***PENNSYLVANIA FARMLAND***

***PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION***

***2015 FALL BUSINESS MEETING***

 Rock Ford Plantation, Lancaster County

Matt Knepper, Lancaster County, Director (Host)

October 29, 2015

**ATTENDANCE**

 **Executive Committee:**

 Matt Knepper Lancaster County – President

Ellen Dayhoff, Adams County – Vice President

 Cindy Kahley, Union County - Treasurer

 Donna Fisher, Blair County – Member-at-Large

 **Guests:**

 Doug Wolfgang, Director, Bureau of Farmland Preservation

 John Howard, PDA

 Andy Loza, PALTA

 Dennis Stuckey, Chairman of Lancaster County Commissioners

 Roger M. Roher, Recipient of the Local Hero Award

**County Administrators and County Staff:**

Cindy Sanderson, Adams County Stephanie Williams, Cumberland County

Mark Clowney, Adams County Eric Johnson, Lackawanna County

Joe Petrella, Beaver County Kevin Baer, Lancaster County

Tami Hildebrand, Berks County June Mengel, Lancaster County

Amanda Burkhard-Sell, Berks County Nancy Ambler, Lancaster County

Kimberly Fies, Berks County Angie Foltz, Lebanon County

 Rich Huether, Blair County Elizabeth Emlen, Montgomery County

 Donna Fisher, Blair County Maria Bentzoni, Northampton County

Geoff Shellington, Chester County Andrea Geist, Schuylkill County

Bill Gladden, Chester County Bill Deitrick, Union County

Margaret Hodgkiss-Lilly Chester County Patty McCandless, York County

 Mary Ann Bower, Clinton County Eric Naylor, York County

 Dick Deiss, Crawford County David Boose, York County

 Tracey Crawford, Crawford County

**OPENING**

Matt Knepper, President, called the meeting to order at 9:54 AM. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Matt brought to the membership’s attention that this meeting should have been an election of officers. He suggested that we defer to spring meeting to conduct elections then. *Patty McCandless made a motion to defer to nominations and voting until spring, Joe Petrella, 2nd motion, Ellen suggested that the terms will be expiring in spring.* *All those in favor, motion carried*.

Matt made the suggestion we need people on the nominating committee to work on elections. We need a chair for the nominating committee; present members are Maria Bentzoni and Elizabeth Emlen. Any members interested can indicate during meeting. Elizabeth stepped up to be the chair. We still need another member.

**MILESTONES/UPDATES**

Milestones: York County: 272 farms, 40,672 acres. Adams County celebrated their 25th anniversary in October with 23,000 acres 165 farms. Northampton County 14,291 acres, 160 farms. Schuylkill County, 100th farm in works. Crawford County, 1,000 acres on 5 farms with a 600 acre farm coming in. Cumberland County 17,000 acres, 135 farms. Berks County, 70,000 acres on 691th farm. Chester County, 420 farms on 35,000 acres. Blair County 46 farms 7,000 acres. Blair County is also celebrating their 25th anniversary in 2016.

President Matt Knepper noted the passing of John Hudack, of Beaver County. He passed away on 8/9/15. He was the vice-chairman of Beaver County Farmland preservation for 21 years. He formed the first ASA in Beaver County. He served on the County Conservation District as well as Penn State Extension Committee for 6 years and 3 years as vice-president. He proudly served in the US Navy and was a long time dairy farmer until in recent years, converting to beef.

**LOCAL HERO AWARD**

AFT was unable to be here to present the award to recipient Roger M. Roher. He is a great supporter of agriculture in Lancaster County. He has been a no till farmer since 2000. He serves on the assessment board. Matt Knepper will provide a copy of the Press Release to be attached to the minutes.

**ROLL CALL**

Maria Bentzoni did a roll call of the entire membership. 17 voting members (plus four proxies) were present, determining a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Matt presented the minutes from the 2015 Spring Meeting 5/7/2015, held in Gettysburg.

