

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC
AUGUST 20, 2019**

The regular meeting of Farmland Preservation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 in the Lower Makefield Township Municipal Building. Mr. Blank called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Those Present

Farmland Preservation

**Mike Blank
Dennis Steadman
Eric Yeager
Dan Bankoske
John Lewis***

Others

Bob Colavita

*joined meeting in progress

MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Blank to approve minutes of April 23, 2019, May 28, 2019 & June 25, 2019 as amended.
Motion moved and approved by the Board and carried.

FOLLOW-UP ON SETTING LAND VALUES FOR FINANCIAL COMPILATION

Mr. Bankoske stated he received confirmation from Farmland’s accountant, Robert Small, that the appraised value of the land is from the point in time when it was originally donated/transferred to Farmland Preservation, Inc. The Board had a discussion on property deeds (specifically whether the agricultural use of the parcels was seed-restricted). Mr. Blank stated he will investigate and report his findings to the Board.

FREQUENCY OF FINANCIAL COMPILATIONS

The Board discussed and agreed to continue with yearly financial compilations.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Bankoske stated the Fidelity account balance as of tonight's meeting is \$406,000. Vanguard account was up \$1,400 with a balance of \$490,893 as of 7/31/19. One check was written to: Apex fence company for \$1,181.

LEASE RENEWALS

Mr. Steadman stated the Board worked on a new lease and it was agreed that the draft be sent to the Township Solicitor for his input. Once approved, a copy will be given to the farmers for their review. The Board needs to have the new leases signed by the end of the year.

Mr. Bankoske asked Mr. Steadman to adjust the acreage of the Clearview lease. He stated it needs to be decreased by .709 acres due to the property taken by the DRJTBC.

MAKEFIELD BROOK ISSUES: DUMPING, EROSION, BAMBOO

Erosion: Mr. Steadman stated he, along with Matt from Corcoran Landscaping, walked Makefield Brook and noticed the erosion caused by the DRJTBC has not changed. Mr. Bankoske stated he has not received any update other than DRJTBC engineers will look at this matter. Mr. Steadman stated drains are being installed by DRJTBC abutting that field.

Bamboo: Corcoran Landscaping will take care of removing the bamboo in September.

Dumping: Dumping has been remediated by one homeowner. Mr. Steadman reported that the brush is too thick to tell whether further dumping has taken place.

Mr. Steadman stated he noticed someone has dug a 10' x 5' hole near the buffer area and feels a letter should be sent to whoever is responsible. The Board agreed to investigate and send a letter to the responsible party.

REPORTS ON CONDITIONS OF BUFFERS

Makefield Brook: Mr. Steadman stated the buffer area needs to be mowed. The board discussed and agreed to contact Mr. Stewart about mowing the buffers on a regular basis as stated in his lease.

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Clearview: Mr. Steadman stated the deer population in this area seems to be very high. Mr. Steadman stated Mr. Stewart usually harvests 250 bushel of corn an acre except for this area where he harvests 125 bushels. He feels this would be a great area for BOWMA to hunt.

Mr. Steadman stated the erosion issue along I-295 has remained the same, nothing has changed.

Leedom: Mr. Bankoske stated the area is generally okay. Mr. Bankoske added several reflector stakes along the road hoping to help keep people from parking in the area. Mr. Colavita asked if more stakes could be added and Mr. Bankoske agreed. Mr. Bankoske stated he still needs to walk the area where Dolington intersects with Washington Crossing Road.

Heather Ridge: Mr. Bankoske stated this buffer area is okay. Mr. Bankoske stated Mr. Patel, homeowner at 2033 Trowbridge Drive, had trees cut down that were in the buffer area. Mr. Patel did not realize it was not his property and stated he is willing to replace the trees. Mr. Patel will come up with a plan and submit it to the Board for their approval. The Board is not sure if they want trees replanted in the buffer area. Mr. Bankoske will reach out to Mr. McGowan, who farms this parcel, for his opinion about replacing the trees.

