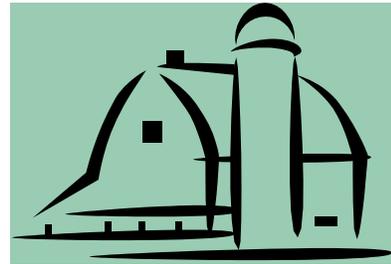


Greene County Farmland Preservation
19 South Washington Street, Suite 150
Waynesburg, PA 15370
724-852-5278



GREENE COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION
MINUTES
JANUARY 15, 2014

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Cree at 1:10 p.m. in the Mezzanine Conference Room, 19 South Washington Street, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania.

Board members present were Bill Cree, Chairman; Rick Thistlethwaite, Treasurer; Charles Day, Secretary; Archie Trader, Greene County Commissioner; Dick Belding, Director, Corbly Orndorff, Director; and Jim Willis, Director.

Staff: Lisa Snider, District Manager; Laurel Rush, Ag Technician and Becky Salosky, Fiscal Officer

II. REORGANIZATION- ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN, TREASURER, & SECRETARY

Chairman – *Chairman was re-appointed by the Greene County Commissioners at their December 12, 2013 Public Meeting. A motion was made by Corbly Orndorff to retain the 2013 slate of officers for 2014, Jim Willis seconded. (Motion Passed)*

Vice Chairman – *Dave Shipman*

Treasurer – *Rick Thistlethwaite*

Secretary – *Charles Day*

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Dick Belding to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2013 meeting. Charles Day seconded. (Motion Passed)

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Thistlethwaite read the Treasurer's Report as follows:

FLP Board Fundraising Account - \$6,558.85

Ck # 136 - \$105.72 – Observer Reporter – Public Meeting Notices

Board of Directors: William Cree III, Chairman; David Shipman, Vice-Chairman; Richard Thistlethwaite, Treasurer; Charles Day, Secretary; Richard Belding; James Willis; Corbly Orndorff; Commissioner Archie Trader

A motion was made by Charles Day to accept the treasurer's report. Dick Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

Ms. Rush noted that a total of \$40,490.31 must be obligated for the purchase of an easement by December 31, 2014.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to bring before the Board.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a. Agricultural Security Area (ASA) - Franklin, Cumberland and Greene Townships

Franklin Township – The Township continues to work to establish an ASA.

Cumberland Township – As required by the program, in December, the Township held a public meeting to accept the additional 19 acres of Mr. Richard Phillips in to the ASA. To date, this addition has not been recorded at the Greene County Register and Records Office.

Greene Township – This morning, a phone call was placed to the Township Office regarding the status of the Mr. Wilber Colvin ASA. It was noted that a recent turnover of one of the Township Supervisor position's, may have delayed action on this matter. The Township is consulting with their Solicitor to determine the next step in this process.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2012 GCFLP Agricultural Easements

- a. Charles Harry, (162.043 acres) Morgan Township
The Easement was accepted by the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation at their meeting held on December 12, 2013. Upon receipt of the check from the PA FLP Board, the closing will be scheduled.

It noted that Mr. Harry was very grateful to the GCFLP Board and staff for their assistance in this matter.

- 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 Determined)

2. 2013 GCFLP Agricultural Easements (Update) listed in ranking order

- a. Jim Willis (53 acres) Cumberland Township – (on-hold)
Clear title still being pursued.

- b. Jim Willis (30 acres) Cumberland Township
 - 1) High rank & appraisal release letter (Completed)
 - 2) Title Search – Ms. Rush distributed a copy of the letter (attached) from Attorney Greg Hook regarding the findings of the title search. The letter states that in 1961, Crucible Steel Company of America excepted and reserved the coal to the Pittston Company.

Since Mr. Willis does not own the surface coal, it precludes GCFLP from proceeding with an Easement on this property. In light of this, Ms. Rush presented a draft copy of a letter to Mr. Willis explaining Attorney Hook's findings and the avenues that could be explored to resolve this matter. The letter also includes a deadline of January 31st, 2014, to notify the GCFLP Board of his decision.

A motion was made by Corbly Orndorff to approve the mailing of the letter signed by Chairman Cree (attached) on behalf of the GCFLP Board as well as a copy of the letter from Attorney Greg Hook, and Chapter 5 of the PA Guide to Farmland Preservation, which outlines the steps that can be taken to resolve this matter, to Mr. Willis. Dick Belding seconded. (Motion Passed- with 1 abstention Jim Willis)

It was noted that an invoice for Attorney Hook's services should soon be received.

It was suggested that the owner of the surface coal may be found through the Greene County Assessment Office.

- c. Richard Phillips (127.4 acres) Cumberland Township
 - 1) High rank & appraisal release letter – Since a clear title is not held on the first (53 acre property of James Willis) or the second (30 acre property of James Willis) ranked properties, the third ranked property can be moved forward for Easement in accordance with GCFLP By-Laws.

The property of Mr. Richard Phillips, (127.4 acres) is the third ranked property and was brought forward for Board consideration.

The following must be completed to move this property forward for Easement.

- A letter, to notify Mr. Phillips, of the intent of the GCFLP to pursue this Easement.
- The acquisition of Mr. Phillips' signature on the Appraisal Release Form.
- The payment, by Mr. Phillips, of the \$2,000 for the Appraisal Fee.

Questions were raised by the Board regarding the amount of funding available for the purchase of this Easement and the ranking order (will the Willis parcels lose their ranking status)?

In response, Ms. Rush noted that currently, GCFLP may not have enough funds to purchase this Easement; however, in March, GCFLP should learn of this year's program allocation. Those funds, along with our current funds, should be sufficient.

The ranking order of the parcels does not change. An issue with the title will be shown and until that issue is resolved, work ceases on those two parcels. In the event, the issue is resolved, and two farms are ready for easement, the application period could be suspended.

It was noted that, in order to ensure that all available funding is encumbered, it is necessary to have another property ready.

A motion was made by Jim Willis to mail the "High Ranking" letter to Richard Phillips. Charles Day seconded. (Motion Passed).

- 2) Title Search
- 3) Appraisal Report
- 4) Survey plot
- 5) Offer letter
- 6) Agreement of Sale

3. GCFLP program considerations (Discussion)

- a. 52 acre subdivision
- b. Deed of merger requirement

This matter was tabled until a future meeting.

Ms. Rush will distribute information regarding this matter, as soon as possible, to Mr. Belding for his review.

4. Annual inspections

- a. **William Cree (108 ac)**
- b. **Jim Willis (100 ac)**

At the last GCFLP meeting on December 9th, 2013, it was noted that the inspections would be scheduled for January with Mr. Dave Shipman volunteering to participate. Since Mr. Shipman was not in attendance today, an exact date could not be set; however, it was noted that the inspections would most likely be scheduled in late January or early February.

IX. OUTREACH

The next Manure Management Workshop will be held the evening of February 26th, 2014 at the 2nd Floor Conference Room, County Office Building, Waynesburg.

X. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on **February 19, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.**

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Jim Willis to adjourn the meeting at 1:40 p.m. Dick Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)