*Patty McCandless made the motion, Stephanie Williams seconded the motion to accept the minutes.*

*Tami Hildebrand noted a correction to the minutes, Amanda’s name is missing from Berks County as in attendance. The minutes were presented as corrected,* *all those in favor, motion carried*.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

The Treasurer’s Report was provided to the membership by Ellen Dayhoff, in the absence of Treasurer Cindy Kahley. The true balance of the account at this time is $670.73, prior to the conference attendance deposit*. Ellen Dayhoff made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report, Joe Petrella seconded the motion.* *All those in favor, motion carried.*

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Ellen Dayhoff gave the membership report: We currently have 57 PA counties with a preservation programs (Delaware withdrew). We have three new memberships in 2016. Currently we have 33 voting memberships, 29 non-member counties, three outside memberships and two contributing memberships. Schuylkill County is our newest member.

*A motion was made by Patty McCandless to approve the membership report and the motion was seconded by Ellen Dayhoff. All those in favor, motion carried.* Ellen thanked Cindy Sanderson for putting together the membership report.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee**

1. No new business.

**Public Relations Committee**

1. **PFPA Website, Presented by Donna Fisher, Blair County**
2. The website is current and up to date. The membership directory is now shown on the home page. Past meeting materials are all being uploaded as they are received. Presentations from the meetings will be uploaded to the webpage and uploaded for at least the past year. State summaries are also listed. Spending allocations are also listed and updated when possible. Previous spending lists are also posted. The county program tab shows other counties and boards. There are pictures from 21 farms that have been uploaded to the “tour” section. Donna Fisher stated to the membership, she is requesting that any county wanting to post pictures, please send them to her. There is a news and notes section which will show press releases and current happenings. A request was made to put up a memorial page to honor those in our preservation community that deserve to be honored. There is a job openings tab. Any county with openings should send the vacancy announcement to her to be posted on the site. We have a new web domain and it is half the price of the previous domain.
3. **PFPA Display/Ag Progress Days**
4. Tracy Crawford gave an update on her attendance to Ag Progress Days. A suggestion of a map showing the entire state and the preserved lands within the state would be a helpful visual tool to those we speak with.
5. Ellen said we don’t have good representation from all the counties. We have to come up with a way to give them information on their county, even if we have a file of the contact info for that county. Donna made up business cards for the PFPA website. Doug said that the state is working on a state wide map. We should get a large map to display at Ag Progress Days.
6. Maria has asked that all counties send her brochures for the box that can be taken to APD. The challenge is not just the information, but getting people to attend. Counties have cut travel allowances and it is difficult to take that much time out of the office. PFPA mileage reimbursement has helped, however that is depleting the already limited funds in PFPA’s bank account.
7. Ag Progress days next year are August 16 to 18th, 2016.
8. Patty suggested counties try to get their counties to budget mileage.
9. Tami from Berks County stated they are scheduling a bus to travel to APD for next year. Anyone who may be interested, please let her know.

 **Conference/Workshop Committee**

1. PALTA is doing a concentration of appraisal format as one of their seminars. Ellen is encouraging PALTA to move the seminar to that Wednesday so PFPA members can attend. Information will be distributed to the membership when it is determined to be held.
2. Evaluations will be sent out, please complete with topic information so we can better address concerns of the membership. We will need them returned as soon as possible to determine upcoming subject and discussion topics.

 **Policy Committee**

1. Nothing has been moved on since the last session.
2. Ellen, from Adams County, requested action on a bill that allows for a landowner to relinquish the right to the 2nd residential structure. If the landowners allow for the subdivision of the residence, they would give up the right to the 2nd residential structure. This would be up to each county to decide if they wanted to add the 2nd house provision. This would have to be approved by the board, with municipal approval, and program language would need to be changed. Adams County is considering amending their program to allow for the homestead to be subdivided only in the instance where the landowner relinquishes the right to the 2nd home.
3. Policy position list was handed out to the membership. If there are any comments from the membership, please let us know. We were not seeking active discussion, but rather just an update on the positions.
4. Matt suggested that we consider moving up the support of GG and consider moving this up the list as there is discussion that GG was being reconsidered. *Patty made a motion to reach out to PFB, by writing a letter requesting support of HB 364. Angie seconded the motion, all those in favor, motion carried*. Joel Rotz is the contact with PFB.
5. Andy Loza requested clarification of item about restricting the deed of easement or ownership. We don’t have the right to prohibit certain activities, and we don’t have the right to limit these actions by the owner and violations would not be upheld in court.

