

Millstone Township Agricultural Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2012

Mr. Asprocolas called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

Roll Call

Present: (6) Asprocolas, Butch, Dancer, Halka, Peck, Pinhas

Absent: (0)

Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Ms. Butch with a Second offered by Mr. Dancer to approve the February 6, 2012, minutes.

Ayes: (4) Butch, Dancer, Peck, Pinhas

Nays: (0)

Correspondence

- **Monmouth County Park System Green Heritage Spring 2012 Edition:** Article highlighting the grant award for the acquisition of the Baird Homestead.
- **Notification from Clerk's office regarding email communication:** Email received by or sent to the Township of Millstone employees, volunteers or professionals are subject to the Open Public Records Act and may be disclosed upon request. This includes business and personal email addresses and all information that is contained in the email.

Old Business

- **Large Animal OEM Plan:** There is a workshop on Friday, 3/9/12, regarding how to handle animals which Ms. Romano may be attending.
- **Low-hanging wires and tree branches:** The Council sent a memo to the Township Administrator identifying the problem of low-hanging branches over Township roads. The Administrator consulted the Township Attorney and it was determined that, by statute, the Township is responsible for trees in the right-of-way because the Township has an active Shade Tree Commission. The Administrator will set money aside in the budget and the Township will begin a maintenance program. The Township's Certified Tree Expert will assist with prioritizing a list of approximately 30 trees to be trimmed each year. Council members and residents are welcome to provide input.
- **Farm Leases:** The Perrineville Road farm lease bid was advertised in the March 5th edition of the Asbury Park Press. Council members reviewed the lease and discussed various items including hunting, fertilization, pesticide/herbicide usage, soil erosion, bonding and fencing.

- **Horse Keeping Businesses and New Jersey Sales and Use Tax:** Nothing new to report. The Farm Bureau will be taking up this issue.
- **Erosion resulting from farming practices and preventive measures:** Nothing new to report.
- **Ordinance No. 12-02 Oath of Office:** The ordinance was adopted at the 2/15/12 Township Committee meeting. All Council members signed the Oath.

New Business

- **Monmouth County Board of Agriculture (MCBoA) Meeting Update:** Ms. Butch provided an update on the 2/21/12 MCBoA presentation to Dr. Katz who is in charge of the State's Cooperative Extension programs. Meeting attendees were provided the opportunity to voice what they like and don't like about the extension service. A major concern is that Monmouth County Agricultural Agent, Richard Obal, has retired and is not being replaced. The Board provided a list of concerns from the Monmouth County farming community to Dr. Katz. He addressed some of the concerns and provided some information about the budget but did not provide details by program.
- **Rutgers Board of Managers Meeting Update:** Ms. Butch explained that the Board of Managers is comprised of one representative from each County. Ms. Butch has been elected to a 3 year term, subject to approval by the Deans. The Board of Managers communicates with the Rutgers Board of Governors and is an advisory board to the NJ Agricultural Experiment Station. The Board of Managers is supposed to meet with the Board of Governors once each year per the Board's bylaws, but a meeting hasn't taken place in years. Ms. Butch made a motion at the Board of Managers meeting to write a letter to the Board of Governors requesting a meeting in 2012. Ms. Butch explained that decisions are being made by the Board of Governors without input from the Board of Managers or the Farm Bureau.
- **School Nutrition/Local Farms Programs:** Ms. Butch provided information on school nutrition and farm-to-school programs and suggested contacting the school superintendent regarding providing local produce at Township schools. Mr. Asprocolas explained some of the challenges with meeting program requirements such as third party audits and farm inspections and noted that most Jersey Fresh produce is in season during summer break.
- **Legislation affecting Agriculture:** Marty Bullock, Gary DeFelice and Ms. Butch will be going to Trenton to discuss proposed legislation affecting farmers including minimum wage, labor housing, child labor and new farmland assessment criteria.
- **Open Space & Ag Council Newsletter:** A spring edition of the newsletter is planned with an article highlighting the Trapani Farm and award winning honey. Additional article suggestions include the manure management plan deadline,

courteous behavior to slow moving farm vehicles and the winner of the Millstone Day "Guess My Weight" pumpkin contest.

- **Tree Clearing:** Ms. Pinhas informed Council members that a local nurseryman was prevented from cutting trees by the zoning officer. Ms. Butch explained that there is a Tree Clearing Ordinance which has an exemption for commercial farmers but that farmers are still required to complete the tree clearing application. The Secretary will provide a copy of the ordinance to Council members.

Upcoming Events

- 6th Annual Open Space Clambake Fundraiser: Sunday, June 3rd: Mr. Asprocolas offered his grill for the event.

Having no further business to discuss, a Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas with a Second offered by Mr. Dancer to adjourn the meeting and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher
Council Secretary