



Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board
Wednesday, September 1, 2021 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Kent County Administration Building – Room 311
Minutes prepared by
Matthew Channing, matthew.channing@kentcountymi.org

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Chair Dennis Heffron (Ag Interest), Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Secretary/Treasurer Russ Slater (Ag Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest), Gretchen Mousel (Conservation Interest Representative), Matt Kallman (County Commissioner)

Absent: Dan Oesch (Ag Interest)

Staff: Paul Petr, Matt Channing

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Chair Heffron welcomed everyone to the meeting at 11:33 a.m.
- II. **Approval of the Agenda** – A motion as made by Ed Robinette to approve the September 1, 2021 Agenda. Gretchen Mousel supported. UNANIMOUS
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Ed Robinette to approve the June 2021 minutes. Gretchen Mousel supported. UNANIMOUS
- IV. **PDR Cycle Update** – Staff reported to the Agricultural Preservation Board the scores for the Purchase of Development Rights 2021 applications. Staff highlighted important factors that seemed correlated with higher scores including more acreage, better soils, and the impact that surrounding farms have. Board members inquired about how the Board can work with the applicants to improve their scores for next time. Staff related that it would identify the gaps for each applicant and propose positive actions to take to fill the gaps in the scoring letters that each applicant receives.

A motion as made by Russ Slater to recommend the Board of Commissioners adopts the scores for the Purchase of Development Rights 2021 applications as the rank order. Ed Robinette supported. UNANIMOUS

- V. **PDR Signs** – Staff presented the two iterations the Purchase of Development Rights program has used for the properties successfully preserved. Chair Heffron described the readability of the signs and recommends the Agricultural Preservation Board return to the older version that

carried less text on the sign. The Chari recommended staff to obtain a cost estimate from Kent County's Parks Department for the printing of new signs.

- VI.** Staff Update – Staff gave several updates to the Agricultural Preservation Board including the new MiFarmLink website and event that seeks to connect new and beginning farmers with retiring farmers as well as the new web tool for farm operations to hire new employees.
- VII.** There was no public comment.
- VIII.** Board Member Updates –Russ Slater recommended a few books from, one of them from Wendell Berry, a novelist and farmer.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

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

Kent County 3rd floor Rm 311