

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD  
FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.  
JANUARY 24, 2017**

The Annual meeting of the Farmland Preservation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2017 in the Lower Makefield Township Municipal Building. Mr. Blank called the meeting to order at 7:30p.m.

**Those Present            Farmland Preservation, Inc.**

**Dan Bankoske  
Michael Blank  
Doug Riblet**

**Others**

**Bob Colavita  
Tom McGowan  
Judi Reiss, Supervisor  
Christine Holmes**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**Nomination of President**

Mr. Bankoske nominated Mike Blank for President. Nomination seconded by Mr. Riblet and carried.

**Nomination of Vice President**

Mr. Riblet nominated Dan Bankoske for Vice President. Nomination seconded by Mr. Blank and carried.

**Nomination of Secretary/Treasurer**

Mr. Blank nominated Doug Riblet for Secretary/Treasurer. Nomination seconded by Mr. Bankoske and carried.

**MINUTES**

Motion made by Mr. Blank to approve minutes of October 25, 2016 and December 8, 2016. Motion seconded by Mr. Bankoske and carried.

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## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Riblet handed out copies of the Vanguard statement showing year to date increases and decreases and value of the funds. As of January 24, 2017, the account has a Capital investment of over \$700,000.00. The board decided to stay the course and not make any changes at this time.

Mr. Blank noted that they still need to go to the bank to make the necessary changes to their account to add his signature. Mr. Riblet agreed and they will set up a date to do this.

Mr. Riblet asked that he be reimbursed for paying Bob Small and it was agreed to do so at the end of the meeting. He also received the statement from the Advance Newspaper which is used to advertise the legal notice of their Annual meeting which is now due and needs to be paid. Both Vanguard account checks were signed by Mr. Blank.

Mr. Riblet stated he received an insurance certificate naming Farmland Preservation, Inc. as the certificate holder and it expires at the end of 2017. The insured is Apex Services, Inc. and Mr. Blank stated that Apex is the fencing company that did work for Farmland and may do some more work this year (e.g. Farmview II).

## **BAMBOO**

Mr. Bankoske stated that, approximately two weeks ago, he and Mr. Joe Januzelli, who is a contracted employee of the Township, went to three (3) properties; Farmview II, Makefield Brook on Quarry Road and Stackhouse to look at the bamboo and also take pictures.

- Farmview II property: At this time, there is nothing that needs to be done. Once the bamboo gets closer to Farmland property, Joe Januzelli will go back and assess the situation.
- Makefield Brook property: It was very clear that the bamboo was not planted on Farmland property but has since expanded onto Farmland property.
- Stackhouse property: Does not look like there is any bamboo on the neighbor's property and it's not very clear how it got on Farmland property, i.e. the bamboo was either planted directly on Farmland or was planted on the property owners land and it expanded to Farmland's property then the property owners must have removed what was on their own property.

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Mr. Januzelli had a meeting with the Township Solicitor, Dave Trulove, in reference to the bamboo ordinance and also whether or not Farmland Preservation, Inc. is Township property. Mr. Truelove stated that Farmland Preservation, Inc. is not considered Township property because property needs to either be legally owned by the Township or must be farmland preserved by the Township in order to be Township property.

The next step, according to Mr. Januzelli, is for Farmland to notify the two (2) homeowners and reference ordinance - Section 84-A2 paragraph B, section I and II and wait for their response.

Mr. Bankoske stated that it is his understanding that if Farmland Preservation, Inc. pursues the process of notifying the neighbors, there might be legal action needed on behalf of Farmland Preservation. If this fails, the Township may be responsible for removing the bamboo after all.

Mrs. Reiss stated that the Board of Supervisors wanted the ordinance to be clear that whoever was at fault would have to repay the Township for the removal but this did not happen. Mrs. Reiss also mentioned that the ordinance states; "It is the responsibility of whoever plants the bamboo to keep it contained."

Mr. Riblet asked what are the retroactive rights of the ordinance vs neighbors? If there are no retroactive rights, why waste their time. Mr. Bankoske suggested having Mr. Januzelli discuss this with Dave Trulove and report back.

Mr. Riblet stated he would draft letters as noted above.

