

Greene County Farmland Preservation
22 West High Street, Suite 204
Waynesburg, PA 15370
724-852-5278



Greene County Farmland Preservation Minutes

October 21, 2015

2nd Floor Conference Room
County Office Building
Waynesburg, PA

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Bill Cree, III at 1:10 p.m. in the 2nd floor conference room, County Office Building, Waynesburg, PA.

Greene County Farmland Preservation Board (GCFLP) Members

Bill Cree, III, Chairman; Dave Shipman, Vice Chairman; Rick Thistlethwaite, Treasurer; Jim Willis, Director; Corbly Orndorff, Director; Richard Belding, Director; and Archie Trader, County Commissioner.

Staff

Lisa Snider, District Manager, Greene County Conservation District (GCCD); and Karlie Wright, Agricultural Technician (GCCD).

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

III. SCOTT YORK, YORK REALTY, INC.

The Board held a conference call conversation with Mr. Scott York of York Realty. The Board members had several questions for Mr. York pertaining to Mr. Tom Willis's appraisal in addition to other appraisals.

Mr. Cree expressed to Mr. York his concern that this appraisal was much higher than appraisals that he has completed for the Board in the past. Mr. York said that he had 18 sales to pull from for comparisons from that last 24 months. He stated that there is a large difference between the smaller acreage parcels and the larger acreage parcels. This difference is what creates the larger easement value.

Mr. Cree stated that the Board is preserving the ground, but the value comes from whether or not it is usable ground to developable houses. Mr. York said that the most

reasonable way to break up the land was to break it into 5-6 parcels for individual houses, not for housing plans. There are no municipal water or sewer sources there. Mr. York compared this property to other properties that were similar to what you could break this property down into. For example, four or five 30 acre parcels. Mr. York also stated that a working pond on the property that can be stocked for recreational purposes, statistically, can raise the value of the property 15% per acre.

Mr. Cree stated that the Board was confused because last year the Board had a property appraised that was right next to a golf course. Mr. York said that he remembers that property and that he pulls from the data that he has. For this property, Mr. York pulled from July 2014 – August 2015. Last time, Mr. York stated that he did not have as much data to pull from for comparable listings.

Mr. Willis stated that some of the comparable properties were many miles from the property that is being appraised. Mr. York stated he has to use the comparable sales and uses the best indicator of property. Mr. York stated if there were sales similar to this sale closer they would be in the report.

Mr. Cree asked if the value of the buildings on the property was added to the overall value of the farm. Mr. York stated that the value of the buildings was irrelevant because the appraisal, in this case, is the difference in land values. Mr. Cree asked that values were in the report. Mr. York commented that it was a requirement to report the condition and contributing value of the structures on the property.

Mr. Cree commented that due to all of this, the biggest difference in price is going to be with the comparable properties that are available at the time of the appraisal. Mr. York stated that adjustments are made accordingly for properties based on location and lay of land, etc. Mr. Cree stated that, when the Board was at the farm, behind the barn there is a Marcellus well and the land is steep. Mr. York stated that he understood that, but that there is also free gas for the two houses on the land. Therefore, if you subdivided those houses off and sold them, there might translate into a mortgage payment and add value to the home. Mr. Shipman stated that normally the gas leases are only for one house, not two and that if you subdivided the property and more the company would properly not let you use free gas anywhere else. Mr. York agreed with Mr. Shipman and stated that that was not his assumption. Mr. York's assumption only included the two houses getting free gas.

There were no more questions and the call was ended.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2015 meeting. Jim Willis seconded. (Motion Passed)

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Thistlethwaite read the Treasurer's report as follows:

FLP Board Fundraising Account - \$14,525.03

Easement Funds – \$121,903.54

Dept. of Agriculture – \$100,665.54

County of Greene - \$21,238.00

A correction was made to the treasurer's report. County of Greene Funds are \$21,238.00, instead of \$28,015.69. The FLP Board Fundraising Account Funds are \$14, 525.03 instead of \$5,628.77. The incidental check from the state was added to the wrong accounts on the agenda, but was added correctly to the treasurer's account balance sheets.

