

OTTAWA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD

DATE: March 13, 2024

PLACE: Ottawa County Fillmore Street Complex, Conference Room C

PRESENT: Chair Josh Hucul, Mike Bronkema, Allison Miedema, Lukas Hill, Kelly Goward, Jasmine Kober (Ad Hoc Youth)

ABSENT: Paul Windemuller, Nate Pyle

STAFF: Becky Huttenga, Julie Lamer, Paul Sachs, Matt Chappuies

PUBLIC: Cliff Meeuwsen

CALL TO ORDER / ESTABLISH QUORUM / INVOCATION

The Ottawa County Agricultural Preservation Board met on Wednesday, March 13, 2024. Chair Hucul called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. A quorum was present to do business. Hill gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES

APB 24-10	Motion: Approve the agenda for the March 13, 2024 Moved by Bronkema	UNANIMOUS
APB 24-11	Motion: Approve the minutes from the February 7, 2024, meeting. Moved by Hill	UNANIMOUS

PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. FINANCIAL REVIEW

Huttenga shared that the unrestricted balance continues to grow.

B. FARM UPDATES

The Molyneux property was not awarded funding from the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund (MDARD). The property ranked very well and is positioned well for the next round of funding. The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) funding was not awarded this round. There is a good possibility the property will be funded in the next round. Staff will work with Molyneux to get the property MAEAP verified.

The Veldheer property was not awarded funding from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE). Staff will put the applications documents into The Regional Conservation

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Partnership Program (RCPP). A site visit is scheduled for March 18. Staff invited the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) staff and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) staff to attend the visit.

The Rasch property was awarded funding from the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund Board. Staff will put the Rasch application documents into the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Application is being processed by NRCS staff. Staff are working on the Deed.

The Holstege easement closed on Tuesday, February 27 and the Jongekrijg closing is scheduled for March 19, 2024. Both preservation signs are being printed by the Parks department. Staff is working on a joint press release for the Holstege and Jongekrijg properties. The presser will also include the PDR applications deadline of April 26, 2024.

**C. SCORING CRITERIA WORK SESSION – DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE
CRITERION 3 DISCUSSION**

Huttenga explained there are several ways to score development pressure and shared Berrien County’s points scoring. Chappuies shared there is no one perfect way to score development pressure. It was decided to do a deeper dive into the top 1-3 scoring properties. Continue to score waterline locations, populations growth, score adjacent land use. Staff will draft a list of discretionary points to be a consideration in the scoring criteria. Sachs suggested an Ag industry feasibility study that highlights where infrastructure is located.

NEW BUSINESS

Bronkema suggested the Board investigate the Transfer of Developments Rights (TDR) program. Staff will reach out and schedule a TDR speaker. Staff will reach out to a few additional people in the Local Unit of Government to attend a future Agriculture Preservation Board meeting.

Huttenga shared that Denny Heffron from Kent County, has scheduled a meeting with Culver’s to develop a Farmland Preservation promotional fundraising event. Ottawa County staff will be collaborating on this event.

OLD BUSINESS

Huttenga shared the success of the Farming Forward event that took place on February 27, 2024

NEXT MEETING

April 10, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

APB 24-12

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m.
Moved by Hill

UNANIMOUS