

Millstone Township Agricultural Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2016

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

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

Roll Call

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

Absent: (2) Dancer, Posten

In attendance: Committeewoman Grbelja (arrived 7:39 PM)

Public Comment: Opened and closed at 7:31 PM with no public in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas with a Second offered by Mr. Peck to approve the December 7, 2015, minutes.

AYES: (3) Pinhas, Peck, Asprocolas

NAYS: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Reorganization

➤ Appointments

- Resolution No. 16-19: Appointing George Asprocolas and Pat Butch to two year terms commencing 1/1/16 and ending 12/31/17.
- Resolution No. 16-20: Appointing Tom Dancer as the Millstone Township Representative to the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board for 2016. Ms. Butch noted that Mr. Dancer did not attend MCADB meetings during 2015. Mr. Peck offered to represent Millstone at the MCADB if Mr. Dancer is unable to attend meetings. Ms. Butch explained that representatives from the SADC attend MCADB meetings, noted the importance of forging relationships with funding partners and that she and C/Grbelja should not be acting as municipal representatives due to the positions they hold on the MCADB.

➤ Election of Officers

- Ms. Butch nominated Mr. Asprocolas for Chairman with a second offer by Mr. Peck. Mr. Asprocolas accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made. Roll call vote:
AYES: (4) Butch, Peck, Pinhas, Asprocolas
NAYS: (0)
ABSTAIN: (0)
- Ms. Pinhas nominated Mr. Peck for Vice Chairman with a second offer by Ms. Butch. Mr. Peck accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made. Roll call vote:
AYES: (4) Pinhas, Butch, Asprocolas, Peck
NAYS: (0)
ABSTAIN: (0)

➤ Adoption of Meeting Schedule for 2016

Ms. Butch explained that the location of the meetings is on the second floor of the court building located at 215 Millstone Road. The room is only accessible using stairs, which can be a hardship. Council members discussed changing the meeting dates so

that the meetings could be held downstairs in the court room or changing the location of meetings to the municipal building at 470 Stage Coach Road. Council members agreed to approve the meeting schedule provided that a meeting room can be secured at 470 Stage Coach Road. Ms. Butch made a Motion to adopt the following schedule of meetings for 2016 and the first meeting of 2017 with a Second offered by Ms. Pinhas.

AYES: (4) Asprocolas, Butch, Peck, Pinhas
NAYS: (0)
ABSTAIN: (0)

January 11, 2016	July 11, 2016
February 1, 2016	August 1, 2016
March 7, 2016	September 12, 2016
April 6, 2016	October 3, 2016
May 2, 2016	November 7, 2016
June 6, 2016	December 5, 2016
	January 9, 2017

➤ **Designation of Official Newspapers**

Ms. Pinhas made a Motion to designate the Asbury Park Press and the Times of Trenton as the Council's official newspapers with a Second offered by Ms. Butch.

AYES: (4) Asprocolas, Butch, Peck, Pinhas
NAYS: (0)
ABSTAIN: (0)

Correspondence

- The Township Clerk/Administrator, Ms. Dellasala, received a letter from Mr. Forman, dated 1/4/16, requesting a change to the term of the Perrineville Road Farm lease, from August 1 to July 31, to a calendar year. Council members discussed the reasons why the current lease term was established including cover crops, runoff, soil erosion and the bid process. Ms. Butch explained that she is opposed to changing the lease term because the Council spent a significant amount of time on selecting a lease term that would be optimal for the Township and changes to the current lease will have an impact on future farm leases. Mr. Asprocolas explained that the lease went out to bid with the current term and bids received would have been based on the term specified and additional farmers may have bid on the lease had the term been different. Mr. Peck noted that the bid price would have been based on the number and type of crops to be planted under the current lease term. Council members discussed County leases, which run for a five year term with an option for another five year term, and that this may be an option for future municipal farm leases. Mr. Peck made a Motion with a Second offered by Ms. Butch to keep the Perrineville Road farm lease "status quo" for the following reasons:

- Concerns regarding the need to have a cover crop planted in a timely manner to prevent erosion over the winter months.
- The bid price was based on the original lease terms and it would not be fair or equitable to other farmers who bid, or would have bid, on the lease had the term been different than August 1 to July 31.
- Any changes to the current lease terms will negatively affect the next lessee.