**Executive Committee Wrap-up**

1. Surveys: A 2008 survey was conducted by PFPA to gather data on how other counties were administering their programs and other relative information. We have updated the survey and we ask the membership to please take the time to complete the survey. Stephanie, Ellen and Patty will all work on this.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. No new business was discussed.

**PDA UPDATE**

1. Doug Wolfgang from BFP gave an update to the membership on the status of the Bureau.
2. Doug is celebrating his 17th year! Proud to announce 514,022 acres preserved on 4,860 farms.
3. John Howard, from Lancaster County is the new assistant council at PDA.
4. Currently there is no budget in Harrisburg. It is shaping up to be the longest budget impasse. However an executive authorization was given PDA with the authority to continue the process of preserving farms.
5. The bureau is looking at ways to improve efficiency. Working on new strategies to streamline things.
6. Time to encumber funds. They must be completed by December 31st. Remaining state and county funds, Doug has a list of county totals he will distribute.
7. Municipal funds: we need to look at ways to do outreach to the municipalities for funds. Perhaps the state will need to look potential funding options with the state.
8. PDA will meet with members of PFPA regarding municipal participation.
9. PDA is working on cooperative agreement with NRCS. NRCS defers to state on rural enterprise, building envelopes, additional residential structure, deferring back to previous formula of impervious surface. NRCS will work with PDA for ROW for certain uses if prior approval is given by state and county.
10. Federal Funds: Leveraging funds for 11/16 deadline to NRCS, 1/15 would be the deadline, no funding total at this point. $800,000 was the last amount heard, could be more.
11. The topic was raised: Are there any assurances that could come which would alleviate the budget delay, any advocacy on our part? Doug stated not at this point.
12. Pipeline Task Force is being established to monitor the 25,000 miles of pipeline potential in the next several years. PDA/BFP is making a priority of using GIS to show statewide preserved farms and how they would be impacted and potentially being able to show other layers showing ASA, 319, poultry farms, etc.
13. Growing Greener 3. What would GG3 look like: where is the focus; preserved farmland in the Chesapeake Bay, investing in farms already preserved, incentives for new farmers, grant money for incubator programs, water quality in CB, and conservation work within the bay corridor? All are possibilities. Prioritize projects within GG3 holding them to higher standard in CB region. More use of FP easements, looking at a new initiative to preserve farms in the most critical areas of the state. Another possibility is preserved farm resource center, initiatives to help transition farms. Possibly provide landowners with a team of professionals, lawyers, accountants, lenders, with tools and information they need, facilitate meetings to help them transition, model after the center for dairy excellence. Hope to have this up by the first of the year. Notifications are being delayed by the budget impasse.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Presentations were made by the following:

 Stormwater Regulations by Peter Hughes, President of Red Barn Consulting, Inc.

 Donna Fisher, Moderator, Blair County

 Doug Wolfgang, PDA - BFP (Slide Presentation available on PFPA)

 Conservation Planning; before, during and after the easement: Round Table discussion

 Moderator: Matt Knepper

 June Mengel, Farmland Preservation Specialist, Lancaster Ag. Preserve Board

Kim Fies, ACE program Technician, Berks Cty Dept. of Ag

**Reminders:**

 The next meeting of the PA Farmland Preservation Association will be set for: Spring 2016 in

 State College in conjunction with PALTA.

*Maria Bentzoni made a motion to adjourn the business meeting; Andrea Geist seconded. All those in favor, motion carried. The business meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Bentzoni, Stand-in Secretary