Longshore: Mr. Blank received an email from Mrs. Murrills, a resident on Merrick Road, stating the buffer area has not been maintained and needs to be mowed. Mr. Blank will look at the area and follow up with Mrs. Murrills.

Stackhouse: Mr. Blank stated there is a tree dying on Kaplan property and asked Corcoran Landscaping to inspect it and quote removal. Mr. Blank feels it should be taken down. Mr. Bankoske stated there are dead trees on the opposite side of the property that needs to be quoted for removal as well.

Mr. Blank stated Corcoran Landscaping removed bamboo from the Kaplan property and it is pretty much cleared away. Mr. Blank stated Corcoran Landscaping is going to inspect the bamboo located behind 1590 Brookfield, Mr. & Mrs. Wright's property. Separate quotes for removal will be given to both Farmland Preservation and the Wright's as there are shoots on both properties.

Farmview II- Mr. Blank stated the Mulberry tree that was hanging over the buffer area has been trimmed, and the ditch has been dug out and the job is complete. Mr. Blank stated bamboo located at 9 Sunnyside Lane has been removed to within 10 feet of Farmland property and the homeowner had their contractor install a barrier. Mr. Blank stated Corcoran Landscaping should look at this area to set up a maintenance program to keep the bamboo under control.

UPDATE ON BOWMA DEER HUNTING REQUEST

Mr. Steadman stated he spoke with Mr. Stewart about possible permission for BOWMA to hunt on his properties. Mr. Stewart agrees there is a deer population problem but is reluctant since he hunts these Clearview and Makefield Brook himself.

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Mr. Steadman & Mr. Stewart became aware of a “red tag” program that is sponsored by the PA Game Commission which allows hunting to continue from February – September, after the regular hunting season has ended. Mr. Stewart supports this program and Mr. Steadman stated he is willing to complete the required paperwork. The Board discussed and approved this program. They also want to contact the other farmers to see if they would like to participate. The Board thanked Mr. Steadman for his efforts.

DISCUSSION RE: COMMUNITY DAY

The Board decided not to participate this year.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

- Mr. Blank will contact Ms. Holmes about cancelling the August 27th meeting.
- Mr. Blank will contact Ms. Holmes about the farmland deeds.
- Mr. Blank asked everyone to update their buffer findings on google drive.
- Mr. Blank will follow up with Mr. & Mrs. Murrills regarding the buffer area on Longshore.
- Mr. Blank will follow up regarding starting a scholarship program.
- Mr. Steadman will follow up with Mr. Truelove and Mr. Ferguson regarding lease drafts.
- Mr. Steadman will follow up with Mr. Stewart about the red tag deer program.
- Mr. Steadman will follow up with Mr. Stewart regarding the buffer area maintenance at Makefield Brook.
- Mr. Bankoske will follow up with Mr. Patel on Heather Ridge regarding the replacement of trees in the buffer area.
- Mr. Bankoske will follow up with Mr. McGowan regarding replacing trees in the buffer behind Mr. Patel’s property on Trowbridge.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Blank asked the Board their thoughts about the possibility of financially supporting a student who is considering an education in agriculture. The Board discussed and felt a scholarship program is a great idea. Mr. Lewis suggested contacting Pennsbury High School, since they already have a scholarship foundation program in place. Bucks Co. Technical High School could also be contacted about students who might be interested in an agricultural program. Mr. Blank will follow up and report his findings to the Board.

Mr. Steadman asked if any opportunities have arisen due to the sale of the Grey Nun Academy property. Mr. Steadman stated there is a parcel behind Grey Nun, that could possibly be added to Farmlands preserved farmland parcels. Mr. Bankoske suggested writing a letter to Holy Redeemer. There was further discussion of doing so and it was agreed to hold off on sending a letter at this time.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Blank, President