

# Millstone Township Agricultural Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes  
November 4, 2013

Mr. Asprocolas called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

## Roll Call

Present: (5) Asprocolas, Butch, Dancer, Peck, Pinhas

Absent: (1) Posten

## Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Ms. Butch with a Second offered by Mr. Dancer to approve the October 1, 2013, minutes.

AYES: (2) Butch, Dancer

NAYS: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

**Public Comment:** No public in attendance.

**Correspondence:** Resolution from Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board (MCADB), dated October 2<sup>nd</sup>, regarding the right to farm complaint against the 17 acre farm located at Block 46, Lots 23.01 and 23.02. The MCADB investigated animal management, animal waste management and fencing on the farm. The owner did not supply any proof of income and the MCADB determined that the farm is not a commercial farm as defined by the Right to Farm Act. The resolution states that MCADB does not have jurisdiction over the operation. After the September Ag Council meeting, the Secretary sent a letter to the owners inviting them to the October Ag Council meeting. The owners did not attend the meeting, have not contacted the Secretary and have not met with any representatives of the town. The Township can now proceed with issuing summonses for code violations.

## Old Business

- **Large Animal OEM:** Sarah Ralston, of the animal nutrition program at Rutgers, has been appointed as the Monmouth County CART coordinator and the County may have some start up funding available. Ms. Butch and Ms. Romano met with the Township OEM Coordinator to discuss the budget for the large animal OEM plan and to compile a list of supplies that are needed in case of an emergency.
- **Farm Leases:** Nothing new to report.
- **Horse Keeping Businesses and New Jersey Sales and Use Tax:** The Farm Bureau wrote to Assemblyman Dancer regarding the state sales tax on equine boarding facilities and requested legislative intervention for an exemption from the tax. The Horse Council posted a portion of the letter on their website and is

asking people to contact Assemblyman Dancer to urge him to sponsor a bill to exempt the equine industry from this tax.

- **New Commercial Farm Certification Form:** The form should be completed by commercial farmers who are seeking relief from zoning ordinances; it is not necessary for farmers to complete the form preemptively. The completed form needs to be signed, notarized and forwarded to the Mayor with proof of production income for final approval. Council members also discussed that the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code provides special construction code criteria for agriculture buildings when the main use of the structure is related to commercial farm production.
- **Baird Homestead Project & Millstone Agriculture Museum**
  - A student work group spent 4 hours cleaning in and around the outside of the greenhouse. Once cleaned, the greenhouse repairs will begin.
  - The truck needs to be emptied and removed from the property.
  - The *Friends* group is holding a brick fundraiser. The brick walkway will go from the back door of the house to the pole barn and will include a patio area.
  - All mechanical plans and architectural drawings have come in and copies have been submitted to the construction department, the Township Engineer and the Township Committee.
  - The water lines are in and JCP&L will be installing a transformer and underground electric lines.
  - Harris Surveying provided a survey, pro bono, which included the water lines and metes and bounds for utility easements.
  - A site plan is being developed.
  - A grant has been written for roof repair work and the roofer has offered to donate the labor for the repair work.
  - Dion's Tree Service did pro bono work which included taking down 13 large trees and will be coming back to bulldoze the overgrown nursery area.
  - The downstairs of the house has been painted, cleaned and decorated with artifacts from the Ag Museum in preparation of the October 28<sup>th</sup> Monmouth County Historic Commission meeting, which was held at the house and hosted by the *Friends* group.
  - The *Friends* will be holding their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 pm.

### **New Business**

- **Public Question 2 - New Jersey Minimum Wage Increase Amendment:** The Farm Bureau is asking people to vote "no" on question 2 which raises the minimum wage and includes annual automatic increases. The Farm Bureau opposes the ballot question because there is no agriculture exemption and it does not take into consideration economic conditions that affect farmers.

- **Term Expirations:** Mr. Asprocolas and Ms. Butch have terms that expire on 12/31/13. Both members agreed to reappointment.
- **2014 Schedule of Meetings:** Council members reviewed the calendar and agreed to meet on the first Monday of the month with the exception of the month of January and during months when a holiday falls on the first Monday. The January Ag Council meeting will be scheduled for the Monday following the Township Committee reorganization meeting. The September meeting will be held on the second Monday of the month due to the Labor Day holiday.

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|------------------|-------------------|
| January 13, 2014 | August 4, 2014    |
| February 3, 2014 | September 8, 2014 |
| March 3, 2014    | October 6, 2014   |
| April 7, 2014    | November 3, 2014  |
| May 5, 2014      | December 1, 2014  |
| June 2, 2014     | January 12, 2015  |
| July 7, 2014     |                   |

Having no further business to discuss, a Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Pinhas with a Second offered by Mr. Dancer and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorraine Maher  
Council Secretary