

**Ocean County Agricultural Development Board
Minutes of February 12, 2020
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Toms River, NJ**

Attendance: Doug Hallock; Chairman, Jeff Adams; Kathleen Sucharski, Martin Lynch (OCADB), Casey Hunter (OCADB), Cassie Shugart (OCPD), Mark Villinger (OCPD), Thomas Thorsen (OCPD) Mathew Thompson (County Counsel), Charles Roohr (SADC), Christine Raabe (OCSCD), Stephen Yergeau (OC Ag Ext), Steven Johnson (Laurita Winery)

- I. **Call to order and Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act-** Chairman Hallock called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm by declaring a quorum and stating the Open Public Meetings Act requirements had been met.
- II. **Oath of Office:** Mr. Thompson administered the Oath of Office to Casey Hunter.
- III. **Approval of Minutes from January 14, 2020-** Mr. Villinger noted that amended minutes were handed out to members to clarify action taken as a result of closed session discussion. Mr. Adams noted that Kathleen S. could not have seconded the motion to appoint herself as secretary. Mr. Villinger agreed and noted it was Jon Dancer who made the motion.

A **MOTION** to approve the January minutes with corrections was made by Mr. Adams at 8:25 pm and seconded by Mr. Lynch. All in favor, Casey Hunter abstained, motion passed.

- IV. **Program Update-**
 - Mr. Villinger informed the board that the county closed on Fleisher Farm in Toms River, and will be vacant until it can be auctioned as a preserved farm.
 - The Grant Farm in Plumsted is set to be auctioned on April 7 by Max Spann Real Estate & Auction Company. There are two lots, one with a house and one with an RDSO.
 - Schen Farm in Plumsted was acquired by with Natural Lands Trust Fund and will continue to be leased for farming

V. **New Business:**

- **Hlubik Farm Update:** Mr. Villinger informed the board that planning staff had a recent site visit to Hlubik Farm where they met with animal welfare and natural resource specialists from NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) in response to complaints. A letter was given to the farm owner from NJDA staff addressing concerns about noncompliance with a nutrient management plan and animal waste management. A leaking food waste storage area was noted, and the farmer was given a deadline to fix the staging area. Some of the NJDA concerns are potential easement issues. Jeff Adams requested that the complaint letter be addressed by planning staff, as the complainant has sent letters to the Board of Agriculture about the condition of the animals and broken pasture fencing. Chuck Roohr said that the estimated 150 animals could result in deed of easement issues due to soil loss, runoff, and manure management. Mr. Villinger said that there would be a follow up site visit during the first week of March and confirmed that planning staff would respond to the complaint letter.

- **Pending Legislation** – Mr. Villinger notified the board about several bills to be introduced to the Assembly Agriculture Committee the following day. The package of bills propose changes to SADC regulations.
 - A2775: Makes current Pilot Program for Wineries permanent
 - ACR117: Determines the SADC rule to implement Pilot Program inconsistent with legislative intent
 - A2774: Provides that the Executive Director of the SADC is appointed by the Governor (6 year term).
 - A2773: Allows certain preserved farms to hold 14 SOES (same as last session Bill A5384/5157)
- **Laurita Special Occasion Events-** The board confirmed with Mr. Villinger that the Special Occasions events submitted by Laurita Winery were consistent with prior events and that no violations were apparent. Outdoor Festivals such as Bacon Fest, Grape Stomp, Food Truck Festivals starting April and recurring throughout the summer. The board confirmed with planning staff that the Winery would be subject to all municipal approvals for these events. Approvals for events past the expiration of the winery pilot program are subject to the extension of the winery pilot program or similar state SOE program approving these types of events. Motion to approve past and future Laurita events was made by Martin Lynch, seconded by Kathleen Sucharski. All approved, Doug Hallock abstained, motion passed.

VI. Concern from the Chairman - Chairman Hallock said that the Magnolia/Goff farm in Plumsted has been allowed to go fallow in one of the fields. As a result, there have been complaints within the community. Mr. Villinger said that staff will follow up with the farm owners. Chuck Roehr said that fallow fields are an enforcement issue for SADC for which they have threatened litigation in the past. In addition, if the trees are allowed to grow in modified wetlands, NJDEP could put a stop to farming there and designate them as wetlands.

VII. Public Comment- Chuck Roehr explained that the comment period for Winery Pilot Program report is done and to be presented at the February SADC meeting. He also explained that SADC Farmer members were not able to participate in a discussion at the last meeting because they are also CADB members. This potential conflict of interest is prohibited by SADC bylaws and the SADC is working to correct this unintended exclusion of farmers. Lastly, Mr. Roehr promoted a farm succession planning event.

Christine Raabe handed out some historic (1890s to 1954) agricultural census data from the soil district office.

Mr. Villinger solicited the board for comments on the presentations done by SADC at the last meeting. He noted that since the SADC will be presented with SOE recommendations, now would be the time if there was anything additional. No comments were made.

VIII. Closed Session

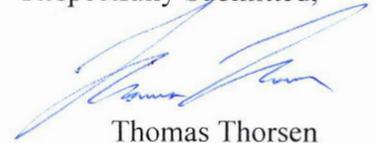
A **MOTION** to enter into closed session was made by Mr. Adams at 8:25 pm and seconded by Mr. Hunter, all in favor, motion passed.

A **MOTION** to return to Open Session was made by Mr. Adams at 8:45pm and seconded by Mr. Lynch, all in favor, motion passed.

IX. Adjournment

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 11 @ 7pm
Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Toms River**

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas Thorsen
GIS Specialist II