

**Minutes of the May 28, 2024**  
**Somerset County Agriculture Development Board Meeting**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the May 28, 2024, Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:18 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**

Chair 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 was 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

Debbie Norz

Robert Shultz

Kenneth Osterman

Laura DePrado

Matt D'Alessandro, Soil Conservation District

Kate Brown, Agriculture Extension Agent

**Members Not in Attendance:**

Sandra D. Rhue, Secretary/Treasurer

Paul Drake, Liaison Somerset County Commissioner

**Somerset County Staff:**

Mathew D. Loper, Director- Department of Engineering and Planning

Kate Katzer, Principal Planner–Somerset County Agriculture Development Board  
Manager

Patrice Brown, Administrative Assistant- Department of Engineering and Planning

Alyssa Puccio, Deputy County Counsel

**Public Members Present:**

Richard Dodd, New Jersey Conservation Foundation

**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion to approve the SCADB minutes of the April 22, 2024, meeting was made by Debbie Norz and seconded by Peter Staats. Laura DePrado and Kenneth Osterman both abstained. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT & PRESENTATIONS:**

There was no public comment.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

**1. SADC Meeting –Update**

Kate Katzer requested the Board’s opinion on which summer date would work best for them for the SADC to present information regarding the New Acquisition Formula. The Board unanimously chose August 26, 2024. The Board requested the County Board of Agriculture be invited.

**2. County /State Boards of Agriculture – Update**

Debbie Norz informed the Board that Sauce of Somerset did not receive the grant. Ms. Norz reported on the proposed Heat Bill that is circulating through the Legislature. OSHA has been working on an update heat safety working conditions; but some states have come out with their own Bills. The current proposed Bill would be detrimental to farming and organizations like Farm Bureau and the State Board of Agriculture are working to inform farmers about the Bill and request comments on the matter.

### **3. Staff Comments**

Kate Katzer announced the Somerset County Health Department's distribution of information packets to all county Farmers regarding the Bird Flu.

*Informative item included in the packet: Lactating Cows can be affected by the Bird Flu and can then transmit the disease to humans.*

Ms. Katzer informed the Board that the 40 Acre Smith Farm Property is expected to close in the coming week.

### **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:**

*The following items were presented to the Board by Somerset County Agriculture Development Board Manager, Kate Katzer:*

#### **1. Dealaman Farm – Right to Farm Concern- Warren Township**

The letter that was sent to the owner of the property and the neighbor is in the Board's packet for approval. To be discussed during closed session.

#### **2. Axcel Farm- Hillsborough Township**

The Letter sent to Axcel Farm and follow-up documentation will be discussed during closed session.

#### **3. SADC Statewide Preservation Formula Update**

The SADC will be invited to attend the August Meeting of the Somerset County Agricultural Development Board to make a presentation regarding the Preservation Formula.

#### **4. Soil Protection Standards Letter**

The Board has previously requested a letter be drafted to address the October 1<sup>st</sup> cut off date. A motion to approve the letter was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Debbie Norz. A roll call vote was made, and the vote was passed.

#### **5. Closed Session**

At 8:44 a.m. a motion to go into closed session was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Debbie Norz. A roll call vote was made, and the motion was passed.

## **6. Results and Actions from Closed Session**

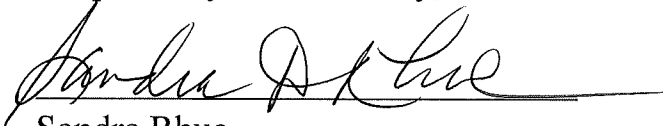
At 9:21 a.m. a motion to come out of closed session was made by Peter Staats and seconded by Laura DePrado.

A motion to approve the submitted plan to address violations on the Axcel property was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Kenneth Osterman. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was passed.

## **7. Adjournment**

At 9:21 a.m., a motion was made to adjourn by Peter Staats and seconded by Laura DePrado. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sandra Rhue", written over a horizontal line.

Sandra Rhue

Secretary/Treasurer