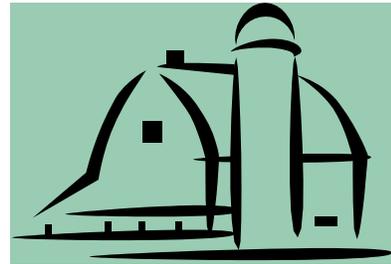


Greene County Farmland Preservation
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GREENE COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION
MINUTES
April 17, 2013

I. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Dave Shipman at 1:00 p.m. in the Mezzanine Conference Room, 19 South Washington Street, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania.

Board members present were Dave Shipman, Vice Chairman; Rick Thistlethwaite, Treasurer; Archie Trader, Greene County Commissioner; Jim Willis, Director; and Richard Belding, Director.

Guests: Larry Marshall, Manager, Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful

Staff: Lisa Snider, District Manager; Laurel Rush, Ag Technician; Rebecca Salosky, Fiscal Officer.

Corbly Orndorff, GCFLP Director, arrived at 1:30 p.m.

II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Larry Marshall, Manager, Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful (WPB)

Mr. Marshall thanked the GCFLP Board for the opportunity to discuss the Greater Waynesburg Land Trust (GWLT). In an effort to preserve certain pristine areas near Waynesburg Borough and Franklin Township, Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful (WPB) formed the GWLT. Waynesburg University President, Doug Lee, and their attorneys assisted in the effort. Much of this land is owned by the coal companies, and initial conversation with them, has been favorable.

By-laws were drafted and the 501c3 organization was formed with the following Board members appointed by WPB: Jeff McCracken, President; Mark Fox, Vice President; Jay Hammers, Secretary; and Larry Marshall, Treasurer.

Mr. Marshall read an excerpt of the by-laws as follows. "The Corporation seeks to protect the environment and preserve the natural resources within the greater Waynesburg area by accepting gifts of land or conservation easements to minimize any long term adverse impacts on the environment caused by environmental challenges such as surface disturbances relative to mining exploration and other such activities."

The next step will be to draft documents for easement purchases.

Tax implications and land trusts were briefly discussed.

Ms. Rush noted that in many counties, FLP and Land Trusts work together to preserve land. She provided Mr. Marshall with information regarding Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA) she obtained at the PA Farmland Preservation Association (PFPA) Spring Conference.

Mr. Marshall welcomed any assistance that the GCFLP could provide. The GCFLP Board thanked Mr. Marshall for attending the meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Jim Willis to approve the Minutes of the March 20, 2013 meeting. Rick Thistlethwaite seconded. (Motion Passed)

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Thistlethwaite read the Treasurer's Report as follows:

FLP Board Fundraising Account - \$7,160.78

Easement Funds – Dept. of Agriculture & County of Greene – \$206,165.99

A motion was made by Richard Belding to accept the treasurer's report as presented. Jim Willis seconded. (Motion Passed)

Ms. Rush noted that as discussed and approved at the March 20, 2013 GCFLP meeting the additional funding of \$2,014.50 for the corrected acreage (112.070 ac) for the purchase of the Janet and Harley Gapen Easement has been deducted from the amount of the Easement Funds.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no Correspondence to bring before the Board.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. ASA – Franklin and Jefferson Townships

Jefferson Township – A copy of the Resolution for the formation of the ASA and the information to be recorded at the Greene County Register and Recorders Office was received. After the recording, an additional five landowners encompassing 429.63 acres will be added to their ASA.

Franklin Township – As noted at the GCFLP meeting held on March 20th, 2013, Mr. Corbly Orndorff submitted an ASA application. Since that time, Ms. Rush has completed the soils inventory. The addition of the Orndorff property completes the 250 acre requirement to form an

ASA. Franklin Township can now begin the process of creating the ASA.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2012 FLP Agricultural Easements

a. James Willis, (53 ac) Cumberland Twp. – On-hold
Clear title is still being pursued.

b. Charles Harry, Morgan Twp.