Roll call vote:

AYES: (3) Asprocolas, Butch, Peck
NAYS: (0)

ABSTAIN: (1) Pinhas (due to conflict of interest)

Old Business

- **Large Animal OEM Plan:** Ms. Butch explained that there is nothing new to report on large animal OEM. Members of the OEM took a tour of the Green Leaf pet facility in regards to establishing an emergency plan for small animals.
- **Farm Leases:** Discussed under Correspondence.
- **Baird Homestead Project:** This item will be removed going forward and can be included on future agendas as needed.
- **Farmland Preservation Process:** The draft document was distributed for review. The document was discussed at the Open Space and Farmland Preservation Council meeting and additional changes have been proposed. This Council will wait for the final draft before commenting on the document.
- **Open Space Trust Account Activity:** The activity report for the period January 1, 2015, through January 31, 2016, was distributed for review.
- **Wildlife Management on Farms Next to Parkland:** The County restricts how hunters can hunt on County-owned land including prohibiting the driving of deer. Due to the restrictions placed on hunters, the deer move off of the County land and onto farms where they are devastating crops and then return to the shelter and protection of the County parkland. Mr. Asprocolas explained that some modifications to the hunting regulations on County-owned land need to be made to alleviate the problems the deer are causing on farmland adjacent to County parkland. This topic will be discussed at the State Agriculture Convention next week.

Pending Legislation and Regulations

- **Horse Keeping Businesses and New Jersey Sales and Use Tax:** There is nothing going on at this time. This item will be removed from the agenda going forward.
- **Soil Disturbance:** No discussion. This item will be removed from the agenda going forward.
- **SADC Regulations:** Ms. Butch read a section of the January 29, 2016, issue of the Farm Bureau newsletter regarding open space funding. Ms. Butch explained that certain expenses, such as the funding for SADC, will come out prior to allocating the remainder of the funding among the preservation programs.

New Business

- **2015 Council Accomplishments:** Council members reviewed the draft list of accomplishments and discussed items to add to the list. The Secretary will update the list and will send it to the Township Committee.
- **Annual Land Conservation Rally:** The Rally will be held on Friday, March 18, in Trenton. The list of workshops was distributed for review. Mr. Asprocolas and Mr. Peck Council indicated that they will attend and the Secretary will prepare the purchase requisition and submit the registration.
- Ms. Butch announced that there will be a bus tour on Thursday, March 24, to Jim Simon's lab and greenhouse in New Brunswick followed by a tour of the Snyder Farm and presentation on sustainable agriculture.
- **Landowner Meet and Greet:** Ms. Butch explained that Millstone has approximately \$750,000 in municipal PIG funding from the State. This represents a

project of approximately \$1.2M with the State funding percentage at 60%. The funding needs to be allocated to a project to prevent the loss of the funding. The Open Space and Farmland Preservation is planning a Meet and Greet event to spur landowner interest in preservation. Representatives from County and State agencies will be invited to provide information and answer questions about the different preservation programs. Ms. Butch stated that the Ag Council should co-sponsor the event and that attendance by Ag Council members is just as important as attendance by State and County representatives. Ms. Butch also stated that Mr. Asprocolas' name should appear on the landowner invitation letter for recognition purposes as well as to provide a level of comfort with farmers. The event will be held on Tuesday, March 8th, at the Elks Lodge. The Secretary will mail invitation letters to the owners of farmland assessed properties that are 25 acres as well as all farms on the County and Municipal target farm lists. Ms. Butch has a list of some smaller properties, that have been identified by the County Park System, that should also receive invitation letters. Ms. Butch asked the Secretary to contact each of the speakers by phone to invite them to the event. Ms. Butch has already discussed the Meet and Greet with Mr. Coeyman of the Monmouth County Park System and he has agreed to attend the event. Ms. Butch asked if the annual municipal planning incentive grant application was discussed at the December 7, 2015, Ag Council meeting. Council members confirmed that the application was discussed during open session of the December 2015 meeting prior to the submission of the application. Ms. Butch suggested including the annual grant application on the December agenda each year to ensure that the discussion is held in an open public forum.

At 8:36 PM, Ms. Butch made a Motion with a Second offered by Ms. Pinhas to move to executive session; with all in favor, the Council moved to executive session to discuss a potential preservation project.

At 8:43 PM, having no further business to discuss, a Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas with a Second offered by Mr. Peck to adjourn and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorraine Maher
Council Secretary