



Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board
Wednesday, June 1, 2022 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: Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Jessica Marks (Agricultural Interest), Carolyn Johnson (Conservation Interest), Monica Sparks (County Commissioner)

Absent: Chair Dennis Heffron (Agricultural Representative), Secretary Russ Slater (Agricultural Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest)

Staff: Matt Channing

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold welcomed everyone to the meeting at 11:43 am. Tyler Augst from Michigan State University Extension was present.
- II. **Approval of the Agenda** – A motion as made by Jessica Marks to approve the June 1, 2022 Agenda. Suzie Reinbold supported. UNANIMOUS.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Monica Sparks to approve the May 4, 2022 minutes. Jessica Marks supported. UNANIMOUS.
- IV. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – There was no public comment.
- V. **MSUE Presentation** – Tyler Augst, Government & Community Vitality Educator for Michigan State University Extension, provided an overview of Michigan’s Right to Farm laws. These laws are a shield that protects certain agricultural-related activities and may preempt overreach by local governments. Farmers interested in learning more can reach out to MSUE and MDARD.
- VI. **Ottawa Regional Conservation Partnership Program Presentation** – Staff received notification that Ottawa County’s Agricultural Preservation Board passed a motion in favor of Kent County joining their Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant.

Carolyn Sparks moved to recommend to Recommend to the Board of Commissioners to approve adding Kent County to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Agreement as an eligible entity, and to accept and appropriate \$100,600 of RCPP funding to purchase the Development Rights to the Momber property, parcel numbers 410520400015 and 410521100020 and authorize the Board Chair or designee to execute the grant agreement, approve extensions, amendments and increases to the grant appropriation not to exceed fifteen percent of the original award.

Supported by Jessica Marks.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

- VII. PDR Selection Criteria Review** – Staff presented recommendations for changes to the 2021 PDR Selection Criteria Review to be incorporated for the 2023 cycle. These changes focused on mandating a minimum 21% landowner donation of the conservation easement value as well as adjusting the points for landowner donation to reward higher donations. Staff also wants to use the application as a means to educate landowners on the importance of succession plans.

Carolyn Sparks moved to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to approve the 2023 Kent County Purchase of Development Rights selection criteria.

Supported by Monica Sparks.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

- VIII. ARPA for Agriculture** – Staff shared Kent County’s American Rescue Plan proposal form with the Agricultural Preservation Board. Board members elected to take the paper packet home to review. Staff offered to hold open office hours in-person and via ZOOM on July 6 from 11:00 to 12:00 pm to review proposals and offer suggestions to Board members.

- IX. Staff Update** – Staff gave several updates to the Agricultural Preservation Board including attending webinars regarding PFAS and its impacts on agriculture; a history of farmers and environmentalism; the difficulty of carbon markets with farmland. There were also financial opportunities from Kent County through ARPA and The Right Place for certain manufacturing upgrades.

- X. General Public Comment** – None.

- XI. Board Member Updates** – None.

- XII. Adjournment** – A motion as made by Carolyn Johnson to adjourn until next meeting. Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold supported. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, August 3, 2022

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

Kent County 3rd floor Rm 311