant enough to use much of the monies in the Township's Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. The Committee's consensus was that this is exactly what the Township's residents approved the monies are for.

- Ms. Urgo told of her continuing efforts to contact various farmers and other land owners in Hope Township, and she and the Committee spent some time reviewing a number of potential properties that should be targeted for preservation.

New Business:

- Because of the blossoming interest in Farmland Preservation in Hope, the need for aggressive outreach has been mitigated. The Committee feels that managing the existing proposals responsibly takes precedence over attracting more.
- If any number of the proposed applications reach fruition and achieve preservation, the Committee feels that a press release should be developed for issuance by the Township Committee to laud the efforts of its farmland preservation efforts.

Adjournment:

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM, following a motion by Richard Goodbody which was seconded by Bob May and approved by the Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Goodbody
Secretary