

**Minutes of the May 22, 2023**  
**Somerset County Agriculture Development Board**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the May 22, 2023, Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:01 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 Act Compliance 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, Chair  
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chair  
Sandra D. Rhue, Secretary/Treasurer  
Laura De Prado  
Debbie Norz  
Robert Shultz  
Kenneth Osterman  
Matt D'Alessandro, Soil Conservation District

**Members Not in Attendance:**

None

**Somerset County Staff:**

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:**

Richard Dodds, NJ Conservation Foundation Staff  
David Zaback, State Agriculture Development Committee Staff

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: SCADB Regular Meeting – April 25, 2023**

A motion to approve the SCADB minutes of the April 25, 2023, meeting was made by Ken Osterman and seconded by Debbie Norz. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed with Laura DePrado and Robert Shultz in abstention.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT & PRESENTATIONS:**

No public comment

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### 2. SADC Meeting -Update

Dave Zaback reported that the State Agriculture Development Committee voted to send the Soil Protection Standards to the Governor's office. Once the Governor's Office reviews and approves the standards, they will be returned to the SADC for a formal vote to release the standards and publish it to the New Jersey Register, after which there will be a 60-day public comment period. The SADC will respond to every comment and then the effective date of the rules will be announced. Mr. Zaback notified the Board that Special Occasion Events meeting dates are being proposed to Somerset County to consider, and he hopes to have an answer shortly about a date and time. Updates have been made to the Agriculture Management Practices (AMPs) for composting and aquaculture.

### 3. County/State Boards of Agriculture – Update

Debbie Norz reported that the bill that was presented to the State Board of Agriculture for the appointment of Director of Agriculture. was vetoed. She stated she testified last week about the rules surrounding livestock as a livestock farmer that the amendment should be adjusted. Ms. Norz expressed her concern with gestation and veal crate size and if the animal could turn around and function in that amount of space (Humane standards). The way the standard is currently proposed, the animal would need to be able to turn around without brushing against the walls. This would not be feasible for the farmers due to the size that would be necessary to house all the animals but is unnecessary for the livestock. Ms. Norz also reminded the Board about Agriculture. in Action occurring at Middlebush Dairy Farm on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The entry fee is \$5 per family.

### 4. Staff Comments

Principal Planner Kate Katzer discussed the property at Shannon Hill Farm in Basking Ridge (43.6 acres). This owner of this farm is interested in applying to the Farmland Preservation Program after a pause during the Covid pandemic. Ms. Katzer will arrange a meeting with the farm manager to review important information pertaining to the program, such as exception areas. It is an equine operation.

## **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

### 1. Dalness Property SSAMP (Peapack-Gladstone)

Kate Katzer read the Dalness Property revised Site Specific Agriculture Management Plan to the Board. Kenneth Osterman made a motion to approve the SSAMP and Laura DePrado seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

### 2. Nahkla Property (Hillsborough)

Kate Katzer reported that placement of commercial vehicles has been noted on this preserved property by Hillsborough Township. The property owner has been notified of the request for removal of the vehicles by both the SCADB and the Township. It has been reported that the vehicles currently remain. The Right to Farm committee requested that a letter be drafted with points for discussion with the property owner. This matter to be discussed during Closed Session.

*Note: Robert Shultz left the meeting at 9:33 a.m.*

### 3. Special Occasion Events Update & Draft Application

Kate Katzer shared that she has been working with the State Agriculture Development Committee for Special Occasion Events (SOE) training session dates. Dates were proposed for the Board to consider. The Board decided on June 14<sup>th</sup> and requested that surrounding Counties be invited to attend.

There will be a Central Jersey Municipal Officials meeting for SOE training on June 12, 2023, and Somerset County was approached about coordinating the North Jersey Municipal Officials Training – more information will follow.

Kate Katzer shared a draft SOE application with the Board that will be used as a template for review. Each County will be responsible for reviewing its own applications. A subcommittee for SOE was formed specifically to review applications. Debbie Norz, Sandra Rhue and Laura DePrado are the committee members, and Ken Osterman will be the alternate for the committee. Roll call vote was taken, and the motion was passed unanimously.

This matter will be further discussed during Closed Session.

#### 4. Closed Session

At 9:08 a.m., Peter Staats made a motion to go into closed session and Ken Osterman seconded the motion. A roll call was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Closed Session was adjourned at 9:53 am.

#### 5. Results and Actions from Closed Session:

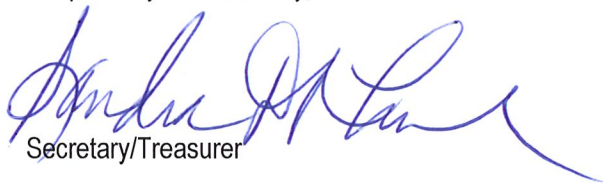
A motion regarding the Nahkla Property letter that has been approved with corrections, was made by Sandra Rhue and seconded by Laura DePrado. A roll call was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made for staff to schedule a meeting for June 14, 2023, for the Special Occasion Events (SOE) training and the setup of a SOE Committee Meeting to review the SOE application for the Board by Laura DePrado and seconded by Sandra Rhue. A roll call was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Debbie Norz And seconded by Peter Staats to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 am. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

***The next meeting will be held in person on June 26, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. in the same location.***

Respectfully Submitted by,

  
Secretary/Treasurer