

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC
SEPTEMBER 25, 2018**

The regular meeting of Farmland Preservation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 in the Lower Makefield Township Municipal Building. Mr. Blank called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Those Present

Farmland Preservation

Mike Blank

Dan Bankoske

Ross Bruch

Doug Riblet

Others

Bob Colavita

Kurt Ferguson, LMT

Township Manager

The Board wishes to recognize Duane “Buster” Doan, our past President and longtime Board member, who would have been 90 years old this past September 24th. He continues to be in our thoughts.

Mr. Ferguson introduced himself and informed the Board that he is accessible for any concerns or issues they may have.

Mr. Ferguson stated he would like to start posting Farmlands minutes on the LMT website. Mr. Bankoske asked if it would be possible to also include other items such as; Farmlands’ mission statement, pictures etc. Mr. Ferguson thought this was a great idea.

A motion was made by Mr. Blank to post Farmlands minutes on the LMT website. Motion was seconded, moved and approved by the Board and carried.

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MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Blank to approve minutes of August 28, 2018 as amended. Motion moved and approved by the board and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Riblet distributed statements and stated the Vanguard Mutual Funds are up approximately \$50,000 for the year which includes approximately \$25,000 in rental fees. This amount also incorporates Farmland's expenses for the year. The rent exceeded the expenses by about \$5,000. There were three checks written: One to Mr. Small, Farmlands accountant, and two checks to Corcoran Landscaping for bamboo removal and buffer cleanup.

Mr. Ferguson asked if Farmland passes an annual budget or outline of yearly expenditures. Mr. Riblet stated Farmland does not have regular expenses. They only have two annual expenses: Mr. Small, the accountant, and the advertising of their annual meeting. The Board discussed some other expenses they frequently incur during the year: brush, tree and snow removal along with the installation, repairs and or replacement of fencing. Mr. Blank stated the accountant does an annual compilation of expenses and investments along with Farmlands annual tax return.

Mr. Bankoske described what buffer areas are and how expenses are up slightly due to maintaining the areas.

INTERVIEWS WITH INVESTMENTS MANAGERS (define goals & objectives for Investment advisors)

Mr. Bankoske stated Farmland had two conference calls with potential investment advisors. Lotus Asset Management and Prism Advisory Group, who was recommended by Mr. Small,

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Farmlands accountant. Mr. Bankoske stated Farmland will continue to interview several more potential investment advisors.

Mr. Bankoske discussed that he spoke with several people who are involved with investments and they only do research and strategies. They are completely independent, and they only get paid for their advice and do not charge a fee. This is another option for Farmland to consider for the managing of its assets.

**BAMBOO REMOVAL MAKEFIELD BROOK; BAMBOO MAINTENANCE
STACKHOUSE**

D) Corcoran Landscaping recently removed bamboo from both the Stackhouse and Kaplan properties. Mr. Bankoske discussed that a maintenance program must now be put in place to avoid the potential regrowth of the bamboo. Penn State Agricultural Department recommended to spray and mow on a regular basis for several years after bamboo has been removed to help with the maintenance.

Mr. Blank will contact Mr. Stewart, who farms the property, to see if he can do the maintenance. Mr. Stewart had asked if salt could also be included as part of the maintenance program? Mr. Colavita stated farmers can only use salt on property they specifically lease and farm. Mr. Ferguson stated Farmland should possibly contact the Township Solicitor to seek an answer.

Mr. Blank asked Mr. Colavita about using vinegar as part of a maintenance program since it is organic, and it kills bamboo. Mr. Colavita stated using 30% vinegar works, as it changes the pH levels in the soil. Mr. Colavita will contact his supplier about the cost of buying vinegar in bulk and report his findings back to the Board.

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II) Mr. Bankoske spoke about the large area of bamboo located at Makefield Brook. The Board previously approved Corcoran Landscaping to remove it. Mr. Yeager will contact Mr. Stewart to see when this field will be harvested so that Corcoran Landscaping can be given a start date for this project. Mr. Bruch will send a letter to the homeowner on Makefield Brook and will include the Township Bamboo Ordinance. The letter will state that Farmland will be removing bamboo and it is the homeowner's responsibility to take care of bamboo that is located on his/her own property.

