



Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board
Wednesday, October 4, 2023 from 12:37 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
1300 Plymouth Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505 – Kids' Food Basket
Minutes prepared by
Matthew Channing, matthew.channing@kentcountymi.gov

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Chair Dennis Heffron (Agricultural Representative), Vice-Chair Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Jessica Marks (Agricultural Interest), Carolyn Johnson (Conservation Interest), Lisa S. Oliver-King (County Commissioner)

Absent: Secretary Russell Slater (Agricultural Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest)

Staff: Matt Channing

I. Welcome and Introductions – Chair Dennis Heffron welcomed everyone to the meeting at 12:37 p.m.

II. Public Comment – None.

III. Approval of the Agenda – Jessica Marks made a motion to approve the October 4, 2023 Agenda. Commissioner Oliver-King supported.

Ayes – 4
Nays – 0
Abstain – 0

The motion passed.

IV. Approval of Minutes – Vice-Chair Suzie Reinbold made a motion to approve the September 6, 2023 Minutes. Jessica Marks supported.

Ayes – 4
Nays – 0
Abstain – 0

The motion passed.

- V. **PDR 2024** – Staff provided updates for the schedule of the Purchase of Development Rights 2024 application cycle. Applications will be accepted from November 2, 2023. to January 31, 2024. Multiple townhalls will be scheduled in December and January.
- VI. **Sieracki Dedication and Proclamation** – Staff presented the drafted proclamation to be read by the and emailed invitations to Commissioners, Township officials as well as state elected officials. The event is October 12 from 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM. Board of Commissioners Chair Stek is tentatively scheduled to deliver the proclamation at the event.
- VII. **Cascade Township** – Staff reported that they were invited to present at the Farmland Preservation Subcommittee of the Planning Commission in Cascade Township on Kent County’s Agricultural Preservation efforts county-wide and specifically what agriculture looks like in Cascade Township. The Group is highly motivated to secure farmland and is particularly interested in exploring how they can amend their PUD language to support a local preservation program in the vein of Grattan Township.
- VIII. **Ag Board Membership Update** – Staff informed the Board that there are two seats up for appointment this year, the Agricultural Interest Representative that Chair Denny Heffron currently serves on and the Township Representative that Ed Robinette currently serves on. Two qualified candidates applied for the Ag Rep seat and no qualified candidates have applied for the Township Rep seat. Grand Rapids Township Clerk Ed Robinette will not seek reappointment.
- IX. **Staff Update** – Staff provided the following updates: As part of his role on the MSU AgBioResearch Council, staff participated a tour of the Kellogg Research Station as well as the dairy facilities on Campus and a strategic planning session for the Council where he championed land preservation as a target. There were four Commissioners on the September Agriculture Tour and there is additional staff support for a tour of protected land in Pennsylvania and beyond.
- X. **General Public Comment** – None.
- XI. **Board Member Updates** – Vice-Chair Heffron had a conversation with Al Vanderberg and they discussed potential changes to the Farmland Protection Ordinance. One change mentioned was the ability for Agricultural Preservation Board members to have the properties preserved through Purchase of Development Rights while abstaining from voting.
- XII. **Adjournment** – Commissioner Oliver-King made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Carolyn Johnson supported.

Ayes – 5
Nays – 0
Abstain - 0

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, October 04, 2023, 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Michigan State University Extension