

Minutes of the June 24, 2024
Somerset County Agriculture Development Board Meeting

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the June 24, 2024, Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:16 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

Sandra D. Rhue, Secretary/Treasurer

Debbie Norz

Kenneth Osterman

Laura DePrado

Matt D'Alessandro, Soil Conservation District

Kate Brown, Agriculture Extension Agent

Paul Drake, Liaison Somerset County Commissioner

Members Not in Attendance:

Robert Shultz

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

Dave Zaback, SADC

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the SCADB minutes of the May 28, 2024, meeting was made by Peter Staats and seconded by Laura DePrado. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT & PRESENTATIONS:

Michael Mueller's Engineer, Linder Peterson, requested that this matter be tabled for this meeting and that it be added to the agenda for the month of July.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. SADC Meeting –Update

Susan Payne has retired, and Chuck Roohr will be acting Executive Director in the interim. A subcommittee is being formed to conduct a search to fill Susan's position. The SADC has hired new individuals to their staff. August there will be an outreach for the Formula Value held by the consultant hired by the SADC – they will be coming to the SCADB's regular meeting. The Soil Protection Standard has yet to be published in the Register; but will be in the coming weeks.

2. County /State Boards of Agriculture – Update

Debbie Norz informed the Board that September 7, 2024, is Ag in Action event. The Tom Everett Scholarship picnic will be held afterwards.

3. Staff Comments

Ag Night will be held at the Patriot's Stadium on July 25th. Chris Carnevale will be new President for Ag Society, and will be installed shortly.

Ms. Katzer informed the Board that the 4-H Fair will be held August 7th through the 9th this year. Farmer Matt Puskas will be doing a Dairy exhibit in the County tent talking about how "Cows are Great Recyclers". There will be a Geo Cashing event put on by the Somerset County GIS department.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

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

1. House Farm – Montgomery Township

A letter has been received by a neighbor to the property. To be discussed during closed session.

2. Awad Farm- Hillsborough Township

All compliances have been met. The township has addressed signage and manure issues. Violations will be cleared once a site visit is completed.

3. Galdi Farm – Franklin Township

Mr. Galdi has come in for his final approval for the regrading around the newly built house. To be discussed during closed session.

4. Susan Payne Resolution of Appreciation

The Resolution was read aloud to the Board. A motion to approve the Resolution was made by Debbie Norz and seconded by Laura DePrado. A roll call vote was made, and the vote was passed.

5. Excessive Heat Advisory Guidance Document

The Farming Community has received the Excessive Heat Advisory Guidance Document. There has been an uptick in communication regarding Excessive Heat

safety protocol. NJ Health has distributed information from the Center for Disease Control.

6. Crop Vandalism Document

There have been several vandalism issues on Farm Properties such as trespassers riding dirt bikes and harming crops. Farmers have been inquiring about their rights in resolving these matters. The Farm Bureau has distributed publications regarding rules and allowances on top of regulations.

7. Closed Session

At 8:53 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.

8. Results and Actions from Closed Session

At 9:22 a.m. a motion to come out of closed session was made by Laura DePrado and seconded by Kenneth Osterman.

A motion to approve closed session minutes for April 22, 2024, and May 28, 2024, was made by Debbie Norz and seconded by Laura DePrado.

9. Adjournment

At 9:25 a.m., a motion was made to adjourn by Laura DePrado and seconded by Kenneth Osterman. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sandra Rhue

Sandra Rhue
Secretary/Treasurer