

Minutes of the January 28, 2019
Somerset County Agriculture Development Board
Somerset County Administration Building
20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ
3rd. Fl. Freeholder's Meeting Room

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the January 28, 2019 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) Meeting began at 8:00 AM at the Somerset County Administration Building, 20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ in the 3rd Floor Freeholder's Conference Room.

Members in Attendance

Mark Kirby, Chairman
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairman
J. Johnson, Secretary
Richard Norz
Ed Seidel
Laura DePrado

Somerset County Staff

Walter Lane, Director, Planning Division
Tony McCracken, Assistant Dir., Planning Div.
Kate Katzer, Principal Planner, Planning Div.
Tom Boccino, Engineering
Patrice Thomas, Admin. Assistant, Planning Div.
Angela Jupin, County Counsel

Public

Amy Mandelbaum, SADC
Patrick Gorman, Zoning Officer, Hillsborough Twp.

Approval of Minutes

Laura DePrado explained that under item D-7 "Ag Month" the term Horticulture month was used and that it should have been horticultural therapy week that was used instead. A motion to approve the minutes with the change was made by Richard Norz and was seconded by Laura DePrado. The motion was passed and carried.

There was no Public Comment.

Reorganization

Mark Kirby then turned the meeting over to Kate Katzer to handle the reorganization portion of the meeting. Ms. Katzer then asked for nominations for the position of Chairman. Richard Norz made a motion to nominate Mark Kirby for the 2019 Chairman of the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board and it was seconded by Peter Staats. There were no other nominations. The motion was passed and carried.

Mark Kirby took over the meeting once again and called for nominations for Vice Chairman. Richard Norz made a motion to nominate Peter Staats for the 2019 Vice Chairman of the CADB and it was seconded by Ed Seidel. Richard Norz then made a motion to close the nominations which was seconded by Laura DePrado. The motions were passed and carried.

Ed Seidel made a motion to nominate J. Johnson for Treasurer of the CADB and it was seconded by Richard Norz. Richard Norz then motioned to close nominations and it was seconded by Peter Staats. The motions were passed and carried.

Mark Kirby shared a drafted Reorganization Resolution with the Board. A motion to approve the resolution was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Ed Seidel. The motion was passed and carried.

The Board then discussed the existing subcommittee lists. Chairman, Mark Kirby explained that he and Vice Chairman, Peter Staats would be reviewing the lists and making changes in the near future however reviewed temporary changes with the Board.

I-1) Somerset County Preservation Plan-Update

Kate Katzer explained that staff recently met with preservation team. They discussed the content to be included in the Agriculture portion of the plan, the potential layout and the summary of the three plans. She informed the Board that there was another meeting scheduled within the week and that staff is planning a Steering Committee meeting tentatively for February 14, 2019 and that the Board would be emailed regarding it.

Introductions were made by between the CADB and the new Freeholder Liaison, Sara Sooy.

1-2) SADC Meeting – Update

On behalf of the SADC Amy Mandelbaum expressed condolences to the Sorge Family in the passing of Board member Catherine Sorge.

She then provided the Board with an update from the SADC. She explained that there are 10 projects currently in Somerset County, 3 from County programs, 5 from Municipalities and 2 from non-profits. She provided the Board with a summary sheet regarding the projects.

She reviewed the Board's available balance for funding, base grants and competitive funding. She also reviewed the SADC's monthly newsletter and information on their deer fencing program and applications.

She then provided the Board with the breakdown of their appropriations for this year, explaining that most of their appropriations are being given to the municipalities, non-profits and for their deer fencing program. She explained that for fiscal year 20 they are discussing more funding opportunities for the Counties and the State Direct program which they are beginning outreach for.

I-3) County/State Boards of Agriculture-Update

State: Richard Norz explained that the State Board has met regarding the change in minimum wage. He explained the projected time frame and amounts with the Board and the Board discussed the negative effects this change will have on Agriculture businesses.

Mr. Norz also informed the Board that the State Ag Convention & Vegetables Growers Convention will be in Atlantic City at Harrah's on February 5th & 6th for the Vegetable Growers Convention and the 6th & 7th for the Ag Convention.

County: Peter Staats asked if the County Board of Agriculture was having an Ag in Action event this year and Ed Seidel & Richard Norz explained that they have not heard of any official plans.

I-4) Staff Comments

D-1) Potential Projects

a. Grande Farm (Branchburg)

b. Dorn Farm (Neshanic Station)

Both applications were briefly discussed and information was provided in the Board's packets. The Board agreed to schedule a Right to Farm committee meeting to discuss further.

