ATTENDANCE

Executive Committee:
Matt Knepper, Lancaster County – President
Ellen Dayhoff, Adams County – Vice President
Sarah Walter, Centre County – Treasurer
Maria Bentzoni, Northampton County - Secretary

Guests:
Dep. Secretary Cheryl Cook, Dept. Secretary of PA Dept. of Agriculture
Doug Wolfgang, Director, Bureau of Farmland Preservation
John Howard, Bureau of Farmland Preservation
Stephanie Zimmerman, Admin Officer II, Bureau of Farmland Preservation
Dawn Patrick, Admin Officer II, Bureau of Farmland Preservation
April Orwig, Admin Officer II, Bureau of Farmland Preservation
Nicole Bloom, Admin, Bureau of Farmland Preservation
Robert Willig, Sr. Director Attorney General’s Office - Speaker

County Administrators and County Staff:
Mark Clowney, Adams County
Kelly Koch, Adams County
Jessica Schaub, Armstrong County
Tami Hildebrand, Berks County
Kim Fries, Berks County

Donna Fisher, Blair County
Rich Huether, Blair County

Amy Kneller, Bradford County
Geoff Shellington, Chester County
Carlene Pearce, Clearfield County
Michael Hollabaugh, Clearfield County
Mary Ann Bower, Clinton County
Stephanie Williams, Cumberland County
Chris Snyder, Juniata County
Eric Johnson, Lackawanna County
June Mengel, Lancaster County
Nancy Ambler, Lancaster County
Beth Lutz (Proxy), Lebanon County

Diane Matthews-Gehringer, Lehigh County
Donna Wright, Lehigh County
Evan Makuek, Monroe County
Danielle Weiden, Montgomery County
Berty Kurtz, (Proxy) Potter County
Andrea Reiner, Schuylkill County
Holly Miller, Sullivan County
Cindy Kahley, Union County
Betty Reefer, Westmoreland County
Patty McCandless, York County
Eric Naylor (Proxy), York County
OPENING
Matt Knepper, President, called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS
State Board Member and County Commissioner Stuckley congratulated PFPA for our advocacy regarding the budget. He feels that our communications helped to secure the budget.

ROLL CALL
Maria Bentzoni did a roll call of the entire membership. 20 voting members (two by proxy) were present, determining a quorum. Patty McCandless made a motion to accept the roll call, motion was seconded by Tami Hildebrand, all those in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Elections of Officers
President Matt Knepper opened the floor for nominations.

A nomination was made for Stephanie Williams of Cumberland County for PFPA President. Stephanie indicated she was not interested in being president at this time.

Ellen called for any other nominations for President. After discussion among the membership, it was decided that the ballots for the slate of officers would be conducted by paper ballot.

There were 20 voting members present. Voting members submitted their ballots.

A motion was made to close nominations by Tami Hildebrand, seconded by Eric Johnson. All those being in favor and none opposed, the motion carried.

Danielle Weiden made a motion to approve current slate of officers as seated, seconded by Patty McCandless. All those in favor and none opposed, the motion carried.

The slate of officers will maintain their position for a two year term, ending Fall of 2019. Positions held as voted:

President: Matt Knepper, Lancaster County
Vice President: Ellen Dayhoff, Adams County
Treasurer: Sarah Walters, Centre County
Secretary: Maria Bentzoni, Northampton County
Donna Fisher: Member at Large, Blair County

MILESTONES/UPDATES
1. Cumberland County launched a You Tube video promoting Farmland Preservation and it will be shown later in the meeting to the membership.
   www.youtube.com/cumberlandcountyfarmlandpreservation.
2. Lackawanna County is celebrating reaching 5,000 acres preserved.

LOCAL HERO AWARD
No local hero award was presented at this meeting.
APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
Matt Knepper presented the minutes from the 2017 Spring Meeting 5/3/17, Lancaster County. Corrections needed: Rich Huether was not present at the last meeting.
Tami Hildebrand made the motion to accept the Minutes as presented and amended, Chris Snyder seconded the motion, all those in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT
The Treasurer’s Report was provided to the membership by Sarah Walter. The current balance of the account as of the 9/21/17 submitted report is $2,764.03, prior to the conference attendance deposit and expenses. Patty McCandless made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report, Danielle Weiden seconded the motion, all those in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
Ellen Dayhoff gave the membership report:
67 Counties in PA
58 PA counties with a preservation program
29 voting memberships
1 pending membership
29 non-member counties
7 outside contributing memberships
0 outside membership sponsors
Ellen thanked Cindy Sanderson for putting together the membership report.
Donna Fisher made a motion to accept the Membership Report, Danielle Weiden seconded the motion all those in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS
1. Executive Committee
   A. No new business.