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

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

1. 2015 Fall PFPA Conference – October 29, 2015, Lancaster, PA
Ms. Wright asked if any Board members would like to attend the 2015 Fall PFPA Conference on October 29, 2015. The Board members decided to pass this year.
2. Letter from Greg Hook to Kirk King concerning Tom Willis deed
The Board briefly discussed to send Tom Willis a letter asking him to make a decision about what he wants to do. This subject was tabled until New Business.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Richard Phillips Easement
 - a. Received check from State Bureau of Farmland Preservation.
 - i. Ms. Wright stated that the state's portion of the Phillips's easement for 131,512.00 was received, in addition to the \$9,209.25 check to cover the Board's incidental costs.
 - b. Letter from Greg Hook's office to Kirk King concerning Tom Willis deed.
 - i. Mr. Hook sent a letter to Ms. Wright and Mr. Kirk King concerning questionable language in Tom Willis's deed. This language pertains to the surface coal.
- b. Bylaw Updates (Discussion/Update)
 - a. Richard Phillips Easement (Update)
 - i. Received check from State Bureau of Farmland Preservation.
 1. Ms. Wright again stated that the state's portion of the Phillips's easement for 131,512.00 was received, in addition to the \$9,209.25 check to cover the Board's incidental costs. She also stated that the check from the County's easement portion has been received for \$8,394.00.
 - ii. Closing at Greg Hook's office, Thursday, October 22, 2015 at 10:30AM.
 1. Checks have been written for the incidental costs for \$2,883.75 for title insurance, and \$76.00 for recording fees. These checks

were signed by Carol Gooden, but still needed to be signed by the treasurer.

- b. Bylaw Committee (Discussion/Update)
 - i. A letter has been drafted and sent to the State Bureau of Farmland Preservation with the changes made at the last meeting for State Board approval at their December meeting.
 - ii. New board member recommendations
 - 1. Suggestions from last meeting:
 - a. Jim Tennant - Declined
 - b. Chris Eisiminger -Accepted
 - c. John Hildreth –No Response
 - d. Mike Belding – Declined
 - e. Ralph Tennant – Declined

The Board members decided that Chris was a good nominee and that they would just send his name because we are trying to start an ASA program in Whiteley Township anyway.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Association Membership Dues (Action)

We received the application to apply for our PFPA Membership dues for \$50.

A motion was made by Richard Belding to pay the PFPA Membership dues for \$50. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

2. December Meeting, When and Where? (Action)

Ms. Wright stated that she will not be available for the normal meeting to December 16th because she will be at Nutrient Management training. Mr. Cree asked if the next day was okay with everyone. The Board was okay with that. Mr. Cree and other Board members thought that an afternoon meeting would be better than an evening meeting since we have lunch.

A motion was made by Corbly Orndorff to have the December Meeting on December 17th, 2015 at Thistlethwaite's Vineyard at 11:30 AM with lunch to follow at 12:15 PM. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

3. Greene County Conservation Board Member Nominations (Action)

Ms. Snider stated that Bill Wentzel is due for reappointment and would appreciate the nomination. Ms. Snider explained that there is still another opening on the Conservation District Board and that the Farmland Preservation Board can nominate people that are off of the associate board member list or any other person. Many nominating organizations nominate members and then the Greene County Commissioners make a final decision.

A motion was made by Corbly Orndorff to nominate Dave Shipman and Jim Willis as Greene County Conservation District Board members and reappoint Bill Wentzel as a Board member. Rick Thistlethwaite seconded. (Motion Passed)

4. 2015 GCFLP Agricultural Easements (Action)

a. Tom Willis (169ac), Cumberland Township – LESA Score: 31.45 –Ranked 3rd, 2015 - Pending

1. W-9 –received
2. Percent Ownership—Received
3. Appraisal release form—Received
4. 2000 Good faith payment—Received
5. Appraisal—Received—York Realty
6. Title Search—Pending—Greg Hook
7. Offer Letter – Pending Approval
8. Plot—Pending—Miles Davin
9. Conservation Plan -

Items Necessary for Encumbering by 12/31/15

- Soils Section C - pending
- Soils Classifications - pending
- Narrative Summary Section - pending
- Appraisal Report – Completed
- Land Owner Application - Completed
- Topographic Map - pending
- Tax map with Parcel Numbers - pending
- Soils Map Labeled / Color Coded - pending
- Status Table Farm Ranking Worksheet - pending
- Title Commitment with Exceptions - pending
- Agreement of Sale with Exhibits A-E - pending

The Board discussed that it would be a good idea to have Tom Willis to try and resolve the issues that Greg Hook found, listed in his letter, with Mr. Willis's attorney Kirk King.

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to send a letter to Tom Willis stating that the Farmland Preservation Board cannot move forward due to a surface coal right ownership issue and to ask Mr. Willis to resolve this issue as soon as possible. Corbly Orndorff seconded. (Motion Passed)

b. Celesta Hegedis (99.43ac), Cumberland Township – LESA Score: 28.11 – Ranked 4th, 2015.

A motion was made by Rick Thistlethwaite to ask Greg Hook take a preliminary look at the next farm on the ranking, Celesta Hegedis, to see if he saw any surface coal issues. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

IX. OUTREACH

- a. Karlie and Lisa are planning to go to the December Perry Township meeting to talk to them about ASAs.

X. STAFF REPORTS

- a. Karlie Wright discussed her staff report that was sent to the board members.

XI. Next Meeting November 18, 2015 at 1:00PM, 2nd Floor Conference Room, County Office Building.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to adjourn the meeting. Richard Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)