1. High rank & appraisal release letter - Completed
2. Title Search – The letter from Attorney Greg Hook regarding the Title Search was distributed prior to the meeting. The following points of the letter were reviewed.
 - Thelma Harry, Mother of Charles Harry, has a Life Estate on this property and since she is still living, her signature would be required on the Easement. A letter will be obtained from Ms. Harry to verify that she is in agreement with the Easement.
 - A new legal description of the property will be needed for the Easement, since a portion of the original farm was conveyed to Robert Harry, Brother of Charles Harry. Also, Mr. Harry will be excluding approximately 4 acres from the Easement purchase.
 - The Pittsburgh Coal was conveyed in the 1900's.
 - Excluded from Attorney Hook's letter was the ownership of the surface coal. He was asked to confirm, initially via e-mail, and after which by the revising the letter regarding the Title Search; that the surface coal ownership is clear.

A motion was made by Jim Willis to accept the Title Search Report for the Charles Harry Property, with the understanding that Mr. Hook will verify in writing clear ownership of the surface coal. Rick Thistlethwaite seconded. (Motion Passed with one abstention – Corbly Orndorff)

3. Appraisal Report – Scott York of York Realty completed the Appraisal Report for the Janet and Harley Gapen Easement, at a cost of \$1,800. Mr. York, via e-mail, indicated that he will increase the fee for the Harry Easement to \$2,500 because of the detail required for it to meet the PA Farmland Preservation program requirements. Since a separate contract is written for each property, and one has not yet been drafted for the Harry property, the \$2,500 fee would mostly likely need to be paid. Also, the short time period to encumber the property (by December 31st), does not allow for negotiation of the fees.

A motion was made by Corbly Orndorff to move forward with the Appraisal Report. Dick Belding seconded. (Motion Passed).

4. Survey plot – A motion was made by Corbly Orndorff to move forward with the survey plot to be completed by Registered Surveyor, Miles Davin.
5. Offer letter – Pending. Cannot be completed until the appraisal and survey plot are finished.
6. Agreement of Sale – Pending. Cannot be completed until the appraisal and survey plot are finished.

c. Harley & Janet Gapen, Greene Twp. – Encumbered.

This farm has been placed on the agenda for the April 18, 2013 meeting of the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation Board.

1. High rank & appraisal release letter (Completed)
2. Title Search (Completed)
3. Appraisal Report (Completed)
4. Survey Plot (Completed)
5. Offer Letter (Completed)
6. Agreement of Sale (Completed)
7. Closing – To Be Announced. Upon receipt of the check from the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation, the closing will be scheduled.

VIII. OUTREACH

As announced at the GCFLP meeting on March 20th, 2013, Greene County Conservation District (GCCD) is planning a service fair to coincide with National Soil and Water Stewardship Week as promoted by the National Association of Conservation Districts. This is held the last week of April through the first week of May. Since that time, the event was scheduled to be held on May 11th, 2013 at the Greene County Fairgrounds. However, it was noted that many of the groups invited to attend the service fair, have prior commitments on that date, so it may be necessary to reschedule.

IX. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

As approved at the GCFLP meeting on March 20th, 2013, Ms. Rush attended the PA Farmland Preservation Association meeting in State College, PA on April 4th, 2013. She noted that the meeting was very informative. One topic of discussion was proposed legislative action that could affect FLP programs. A summary listing of these proposed actions was distributed to GCFLP Board members.

In the afternoon, a panel discussion was held entitled “*21st Century Farmland Preservation: Keeping our Farms Economically Viable*” Representatives from the PA Association of Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), PA Farm link, and Ag Choice Farm Credit were present for discussion. Each of these organizations have programs to connect individuals with preserved farms to people wishing to lease or purchase farms.

- X. **NEXT REGULAR MEETING: May 15, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.** It was noted that the evening meeting schedule will begin with this meeting.
- XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Rick Thistlethwaite to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 p.m. Jim Willis seconded. (Motion Passed)