

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 20, 2018**

Vice-Chairman Peck Called the Meeting to Order at 7:47 p.m.

Ms. D'Andrea read the Adequate Notice.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Ms. Butch, Ms. Pinhas, Vice-Chairman Peck

Absent: Chairman Asprocolas, Ms. Posten, Mr. Dancer

Guests: Ms. Mandelbaum, Northeast Regional Acquisition Coordinator, SADC
Deputy Mayor Grbelja
Ms. D'Andrea

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: July 19, 2018

Ms. Butch made a Motion to approve the Minutes and Mr. Peck offered a Second. Roll Call Vote: Butch and Peck voted yes to approve the meeting minutes

CORRESPONDENCE:

The discussion of the Memorandum from the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board dated 9/14/18 regarding update to target list has been tabled to the 10/18/18 meeting.

Vice-Chairman Peck opening the floor for Open Public comment and seeing none, closed that portion of the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM:

Ms. Butch discussed that each December 15th, the Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) program . The Council will table this discussion for the next meeting in October. The report and update is due to SADC thirty (30) days prior, the report must be forward to MCADB for review comment.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Ms. Butch advised that the Deer Management Survey was sent to the residents and farmers of the Township and the many responses were received. The data collected from the survey is important is assessing the Impact of the deer population in the community.

Ms. Butch offered that along with the spotlight deer counts that will begin in February when the leaves are off of the trees, Chairman Asprocolas will be in charge of scheduling the third wildlife management workshop.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja discussed connecting with the school and the Environmental Commission to lay out an area that can be followed throughout the year and monitored as to what grows and does not grow due to deer. The Township area across from the Baird Homestead and next to the middle school was discussed as a possible staging area. Ms. Butch will contact the school superintendant and Deputy Mayor Grbelja would connect with the EC to try to set this up.

Vice-Chairman Peck and Ms. Butch discussed the Farm Bureau's work on the Schneider Farm using the infrared drone in Millstone. Deputy Mayor Grbelja discussed that the Councils' drone is being funded from monies set aside from the clam bake. This will help get our program off of the ground.

The Council discussed the Monmouth County Park System participating in a pilot program at one of their parks located in the Township, to close the park to allow hunting.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja stated that Chairman Asprocolas will have to get the third wildlife workshop moving.

LARGE ANIMAL OEM PLAN: Ms. Butch had nothing to report at this time

OPEN SPACE TRUST:

Deputy Mayor Grbelja discussed that she monitors the Trust so that the funds are not utilized to maintain the Millstone Park. She explained that she fights hard to preserve land. She advised that the Open Space and Agricultural Councils work well together. There is an Open Space member who is licensed to operate the drone and he will help the Agricultural Council to perform the deer count and the Open Space council to perform site assessments.

FALL NEWSLETTER:

Deputy Mayor Grbelja discussed that the Fall Newsletter is being published and will be distributed. She went over some of the articles that are in the publication this season.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja advised that the SADC has approved a total number of six (6) communities are sharing in the \$41 million funding. Millstone was one of the 6 in the State of New Jersey to received \$1million. Deputy Mayor Grbelja shared that our hard work is being recognized.

NEW BUSINESS:

DRONE:

Deputy Mayor Grbelja discussed that through the hard work of everyone at the Clam Bake, monies were set aside for the purchase an infrared drone. Deputy Mayor Grbelja reiterated that the monies for the drone purchase is not coming out of Open Space Trust monies. Secretary Peerboom provided additional information from her research results for the Council to consider when purchasing a drone.

The drone is a significant tool and would be used to help map out and photograph areas. The drone with its infrared light can assist in collecting data to determine the deer population. The beneficial components of utilizing a drone were discussed, including noting the waterline from different floods. The Open Space Council has a certified licensed drone operator who could operate the drone. The Township Attorney has provided additional language to be used when sending written correspondence to the residential areas when stewarding is taking place and the drone is used.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja discussed that farmland preservation should be under the supervision of the Agricultural Advisory Council which is made up of active farmers. The Open Space Council has 9 members and only 2 are farmers. It is not the intent of legislation to have a non-farm group make the decisions on farmland.

Ms. Mandelbaum offered that new legislation lines up with the duties of the Agricultural Advisory Council and has us working together with the County and the SADC..

Ms. Butch, provided information regarding the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. She advised that they added \$2.5 million to their budget. Ms. Butch informed the group that this is not an annual occurrence, but rather a one-time addition. They are talking to the legislators because the station needs salaried positions to properly run the Station. She advised that at the 9/27/18 Board of Managers meeting this will be discussed.

Ms. Butch also addressed the needs of the Cream Ridge Biological Resource Center. She will have a list next week and will have an update next month.

