



# BERKS COUNTY *agricultural land* PRESERVATION BOARD

Berks County Agricultural Center  
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**County Commissioners:**

Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair  
Kevin S. Barnhardt  
Mark C. Scott, Esq.

**Board Members:**

David L. Phillips, Chair  
James R. Coker, Vice Chair  
Wilson M. Balthaser  
Robert E. Kopfer  
Robert B. Ludgate, Sr., PE, PLS  
Jeremy R. Meck

**Ex Officio:**

Steven C. Mohn  
Clyde A. B. Myers  
Robert C. Ziegenfus, Ph.D.

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## Minutes from the May 29, 2019 Meeting

The Berks County Agricultural Land Preservation Board (Board) held a regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 29, 2019 at 7:30 PM at the Berks County Agricultural Center. David Phillips, Chair, called the meeting to order. Board members present included Robert Kopfer, Jeremy Meck, Steven Mohn, Clyde Myers, and David Phillips. Also in attendance were Mark Sprow, Esq. Special Counsel for the Board; Tami Hildebrand, Executive Director; Kimberly Fies and Amanda Burkard-Sell, staff.

### I. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS – None.

### II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion:** A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2019 meeting, as drafted. (R. Kopfer, S. Mohn)

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

### III. STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION UPDATES

- The Board reviewed the previously distributed Status of Recommendations. Docket #1711 will now be submitted to the State Board for the August 22, 2019 meeting, which is the only change since the Status of Recommendations was distributed.

### IV. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Five-year Outreach Activities Plan – Status of Projects

- C. Myers reported that Lower Heidelberg and North Heidelberg Townships had each contributed \$500 to the Farm Forever Sign Project. Myers added that a \$1,000 donation had been received from Joe Jurgielewicz and Son, along with a \$250 donation from Levan Holdings Company. Myers summarized the total funds received to date for the Project: \$7,650 from businesses, \$3850 from townships, \$1,500 from Vickie Kintzer's retirement celebration and \$2,050 from landowners, totaling \$15,050. Myers added that the funds had been enough to pay for the first round of signs.
- A. Burkard-Sell reported that in response to the landowner sign survey, to date 43 landowners had requested 45 signs and only three (3) had responded as not interested in the signs. Burkard-Sell added that several landowners had donated additional funds in addition to purchasing their own signs.
- C. Myers reported that Stacie Jones editor of the Reading Eagle's Berks Country will feature an article about the signs and there will be a photo -op at the installation of the first sign on the Kopfer farm, which was the first farm preserved. Myers suggested inviting some of the larger donors to the project, including the Berks County Community Foundation; the County Commissioners and Board members.

B. Update to Proposed Review Criteria for ACE Program Applications in Rural Conservation Areas of the Comprehensive Plan

- T. Hildebrand reviewed the email in the Board packet that had been sent to the subcommittee members after the staff and C. Myers had met with the Planning Commission staff to review areas that the Planning Department's review supports changing from Rural Conservation to Future Growth. Hildebrand reported that the staff only disagreed on two parcels, which are located in Centre Township, near Centerport. Hildebrand requested the Board's response, both to the review process as a whole and to the area of disagreement. The Board discussed the area in question. D. Phillips reported that the area is zone for commercial retail.

**Motion: A motion was made to request that the Planning Commission staff consider substituting the area southwest of Centerport as a Future Growth area in the Comprehensive Plan update, rather than the proposed area to the east.**

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote: Motion carried. D. Phillips abstained.**

- The Board discussed the importance of the Planning Commission staff using a consistent methodology and continuing meetings and discussions between the two groups. The Board further discussed the time table for when the changes would be binding and agreed that the adoption of the update to the Plan by the County Commissioners would be the determining factor.

**Motion: A motion was made to support the methodology used by the Planning Commission staff review of the Rural Conservation and Buffers for Growth Areas per Planning region of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and for continued cooperative discussions between both Boards during future Comprehensive Plan updates.**

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote: Motion carried unanimously.**

C. 2019 LESA Ranking Results – Third Selection Update

- T. Hildebrand informed the board that additional farms had been selected utilizing the available funding, allowing the staff to send selection letters up to and including farm #27, with a cut-off score of 48.00. Hildebrand added that if all of these farms elect to proceed, including the three (3) outstanding ones, a total of 16 farms with approximately 1,138 acres will be selected for 2019.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Review of Conveyance Report

- The Board reviewed the Conveyance report. Settlements #116.0, #416.0, #417.0, #427.0, and #428.0 had transferred correctly; Settlement #586 is still outstanding but will be corrected when ownership transfers from the Bank. Settlement #579.0 is in the process of being corrected by the attorney and Settlement #194.0 had transferred incorrectly, but has since been resolved.

VI. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- T. Hildebrand discussed the contents of the Board packet, which included totals following the April State Board of Farmland Preservation meeting; currently, Berks County remains first in the State and County Program and should have 75,000 acres preserved by the end of 2020.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion:** A motion was made to offer the cap of \$2,500 per acre to Dockets #1910 and #1917. (R. Kopfer, J. Meck)

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

**Motion:** A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm. (R. Kopfer, C. Myers)

Respectfully submitted,

*Signature on file.*

Amanda K. Burkard-Sell  
ACE Program Coordinator