Public Relations Committee
2. PFPA Website, Presented by Donna Fisher, Blair County
   A. No committee update.

3. PFPA Display/Ag Progress Days
   A. Ag Progress Days was held on August 15 to 17th, 2017. We are in need of volunteers. The membership is asked to step up and volunteer to cover the stand. APD will be held August 14, 15, 16, 2018.
   B. Sign up sheet will be emailed out closer to the event asking for volunteers for APD.
   C. Counties are still encouraged to bring their own county map for display.

4. Conference/Workshop Committee
   A. Spring 2018, York County has offered to be the host county. Dates will be sent out when secured.
   B. Membership has asked that the Spring meetings be held in May of each year.

5. Policy Committee
   A. Please see attached Legislative update submitted by Matt Knepper. (Attached for minute record.)
      1. HB 1689 – Discussion: Betty Reefer stated there are counties already working with land trusts because there is funding available. Yet not every county has a land trust to
coordinate with and it would impact the amount of funding. Matt stated land trust funding is drying up for the purchase of easements. Access to funding is limited depending on the type of easement. Patty McCandless made a motion to take it to the membership, Amy Kneller seconded to vote on HB 1689. All those in favor one opposed. Motion carried.

The membership was asked, who of those are in favor of supporting of HB 1689: 3 in favor of the Bill as is, 17 opposed of supporting the Bill as stated.

2. SB 819 (previously) – Discussion was had regarding this proposed legislation.
Cindy Kalsey made a motion to oppose to SB 819, Patty McCandless seconded the motion, sixteen members voted in favor to oppose it as it reads now, four members did not vote. Motion carried.

6. Executive Committee Wrap-up
A. No further updates from the other committees.

OLD BUSINESS
1. None.

NEW BUSINESS
1. No new business was discussed.

PANEL DISCUSSION
John Howard from PDA reviewed and discussed the definition of the Right to Farm Law, ASA and ACRE Law, (please see recorded legislation).

Agri-tainment activities have not yet been challenged, so there is no legislation to address the issue.

Doug Wolfgang defined ASA law as the foundation of the State Easement Program and a prerequisite for the ability to be preserved. ALCAB has convened 86 times since the establishment of the Program. 998 municipalities across the Commonwealth have ASA’s.


If local muni ordinance conflicts with a normal farm activity, that conflicts with standard Agricultural Security Law.

Key points:

1. The extensive use of agricultural land in the State. In 2016, there was 7.6 million acres devoted to agricultural land use.
2. Agriculture has a $75 billion cash impact on the economy.
3. It’s the declared mission of legislators to promote ag in the State.
PDA UPDATE

1. There was $17.2 million dollars certified by the counties. The estimated budget for 2017/2018 is approximately $40 million, which would be approximately a $5 million dollar increase over last year.

2. County programs are to be recertified every 7 years. Several are due in 2018. The Bureau will conduct a webinar for requirements for counties needing to be recertified.

3. PA Farmland is the online submission tool where all State submissions are sent. Phase II is currently in production. Phase II will address the transition of farms as they change hands. Phase II will also address the financial aspect to keep track of those funds utilized and will integrate in all of the current data track all of the relevant data. Phase II will allow the State to have access to all landowner information so that data like the Farm Resource Center can distribute useful information to communicate with landowners.

4. BFP will be reaching their 550,000 acre preserved in the spring of 2018. State Board meeting will be a destination meeting.

5. There are 1,500 farms on the current backlog. The question was raised, should we be studying the return on our investment for the taxpayer and show the people what this Program has accomplished over the lifetime of the Program? The general opinion of the membership was yes.

6. Matt reminded the membership that there are 2 regions within the Chesapeake Watershed, in coordination with Team Ag to provide up to $1,500 for conservation planning eligible for reimbursement. Information in the PFPA packets.

Presentations

1. None

Reminders:
The next meeting of the PA Farmland Preservation Association will be set for:
   Spring – May, York County, Details to follow.
   Fall – October in conjunction with the October State Board meeting. Details to follow.

Matt Knepper made a motion to adjourn the business meeting; Patty McCandless seconded the motion. All those in favor, motion carried. The business meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Bentzoni, Secretary