POTENTIAL MANDATORY FARM FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS:

Fire Marshall Meeting. Ms. Butch spoke to Lt. Matt Wagner of the Millstone Fire Dept. to schedule a joint workshop and invite local farmers to find out what the requirements are for commercial farms. She explained a situation in South Jersey with the Fire Department citing commercial farm vehicles. Farm equipment is not under their auspices. Ms. Butch advised that Lt. Wagner is willing to work with us. Secretary Peerboom will help set this meeting up. Email invitations should be sent to farmers. There should be an email contact list of farmers in the office. The meeting should be set for our regular November 15th Meeting if it works for the Fire Dept. schedule. This meeting should be advertised. They are considering holding it at the Clarksburg Resource Center.

Ms. Butch added that commercial farms in Millstone Township do not have to pay a fee to be inspected by the Fire Department as per Ordinance.

The next meeting of the County Agricultural Board is Thursday, October 10th at 7:30 p.m.

LEGISLATION:

Ms. Butch provided an update:

Legislation may be passed to allow the County Ag Development Boards to have Alternates. She added that Monmouth County has had that in place for some time due to the grandfather clause.

New legislation is being proposed to aid non-preserved farms obtain deer fencing.

The New Jersey Farm Bureau was at the Schneider Farm in Hunterdon County sending up a drone for the deer count.

The Farm Bureau is having their 100th Anniversary celebration, Monday, November 12, 2018. It is a social gathering.

Five (5) delegates are going to the Bureau convention. Vice-Chairman Peck and Ms. Butch will be two of the Monmouth county delegates, as well as Annie Trapani.

Ms. Butch advised that they are looking for Policy Development. She he asked if anyone has any suggestions for change in legislation or policy, to let her know. Mr. Peck has been elected President of the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board.

Ms. Butch advised that the County is doing less with less funding. There are no IPM programs.

There will be an Open State Board of Agriculture Meeting at Cream Ridge Resource Center. The meeting begins at 12:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 26, 2018. All are welcome.

There was discussion as to the \$15/hour minimum wage is on the table wording of the proposal of the legislation.

There are a lot of Agriculture teacher vacancies in the State. The State is working its way through the process of keeping teachers in the State by passing legislation that would reimburse them to stay here.

Horses have contracted West Nile and Encephalitis. The earlier that this is caught, the better the chance of survival. The horses that succumb were not vaccinated.

The longhorn tick has now been found in Monmouth County.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja advised that she had a conversation with Assemblyman Dancer regarding the New Jersey Sire Stakes. She discussed that the Standard Bred Association has problems. Assemblyman Dancer is in the process of putting two bills together and will forward them to Deputy Mayor Grbelja. She discussed two issues; Assemblyman Ron Dancer is demanding that the simulcast money from sports betting be distributed to the breeding and racing program while they are simulcasting the racetracks. She explained that the legislation will demand that in order for the facility to have simulcasting and/or betting on horse racing, they will have to have live horseracing.

The two bills being sponsored will put pressure on the Meadowlands.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja stated that the thoroughbred horsemen have not had a problem. She stated that they took over Monmouth Park and run it. The Standard Bred folks had poor leadership and having a private individual has been detrimental to them.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja stated that we must seek an audit of the Meadowlands and we must take quick action.

Deputy Mayor Grbelja stated that the Shire Stakes had 68 trotters. It was a good year and they were able to increase the purse.

Ms. Mandelbaum thanked the Agricultural Advisory Council for being such an active Group. This helped us to be the recipients of the additional \$1million in funding. This will be available in early 2019. Ms. Mandelbaum told the council to keep up the good work of getting new applications in the door for farmland preservation.

EVENTS:

Ms. Butch offered that the Newsletter discusses the funding and addresses their outreach. Ms. Mandelbaum stated that this past spring, the SADC had a big push in working with municipalities that have Planning Incentive Grant Programs thru them and as a result, she advised that towns would like help in navigating the applications. There is a lot of paperwork so it is an undertaking but Ms. Mandelbaum advised that they are trying to streamline and have checklists and also have customer service. She would like to kick things off to have a workshop on October 10th and she thanked the Council for being such gracious hosts. To date, 16 people have registered for the workshop.

Ms. Mandelbaum advised that if you want to attend the workshop, you must register.

Secretary Peerboom is working with Ms. Mandelbaum to provide her with what she requires in order to run a Power Point Presentation.

Seeing no further business at this time, Vice-Chairman Peck made a motion to leave the regular session and enter into the Executive Session to discuss pending preservation. Ms. Pinhas offered a Second and by unanimous, the Council left the Regular Session at 8:45 p.m.

At 9:20, the Council returned to the Regular Meeting. Ms. Butch apprised the group that Friday, April 12th, 2019 will be the Annual Land Rally with the topic "Conservation Innovation". She asked everyone to save the date.

Seeing no further business at this time, Vice-Chairman Peck made a Motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Pinhas offered a Second and by unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela D'Andrea