

Minutes of the December 19, 2022
Somerset County Agriculture Development Board

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the December 19, 2022, Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:08 A.M. This meeting was held in person in the Commissioner's Meeting Room at the Somerset County Administration Building in Somerville, N.J.

Open Public Meetings Statement

Chairman Mark Kirby reported the meeting had been duly advertised in accordance with Open Public Meetings Act as follows:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 *et seq.*, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided. The date and time information for this meeting were published in The Star-Ledger and the Courier News. The agenda for this meeting was also posted on the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board's website.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken. There was a Quorum.

Members in Attendance:

Mark W. Kirby, Chairman
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairman
Laura DePrado
Sandra D. Rhue, Secretary/Treasurer
Matt D'Alessandro, Soil Conservation District

Members Not in Attendance:

Kenneth Osterman
Robert Shultz
County Commissioner Paul Drake, Liaison

Somerset County Staff:

Walter C. Lane, Director, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Kate Katzer, Principal Planner, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Tom Boccino, Supervising Planner – Preservation, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Patrice Brown, Administrative Assistant, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Greg Pasquale, Deputy County Counsel

Public Members Present:

Debbie Norz, State Board of Agriculture

David Zaback, SADC (State Agriculture Development Committee) Staff

Rich Dodds, New Jersey Conservation Foundation

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the SCADB minutes of the November 28, 2022 meeting was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Sandra Rhue and the minutes were approved. Peter Staats abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT & PRESENTATIONS:

No public comments.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. SADC Meeting –Update

David Zaback of the SADC reported to the Board that Chuck Roohr has been promoted to Deputy Executive Director. There will be a reorganization within the SADC as well as new positions opening that will focus exclusively on Agricultural Viability and Business Development. Mr. Zaback also shared that cannabis has been approved to be grown on preserved farms. Protection Standards' Subcommittee is meeting with the State Board of Agriculture soon to discuss the concerns brought up during their most recent letter to the SADC.

2. County /State Boards of Agriculture – Update

Debbie Norz of the State Board of Agriculture updated the Board on the County Board of Agriculture's recent election of officers for 2023, Matt Puskas will be President and Tyler Van Nuys will be Vice President. The State Board of Agriculture did not meet in December.

3. Staff Comments

Principal Planner, Kate Katzer reported that the Preservation Intern, Larisa Paxton has completed her internship. Ms. Katzer extended Ms. Paxton's heartfelt thanks to the Board for the opportunity to work alongside them and learn from them over the past seven months.

Ms. Katzer informed the Board of the submitted PIG Grants Application for fiscal year 2024. The grant money received will enable the continuation of preserving farms. The updates are in concordance with the updated Preservation Plan. Staff has worked with the municipalities to ensure all municipal targeted farms have been captured on the County's Targeted Farm List. Additionally, the submission reflected the changes made to the roster, such as the removal of ex Board Member Christopher Carnevale's name. Once a new board member is announced by the Commissioners, his or her name will also be shared with the SADC for its files.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

1. Mueller Farm

The Board reviewed a resolution covering the continued cleanup of the asphalt millings on the Mueller property, their removal from the property, and the approval of the barn pad location. A letter will be released to Hillsborough

Township upon confirmation that the millings have been removed and clean fill has been moved into place. Principal Planner, Kate Katzer reported that Mr. Mueller has satisfied all requirements for the resolution to be reviewed and voted on since Mr. Mueller submitted the remaining required documents which included his 2022 Monitoring Sheet.

Ms. Katzer read the Mueller Resolution to the Board.

2. Crestview Farms (Far Hills)-

Kate Katzer read the SSAMP (Site Specific Agricultural Management Practice) resolution to the Board. Changes were suggested by the Board.

3. Proposed Legislation

Ms. Katzer shared each bill that was to be considered. These bills were reviewed by the CADB Legislative Committee. Notes outlining the concerns and conversations of the Legislative Committee during its most recent meeting were placed into the Board's December meeting packet for the full Board to review. These bills will be addressed during closed session.

4. 2023 Meeting Dates

Kate Katzer announced that the December, 2023 meeting will be held on the 3rd Monday instead of the typical 4th Monday. The committee meeting date will therefore be adjusted as well. This change will be voted on at the annual reorganization meeting on January 7, 2023.

Staff was asked about the vacant position on the Board. Director Walter Lane replied that the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners will be holding their reorganization meeting in January, and any changes to our Board will be announced then.

5. 2023 Committees

Any board member wishing to move to a different committee should make the request to the Chair or Vice Chair prior to the January 2023 meeting.

6. Closed Session

At 8:30 a.m. there was a motion to go into closed session made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Peter Staats. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was passed.

4. Results and Actions from Closed Session

Mueller – A motion was made to approve the resolution as read, by Laura DePrado and seconded by Sandra Rhue. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was passed.

Crestview Farms – A revised resolution will be reviewed at the next meeting reflecting the changes requested by the Board.

Proposed Legislation- A motion to authorize the Legislative Committee to approve letters regarding any current bills to be acted upon was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Peter Staats. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was passed.

Nahkla – No action. Update only.

Chairman Kirby shared that his granddaughter, Jacquilin Kirby, had been selected as the New Jersey State Dairy Princess for 2022 - 2023. Debbie Norz spoke about the responsibilities of the Dairy Princess, the State's process for the program, and the ways in which these programs benefit our youth. Ms. Norz mentioned that as part of Jacquilin's new role, she will be reaching out to various agricultural groups to attend their meetings and share what is happening in the world of dairy. The Board spoke about extending an invitation for Ms. Kirby to speak at an upcoming meeting.

At 10:01 a.m., a motion was made to adjourn by Laura DePrado and seconded by Peter Staats. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting will be the annual reorganization meeting to be held in person on January 23, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. in the same location.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sandra Rhue

Sandra Rhue
Secretary/Treasurer