

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP  
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 27, 2022**

Chairperson Butewicz called the Meeting to Order at 7:50 p.m.

Reading of Adequate Notice

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Mr. Asprocolas, Ms. Butch, Ms. Butewicz, Mr. Peck, Ms. Posten

**Absent:** Mr. Rueter, Deputy Mayor Morris

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No Public

**Approval of Minutes: April 26, 2022**

Motion Ms. Butewicz Second: Ms. Butch

The following amendments were made to the minutes:

- 1) Under Landowner Meet & Greet: Include: *Monmouth County Park System and Monmouth Conservation Foundation* to the list of invited speakers.
- 2) Under Landowner Meet & Greet: Add: The secretary will get a list of the farmland assessment properties and create a list of landowners and presenters.

Ms. Butch YES Ms. Butewicz YES

**CORRESPONDENCE:** 1. The letter of resignation from Mr. Milston "Bud" Rueter was read.  
2. Kathy Minniear, Green Acres program will attend the Meet & Greet.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Deer Population Survey:** The new survey results are listed in the newsletter draft sent to the council. Mr. Asprocolas noted that during the field survey, they noticed that the lower elevations in Millstone was affected more by the recent disease than the higher elevations. Expect recovery of the deer population to be much quicker than anticipated. Ms. Butewicz asked if the disease caused any issues with harvesting deer meat and if any study was done regarding the numbers of black bear in the area. Mr. Asprocolas noted that deer meat was not affected by the disease but the recommendation was to avoid organs. No study was done regarding black bear but the restrictions by the State on bear hunting will result in an increase in numbers and sightings.

**Landowner Meet & Greet:** Two speakers have confirmed. Jen Cosimo from Monmouth Conservation Foundation and Kathy Minniear from Green Acres Program. The Farm Bureau convention is November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, so it won't be a conflict with the 17<sup>th</sup>. The confirmed time is 6:45pm. The secretary is creating a list by reviewing the farm land assessment properties and the property tax list to identify perspective properties. Farmland Preservation needs a minimum of 25 acres but Open Space will purchase easements or small parcels depending on where they are located in relation to other Open Space parcels or parklands. Ms. Butch motioned to allocate up to \$600 to be split between Ag and Open Space for food for the event. Mr. Asprocolas offered a second. All voted in favor. Ms. Butewicz will reach out to Harriet Honigfeld and Amy Mandlebaum. Ms. Butch will reach out to Andy Coyeman. Mr. Asprocolas asked if we should invite a someone who has gone through the Farmland Preservation program to speak. Ms. Butch noted that Millstone has not completed a preservation process in a long time.

**Review of Millstone Township Ordinances Relating to Agriculture:** Ms. Butewicz met with Ms. Sims from the Land Use Department to review ordinances related to Agriculture and Equine farming. There was not much listed in the code book relating to farm definitions and equine activities. Ms. Butch noted that Township ordinances must comply with State commercial farm rules and permitted activities. State regulations also specify farm sizes. There should be a Township ordinance that allows a homeowner to partition out 2 acres for a home from a parcel being preserved even if the zoning requires 10 acres. There should also be an ordinance regarding automatic gates for Fire and Emergency access along with an ordinance exempting farms from paying fire inspection fees.

**Newsletter:** The council received the draft of the newsletter. Ms. Butch will send recommended changes to Secretary DeFelice.

**New Business:**

**NJ Ag Convention:** The convention is coming up in February. Ms. Butch expects to be on the Resolutions Committee. There is a meeting coming up with the Department of Health to discuss important issues. Mr. Asprocolas noted that he was not informed of the meeting but needs to attend to voice farmer concerns.

**Clambake Funding:** Ms. Butch noted that the Clambake has raised significant funds over the years that it has been held. The individuals who have worked on the clambake over those years would like to see those funds used to raise a windmill at the Baird Homestead. The windmill was moved from a farm in Somerset County to the Agriculture Museum in 1990. Around 2012, the windmill was given to Millstone Township. The goal is to refurbish the windmill and install it over an existing agrarian well. The existing greenhouse adjacent to the well may be converted into a geothermal greenhouse if the investigation into the technology proves to be feasible. This would allow for extended planting and educational programs during winter months. The Historic Committee has identified an individual in Illinois that has the knowledge required to refurbish this type of windmill. Mr. Asprocolas asked if anyone approached individuals in Lancaster, PA. that have experience with these types of windmills. Ms. Butch noted that the search for a qualified individual was very extensive and the person located in Illinois had done another project in NJ several years ago. Mr. Asprocolas asked if the clambake will continue. Ms. Butch noted that most of the people who contribute to the clambake's success may not be available next year to run it. Mr. Peck noted that a geothermal installation on the greenhouse would be pricey and require repairs to the wood structures that are weak. He suggests working with engineers at Rutgers Ag to fully understand what would be involved. Ms. Butch estimates that both projects would need about \$80,000 in funding. A grant will also be pursued if needed to help leverage the funds. Ms. Butch made a motion to move forward with both projects. Mr. Asprocolas offered a second. The council voted in favor.

Mr. Asprocolas motioned to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:52pm and Chairperson Butewicz offered a second.

Council returned from Executive Session at 9:44pm.

Seeing no further business, Councilperson Asprocolas motioned to adjourn. Mr. Peck offered a second. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Andrew DeFelice