

**Minutes of the August 24, 2020**  
**Somerset County Agriculture Development Board**  
**Virtual Meeting**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the August 24, 2020 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) Meeting began at 8:00 AM. This meeting was held virtually due to the Covid-19 crisis.

**Members in Attendance**

Mark W. Kirby, Chairman  
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairman  
Richard Norz  
Laura DePrado  
Sandra Rhue  
Ben Auletta  
Freeholder Liaison Melonie Marano

**Somerset County Staff**

Walter Lane, Dir, SC Planning Division  
Anthony McCracken, Assis. Dir. Planning Div.  
Kate Katzer, Principal Planner, SC Planning Div.  
Cathy Bunting, Admin. Assis., SC Planning Div.  
Tom Boccino, SC Parks Commission

**Public**

Beth Davisson, NJ Conservation Foundation (NJCF)  
Amy Mandelbaum, State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC)

**There was no public comment.**

Chairman, Mark Kirby announced the resignation of Board member Ed Seidel. Richard Norz then made a motion to direct staff to begin the process of obtaining a new Board member by obtaining a list of possible farmers from the Somerset County Board of Agriculture and forwarded the request to the Freeholder's. The motion was seconded by Laura DePrado and it was passed and carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Sandra Rhue explained that on the July 27, 2020 meeting minutes she was marked absent but she was present at the meeting. Staff made a note to make the correction.

A motion to approve the July 27, 2020 meeting minutes with the change was made by Peter Staats and was seconded by Sandra Rhue. Richard Norz abstained from the vote and the motion was passed and carried.

**I-1) SADC Meeting-Update**

Amy Mandelbaum from the SADC attended the meeting to provide the CADB with an update from their office. She provided statuses of the pending applications within the County.

**I-2) County/State Boards of Agriculture – Update**

There was no updated available.

### **I-3) 2020 Monitoring Update**

Kate Katzer explained that staff is currently working on a plan to monitoring safely during the COVID-19 crisis. She also mentioned that the SADC is considering extending the deadlines for annual monitoring. Richard Norz suggested continuing on with monitoring as is.

### **I-4) Johnson Farm Monopole (Montgomery)**

As requested, Ms. Katzer obtained an update from the SADC regarding the Johnson Farm Monopole request. She explained that there were some missing components to the plan and that the owner is currently working on those items. The application will be on hold until the items are satisfied.

### **1-5) Staff Comments**

The Board discussed and agreed to wait one month to give any member interested the chance to volunteer for the open position of secretary.

### **D-1) Drenchko (Hillsborough)**

Ms. Katzer informed the Board that staff recently met with David Kois from the SADC to discuss the possible loss of grant funding towards preservation for the Drenchko property. She explained that the risk of the loss of funds is due to the property not being preserved for a number of years. She explained that one possibility would be to switch the application to a Municipal Planning Incentive Grant (PIG). She explained that Amy Mandelbaum, from the SADC, confirmed that the process can be transferred over without beginning the whole process over again.

Peter Staats made a motion to direct staff to move forward with transferring the application to a Municipal PIG due to the potential loss of funding from Hillsborough Township. The motion was seconded by Laura DePrado.

**Discussion:** Richard Norz did not agree that the motion should include the reasoning of potential loss of funding. The Board discussed and agreed to amend the motion to not include "due to the potential loss of funding from Hillsborough Township". The motion was voted on as amended and was passed and carried.

### **D-2) Marano (Bedminster)**

Beth Davison attended the July CADB meeting and explained that an individual has offered to donate funding to preserve 34 acres for the Marano property. The Board agreed to discuss the item further in Closed Session.

### **D-3) PSE&G Branchburg Switch to Pleasant Valley Segment 1&2 Resolution**

Ms. Katzer reminded the Board that at the last meeting after hearing about PSE&G's Pleasant Valley project they agreed that they had no issues with the project however clarified that they were not speaking for any property owners. She shared a drafted resolution based on their decision. A motion to approve the resolution was made by Richard Norz and was seconded by Laura DePrado. The motion was passed and carried.

### **D-4) Segal & Morel (Bedminster)**

Staff received an amended application for the Segal & Morel property that addressed previous issues. Ms. Katzer reviewed the changes with the Board for discussion.

**Closed Session:** A motion to enter Closed Session was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Peter Staats. The motion was passed and carried and the Board entered Closed Session.

A motion to exit Closed Session was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Sandra Rhue. The motion was passed and carried and the regular portion of the CADB meeting resumed.

#### **D-5) Actions & Results from Closed Session**

**Mueller:** A motion to proceed with the violations on the Mueller Property, discussed in Closed Session, was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Peter Staats. The motion was passed and carried.

**Marano:** A motion to accept the additional exception area on the Deed of Easement for the Marano property was made by Richard Norz and was seconded by Sandra Rhue. The motion was passed and carried.

**Segal & Morel:** A motion to move forward with obtaining green light approval for the Segal & Morel property was made by Peter Staats and was seconded by Sandra Rhue.

Discussion: Richard Norz requested to have all information presented to the Board on all properties before any approval is given.

Laura DePrado abstained from the vote and the motion was passed and carried.

#### **Other**

Richard Norz commended Freeholder Marano for her efforts in helping farmers throughout the Covid-19 crisis. The Board discussed concerns for the future effects that Covid-19 can have on the farming industry in Somerset County.

#### **D-6) Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Laura DePrado and was seconded by Sandra Rhue. The motion was passed and carried and the meeting was adjourned.