

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC
OCTOBER 22, 2019**

The regular meeting of Farmland Preservation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, October 22, 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

Eric Yeager

Doug Riblet

Dan Bankoske- via phone

John Lewis

**Dennis Steadman - *via phone
then joined mtg. in progress.**

Others

Bob Colavita

MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Bankoske to approve minutes of September 24, 2019 as amended. Motion moved and approved by the Board and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Riblet distributed copies of the Fidelity Investments and stated there was an approximate gain of \$9,000 since transferring \$400,000.00 on May 6th from the Vanguard account. Mr. Riblet stated the Board agreed to conduct a six-month review after the transfer of funds. As of today, Fidelity investments have outperformed Vanguard investments.

TRANSITION OF TREASURER RESPONSIBILITIES IN LIGHT OF MR. RIBLET'S RESIGNATION

Mr. Riblet announced his resignation effective the end of the year. Mr. Riblet stated he will hand over all material documents in his possession to the Board at an undetermined date. Mr. Blank, Mr. Lewis and all present thanked Mr. Riblet for his many years of generous service.

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PROGRESS ON LEASE RENEWALS

Mr. Blank reported on the review of the new leases. The Township Solicitor reviewed and approved the new draft leases. The Solicitor also asked the Board of Supervisors to review the new leases for consistency and coordination. The BOS also approved the new draft.

Mr. Steadman asked Mr. Blank to provide him with available dates when they can both meet with the farmers to review their new leases. Mr. Riblet stated he feels soil testing should be included in the discussions with the farmers and the Board agreed.

CONSIDERATION OF INSTALLING BAMBOO BARRIERS ON ALL BAMBOO-AFFECTED PARCELS

Mr. Riblet stated he feels, that after reading the new LMT bamboo ordinance, there's no distinction between homeowners who plant bamboo and homeowners who have bamboo that has encroached onto their own property due to someone else's planting. Mr. Riblet feels the installation of barriers (in affected areas) is extremely important to keep regrowth from occurring.

The Board discussed and voted to have Corcoran Landscaping quote installing barriers at: Stackhouse (next to Kaplan's and behind the Wright's on Brookfield Rd) and Sunnyside Lane (Farmview II) and to also do a comprehensive review of where barriers have previously been installed and where they have not for comparison to help decide on the most desired treatment protocol (effectiveness and cost) for future bamboo issues that arise.

MAKEFIELD BROOK ISSUES: SOIL THEFT, EROSION, BAMBOO

Mr. Yeager stated Corcoran Landscaping has cut the bamboo in the field along I-295 and is waiting for the corn to be harvested on Makefield Brook before he can remove the bamboo roots (this project has already been paid for).

Mr. Yeager stated Corcoran Landscaping quoted \$900.00 verbally for removal of the dead tree located on Woodside Road (across from Makefield Highlands golf course) and removal of two trees on Kaplan's property. This price also includes grinding the sycamore tree stump.

Mr. Steadman stated the buffer at Makefield Brook has been cleared all along the residential neighbors and looks fantastic.

Mr. Steadman stated the letter to the neighbor (behind Makefield Brook) who removed topsoil from Farmland's property was not sent. The Board discussed and agreed to send via certified mail.

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REPORTS ON CONDITIONS OF BUFFERS

- *Leedom/Heather Ridge*- Mr. Bankoske stated he does not have an update, but he will contact Tom McGowan for his opinion on replacing trees on Heather Ridge where the homeowner’s landscaper mistakenly removed them.
- *Stackhouse* - Mr. Blank stated Corcoran Landscaping will remove two trees near Kaplan’s property along with the tree on Woodside Road. Corcoran Landscaping will also clean up the remainder of the bamboo (located behind Brookfield Rd).
- *Longshore* – Mr. Blank stated the single tree located across from the golf course, will be removed. This will now allow Sam & Tim Stewart easier access to the property.
- *Farmview I & II* – Mr. Riblet stated he is concerned about the overgrown weeds on Farmview II (located near the rock garden). He said they are waist high and need to be maintained once the crops have been harvested.
- *Bridle Estates* – Mr. Yeager stated everything looks well maintained.
- *Makefield Brook and Clearfield* – Mr. Steadman stated there is nothing new to report.

The Board discussed and agreed to inspect their assigned properties on a quarterly basis.

UPDATE ON BOWMA DEER HUNTING REQUEST & RED TAG PROGRAM

As a trial on potential benefits to the Township’s deer management efforts and potential benefits to tenants’ production yields, Mr. Steadman stated he will apply for the PA Game Commission “Red Tag” program on behalf of the agricultural producer on Makefield Brook and Clearview. This application will be made in January/February for 2020 and he prefers to give BOWMA access to the program but wants to discuss further with tenant.

POTENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM DISCUSSION

- Pennsbury Scholarship Foundation is interested and will present Farmland’s request to their Board of Directors and report back to Mr. Blank.
- Delaware Valley University – still waiting to make contact.

Mr. Riblet stated he feels Farmland Preservation, Inc. is a trust, that serves the citizens of Lower Makefield and the sole purpose of Farmland is to manage real estate. He also feels that before any decisions are made, the Board should get the opinions from the Township Solicitor and BOS regarding giving away Farmland money for scholarships or any charitable cause which does not reflect in a corresponding benefit to Farmland Preservation, Inc.

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Mr. Blank stated he disagreed with Mr. Riblet's characterization of "giving away" Farmland money, that there was a potential benefit to Farmland Preservation, Inc. and the Township, and that he would like to continue to pursue this idea. Mr. Steadman stated he feels promoting community awareness and appreciation of farming and farmland preservation in LMT through potential scholarships and/or community education could benefit the community, the farmers and the preservation of farmland in LMT.

Mr. Lewis suggested the possibility of starting a "marketing/PR" program, using the Township's resident email data base and potentially exploring with the BOS the observation of a "Farmland Preservation Week", for example.

Farmland could use such email distributions to explain the foundation of Farmland Preservation, the challenges the farmers face in LMT, neighbors' responsibilities, potentially the possibility of scholarships, etc.

Mr. Blank asked the Board to think about this idea further for discussion at the next meeting.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

- Mr. Blank will clarify fees with Fidelity Investments along with the procedure to change the signature card.
- January meeting – Mr. Bankoske will become treasurer and will need a replacement for Vice president.
- Mr. Blank will research for a recent quote from Corcoran Landscaping- Farmview trees.
- Mr. Bankoske will contact Mr. McGowan for his opinion on tree replacement on Heather Ridge.
- Mr. Riblet will contact Mr. Sam Stewart about clearing Farmview I & II (at appropriate time).
- Mr. Steadman will coordinate with Mr. Blank for a date to discuss lease renewals with the farmers.
- Mr. Blank will continue to research scholarships/internships/public support & awareness of farmland preservation and will also contact the farmers for their views on this topic.
- Mr. Yeager will contact Corcoran Landscaping for a quote on bamboo barriers for 1590 Brookfield, Sunnyside & Farmview II. He will ask if they were responsible for the buffer cleanup on Makefield Brook.
- Mr. Blank will draft a letter to the resident of 1367 Brentwood Road regarding the stolen soil.
- Mr. Blank will contact Ms. Ellison regarding the record retention policy.
- Mr. Riblet will contact Vanguard regarding management transfer of the account.
- Mr. Riblet will scan all documents from Bob Small (Farmland's accountant) and forward to Mr. Blank.

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OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael S. Blank, President