

# Millstone Township Agricultural Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes  
November 7, 2011

Mr. Asprocolas called the meeting to order at 7:43 pm.

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

## Roll Call

Present: (4) Asprocolas, Butch, Dancer, Peck

Absent: (2) Halka, Pinhas

## Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Mr. Peck with a Second offered by Ms. Butch to approve the October 4, 2011, minutes.

Ayes: (3) Peck, Butch, Asprocolas

Nay: (0)

**Correspondence:** None.

## Old Business

- **Large Animal OEM Plan:** Nothing new to report.
- **Low-hanging wires and tree branches:** Nothing new to report.
- **Farm Leases:** Nothing new to report.
- **Motor Vehicle Regulations for Agriculture:** Nothing new to report due to the cancellation of the MVC October meeting.
- **Horse Keeping Businesses and New Jersey Sales and Use Tax:** Ms. Butch explained that both Gaitway and Showplace Farms were visited by the State regarding the collection of sales tax. Both farms received bills, for \$40K each, in the mail the week following the State's visit. No one was informed of the new law and the law hadn't been enforced. Mayor Grbelja met with an aide to Governor Christie to come up with a strategy to get rid of the law. The law is not clear: the collection of sales tax is necessary in some cases of horse keeping but not in others. Many horse farm owners do not have the license required to collect sales tax. Ms. Butch will keep the Council informed of any updates.

## New Business

- **Erosion resulting from farming practices and preventive measures**  
Mr. Pete Nurko was in attendance, at the request of Ms. Butch, to discuss erosion preventive measures he has taken on his preserved farm. Ms. Butch explained that the Township is farm-friendly and she would like to proactively mitigate this and similar situations, for all farmers, to avoid the reoccurrence of these issues.

Mr. Nurko explained that his family has been farming the same parcel of land for 80 years and that there hadn't been erosion or drainage problems until the past year. The past year was marked by unusually high precipitation levels and excessive rainfall within short periods of time. Water cannot properly drain due to silt runoff blocking drainage piping which is located on private property across the road from Mr. Nurko's farm. The property owner has denied the Township access to clean out the blocked pipe. Mr. Nurko stated that he has been working with the Township Engineer and has taken action on erosion preventive measures. Mr. Nurko has also spoken with Doug Kaufman of the NCRS regarding erosion control measures and stated that he has followed NCRS recommendations. Mr. Nurko asked the Council why, when issues arise that are agriculture-related, the Township Committee and Engineer don't consult organizations such as the Ag Council or the NCRS since these organizations have a better understanding of farming practices.

Mr. Asprocolas farms in the same area as Mr. Nurko and explained that the catch basins in this area do not drain anywhere which causes water to accumulate and flood the field that he farms. Mr. Nurko explained that there had been an additional catch basin but the developer had graded over it which has exacerbated flooding problems in the area.

Council members discussed the Right-to-Farm Act as it relates to farming practices and damages resulting from common farming practices.

Ms. Butch spoke with Mr. Kaufman of the NCRS and requested a generic list of best management practices to control water runoff which can be distributed to farmers. Ms. Butch suggested contacting the County Ag Board and Farm Bureau regarding the responsibility for erosion control measures.

Mr. Nurko thanked the Council and departed at 8:20 pm.

Council members continued discussing erosion and drainage issues and liability for damages caused by common farming practices.

Mr. Peck offered to contact the Code Enforcement Officer to fact find once the list of best management practices is received from NCRS.

- **Terms Expiring 12/31/11:** Both Mr. Asprocolas and Ms. Butch, whose terms expire at the end of the year, agreed to re-appointment.

- **Preliminary meeting schedule for 2012**

The following schedule of meetings was distributed for Council review:

January 9, 2012	August 7, 2012*
February 6, 2012	September 4, 2012*
March 5, 2012	October 2, 2012*
April 2, 2012	November 5, 2012
May 7, 2012	December 3, 2012
June 4, 2012	January 7, 2013
July 3, 2012*	

\*Tuesday meetings

Having no further business to discuss, a Motion was made by Ms. Butch with a Second offered by Mr. Dancer to adjourn the meeting and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher  
Council Secretary