BUFFER CLEANUP ON LONGSHORE; FENCING ON LEEDOM

Longshore - Mr. Blank received a complaint from a neighbor on Longshore concerning the overgrowth of vines on Farmlands fence that is now coming onto her property. Mr. Blank walked the property with Mr. Corcoran and they feel it's a simple cleanup. Mr. Blank stated Corcoran and Sam Stewart have already spent a couple of hours cleaning up parts of that buffer. Mr. Blank feels there are areas that are thick with overgrowth that should be taken care of. Mr. Corcoran quoted \$1,900 for this job, which also included mowing. Mr. Stewart is responsible for mowing this area. Therefore, Mr. Blank will ask for a revised quote without the mowing.

POST-MEETING NOTE: Corcoran felt that he needed to mow the area first to provide adequate access to the fence, though he reduced his quote to \$1,800.

Leedom – Mr. Blank stated Corcoran Landscaping cleaned up the buffer area, which he refers to as the “corner” along with areas of fencing that were missing or broken. Apex fencing quoted \$2,098 to install a fence in the part of the fence that runs perpendicular to Dolington Road. Mr. Blank asked the Board for a motion to approve Apex fencing for this job. The Board seconded and approved. Mr. Blank will contact Apex fencing.

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Mr. Blank will talk to the three homeowners that border this area asking permission for Farmland to access their properties, so farmland can clean it up. This will allow Apex to install the fence when the time arrives.

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY DAY

Mr. Bankoske stated they felt attendance was down from last year. About ten (10) residents completed the questionnaire Mr. Bruch designed on SurveyMonkey. Most residents liked the idea of the possibility of a community garden, most residents liked the educational aspect and some residents liked the idea of volunteering.

Mr. Riblet asked Mr. Ferguson if the Township would be interested in managing a community garden that would be located on Farmland property. Mr. Ferguson said that as of now it would be difficult for the Public Works Department to take on the responsibility of maintaining a community garden due to their current workload.

Mr. Riblet asked Mr. Ferguson who is responsible for making sure the rules are followed at the Township owned Community Garden. Mr. Ferguson will follow up and get back to the Board.

Mr. Yeager contacted Ms. Tierney, Director of Parks and Rec, to see how the Township community garden, located at the Garden of Reflection, is managed. Mr. Yeager was absent from the meeting and will report his findings upon his return.

PLANS FOR CONTACT WITH LIKE-MINDED ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Bruch stated he contacted several organizations located in Bucks County and New Jersey and discovered they do not operate the same way as Farmland Preservation. Mr. Bruch feels “Land Trusts” (particularly a few in New Jersey) are more suited to how Farmland Preservation

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operates. Mr. Bruch will reach out to some Land Trusts to see if it would be possible for the Board to attend any future meetings they may have.

ACTION ITEM REVIEW

**Mr. Yeager will contact J & J Landscaping to see if bamboo can be chemically treated.*

**Mr. Yeager will contact Corcoran Landscaping for a quote to remove several trees that border the Kaplan property. The Board discussed and decided to hold off on this issue.*

**Mr. Blank will walk Stackhouse with Mr. Stewart and discussed the areas where bamboo had been removed and will now need to be mowed on a regular basis.*

**Mr. Bankoske will follow up with Mr. Kaplan regarding mowing and chemically treating the bamboo on his property and nearby farmland.*

**Mr. Yeager has transmitted Board approval to Corcoran Landscaping regarding Makefield Brook bamboo removal.*

**Mr. Bruch will draft letters to Makefield Brook homeowners' regarding the removal of bamboo and how they must now maintain it on their own properties. He will also attach a copy of the updated bamboo ordinance.*

**Mr. Blank will talk to the homeowners located at: 2028, 2032 & 2036 Farmview- for approval to access their properties so Farmland can clean up the fence.*

**Mr. Bruch will contact Land Trusts of NJ so that Farmland Board members can attend some of their meetings.*

**Mr. Bankoske has the summary from the Board that will be posted on the LMT website. He will send to Board and farmers for review.*

**Mr. Colavita will get quotes for vinegar.*

**Mr. Bankoske will continue with interviews for potential investment advisors.*

**Mr. Yeager will follow up with Ms. Tierney about community gardens.*

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OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Blank, President