



Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board
Wednesday, December 7, 2022 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Michigan State University Extension, 775 Ball Ave NE – Room A&B
Minutes prepared by
Matthew Channing, matthew.channing@kentcountymi.org

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Chair Dennis Heffron (Agricultural Representative), Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Russell Slater (Agricultural Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest), Jessica Marks (Agricultural Interest), Carolyn Johnson (Conservation Interest), Monica Sparks (County Commissioner)

Absent: None.

Staff: Matt Channing

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Vice Chair Reinbold welcomed everyone to the meeting at 11:31 am.
- II. **Approval of the Agenda** – A motion as made by Ed Robinette to approve the November 2, 2022 Agenda. Jessica Marks supported. UNANIMOUS.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Russell Slater to approve the October 5, 2022 minutes. Jessica Marks supported. UNANIMOUS.
- IV. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – None
- V. **PDR University** – Staff presented on conservation easement details including: how conservation easements are structured, what is permitted and restricted; how easements are valued and what the implications of donations are; and tax law including capital gains tax possibilities and IRS 1031 like kind exchanges. Carolyn Johnson said that she could assist staff with basic tax questions by connecting him with a colleague of hers.
- VI. **PDR 2023** – Staff reported out on the two townhalls. There were 22 attendees who farmed in 2 counties and 9 townships. The cycle will close January 31, 2023. Staff anticipates having the scores available for Board ranking at the March meeting.
- VII. **Staff Update** – Staff updated the Board on various activities related to agriculture. With Ottawa County, staff had an information table at the 2022 GL Expo.

VIII. General Public Comment – None.

IX. Board Updates – Ed Robinette suggested staff and a few Board members meet with the Township Supervisors Group. Chair Heffron wants to know from the Board what we can do in the new year to preserve land beyond one application a year and if this Board is effective and necessary. Commissioner Sparks advised that a circulated letter of support from key area foundations and other invested and respected parties could help motivate the Board of Commissioners and let them know that they are not alone in this movement. She also opined how we need to educate the average person and that staff should put together talking points. Ed Robinette suggested that the Agricultural Preservation Board needs a business plan. Chair Heffron asked if staff can work with Michigan State University Extension on getting updated statistics on West Michigan Agriculture.

X. Adjournment – A motion as made by Vice Chair Reinbold to adjourn until next meeting. Jessica Marks supported. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, January 4, 2022

11:30 a.m.to 1:00 p.m.

300 Monroe Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503