D-2) Other Business

Mr. Katzer presented a drafted resolution to the Board recognizing Catherine Sorge's service to the CADB and the community. A motion to approve the resolution as presented was made by Peter Staats and was seconded by Laura DePrado. Richard Norz then suggested that "Agriculture" be added on to the end of "*the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board would like expresses their sincere appreciation to **Catherine A. Sorge** for her service to the Board, to Somerset County, and to this great County's farming community – and for her vision and support to enhance the quality of life for Somerset County residents*". The other board members agreed that it was acceptable as is. The Board voted, Richard Norz voted no and the motion was passed and carried.

Staff recommended inviting the resolution to Catherine's family to the next meeting to present them with the resolution. The board agreed.

The Board reviewed resolutions for former Freeholder Mark Caliguire and Freeholder Patrick Scaglione, recognizing them for their services. A motion to approve the resolution as made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Ed Seidel. The motion was passed and carried.

Richard Norz asked the status of the inquiry that local farmer, Sam Conard made regarding preservation of some properties that are not candidate farms. Kate Katzer explained that she had spoken to him earlier in the month. She explained that she again gave her information for Mr. Conard to pass along to the property owner. She also explained that the two other properties were too small to meet the County's criteria so she suggested he contact the township for preservation opportunities through them.

Laura DePrado reminded the Board that the third week of March is the NJ Horticulture Therapy week. She explained that Carrier Clinic in Belle Mead now known as Hackensack Meridian Health Carrier Clinic is now

coordinating an event relating to Horticulture Therapy Week. She explained that she will keep the Board updated on the event and other related events.

Mr. Norz suggested that the process on County leasing set forth by the County Park Commission is in need of updating. He suggests receiving help from the County itself.

Peter Staats informed the Board that he and Mark Kirby had recently attended a Park Commission meeting. He explained that there has been a turnover in staff and he feels that is where some confusion is coming from. He did state that it was a well-attended meeting with a lot of "give and take" and he feels that both parties will be able to work together. Mark Kirby also agreed that the meeting was productive. They discussed the details of the meeting.

Walter Lane stated that staff would meet with the Park Commission regarding all things discussed.

D-3) Gund Farm (Franklin)

Kate Katzer informed the Board that staff will be attending the February 13, 2019 Freeholders Closed Session for approval of the funding plan for the preservation of the Gund property. She explained that after the resolution is signed she will be reaching out to Engineering to begin surveys on the property and county counsel will begin working on closing documents.

She also reminded the Board that the property owners did agree to a 6 acre non-severable exception for the Park Commission use.

D-4) Doyle Farm (Hillsborough)

Kate shared a letter from Mr. Doyle with the Board. The letter acknowledged that he has received an updated green light amendment from the SADC and that he and his wife have decided to conduct his composting facility on preserved property. He also acknowledges that he cannot sell or donate any waste, generated from the composting operation to other land owners. He stated that he agreed to operate his composting facility in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations and agreed to follow his NRCS Farm Conservation Plan, the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan, the NJDA Regional compost facilities scope of work and the Farmland Preservation Plan Deed of Easement.

The Board chose to discuss further in Closed Session.

D-5) Harms (Bedminster)

Ms. Katzer informed the Board that letters requested to be sent to property owners were mailed out. The Board agreed to discuss further in closed session.

D-6) Hunter Farms (Montgomery)

Ms. Katzer explained that letters regarding the Hunter Farms Right to Farm dispute were received by staff and would be discussed in Closed Session.

D-7) Closed Session

A motion to enter closed session was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Richard Norz. The motion was passed and the Board entered Closed Session.

Walter Lane recused himself from all discussions regarding the Naturally Nurturing Property (Patel).

J. Johnson recused himself from all discussions regarding the Hunter Farms property.

A motion to exit closed session was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Peter Staats. The motion was passed and the regular portion of the CADB meeting resumed.

D-8) Results and Actions from Closed Session

A motion to allow County Counsel to send Harms a second letter regarding their violations was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Richard Norz. The motion was passed and carried.

A motion to allow staff send a letter to Mr. Patel to cease all activity on property until they receive further action from the SADC was made by Richard Norz and was seconded by Peter Staats. The motion was passed and carried.

A motion to support the purchase of the preservation and further evaluation of the Doyle Farm with the requirement of a one acre exception was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Richard Norz. The Board discussed details and voted. The motion was passed and carried.

The Board agreed to move the Hunter Farms issue to the CADB's subcommittee meeting.

D-9) Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Peter Staats and was seconded by Laura DePrado. The motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by,

J. Johnson
Secretary/Treasurer