## **SOIL CONSERVATION**

Mr. Blank reported that Farmland Preservation had previously met with the Department of Agriculture who gave recommendations. Mr. Stewart will work on Farmview I, II and also Clearview to mitigate. Once work is completed on Farmview II, Farmland Preservation will take the neighbors out and show them what Mr. Stewart has done to mitigate and then Farmland will put up a fence.

Mr. Riblet stated Farmland agreed to send a letter to the farmers in April advising them of the soil testing and insurance policies required by their leases. The board had a discussion and agreed the letter should be sent before planting begins, possibly in February.

Mr. Riblet stated he would draft a letter to the Farmers for the February meeting.

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Mr. Blank asked Mrs. Reiss if she was aware of the communication Farmland received about too many deer in a resident's backyard (Fairfield development.) Mr. Blank said that Mr. Riblet stated it best "Farmland Preservation, Inc. has no control over where the deer roam in the Township." Mr. Blank stated he would like to get a report from BOWMA and also invite them to the February meeting since the deer hunt ends at the end of January.

### **DELWARE RIVER JOINT TOLL BRIDGE COMMISSION (DRJTBC)**

Mr. Bankoske stated that since the last board meeting and tonight, he, Mr. Riblet and Mr. Blank held an Executive Session meeting to discuss their strategy. After that meeting, they went to Mr. Tim Duffy (from Dave Truelove's office) with their information. Mr. Duffy went back to DRJTBC and, as of today, they are waiting for a response. Mrs. Reiss asked how much property are they discussing. Mr. Blank stated it is .7 acres. Mr. Bankoske said to wait and see what happens in the next week or two. He will then send a follow up letter to Mr. Duffy at least two weeks before the next Farmland meeting.

### **RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION, INC.**

Mr. Blank stated there are currently three (3) members on the board and there should be five (5). Mrs. Reiss stated they will discuss this at the next BOS meeting. She also suggested flyers for the farmer's market along with a possible coordination with the Patterson Farm committee. Mr. Bankoske asked if a paragraph could be added to the website to help with recruitment. Mr. Fedorchak would have final approval.

Mr. Blank stated that there had been a discussion with Mr. Benedetto about Farmland Preservation, Inc. possibly managing Sam Stewart's lease to land at the Patterson Farm but was told by Mr. Benedetto that were too many moving parts. Mr. Riblet stated they did not want any legal or financial (aside from collecting rent from the farmers(s)) interest in the property and Mrs. Reiss stated that is how she had presented it to the BOS.

### **SIGNAGE RECOGNITION FOR DUANE "BUSTER" DOAN**

Mr. Riblet asked if a sign could be installed at Patterson Farm to honor Mr. Duane "Buster" Doan. Mrs. Reiss suggested they write a letter to Kristin Tyler about this request. Mrs. Reiss thought this to be a lovely idea.

Mr. Riblet stated that he will draft the letter.

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## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Bankoske asked about the pine trees at 2088 Farmview. Mr. McGowan stated he took care of the trees next to it but has not been back because the grounds are wet. Once the ground dries, he will go back with the chipper and finish.

There was a discussion about when the trees were originally planted in the buffer, which was about twenty years ago. Mr. McGowan stated that when the trees were small they had wires around the girth and support stakes. Now the trees are being choked and are dying.

The question was asked if Farmland removes the trees, are they responsible to replace them? Mrs. Reiss stated that if the trees are damaged, dying or are a clear and present danger, they can be removed and they do not have to be replaced. Note: this is in keeping with the change made to the relevant township ordinance.

## **Mutual Fund Discussion**

Mr. Riblet asked Mr. Colavita as to why the Vanguard mutual funds identified for his escrow account are not shown separately. Mr. Colavita replied that they did what was needed to be done to make money on the account.

Mr. Riblet would like to know when the merge occurred as he feels it would be best to have separate accounts. Mr. Bankoske stated that when he was joining Farmland he went through previous minutes and remembers coming across this information.

Mr. Bankoske asked as to why the escrow account should be segregated. Mr. Riblet stated, he feels the reason to separate the account is to determine how Mr. Colavita's escrow account is doing just in case they need to use the money. Mr. Blank stated he thought there had been a previous discussion to merge the accounts.

Mr. Blank asked Mr. Riblet if he would like to make a proposal. Mr. Riblet stated his proposal is to determine when the funds were combined. Then he would take the value of Mr. Colavita's fund at the time and calculate what the growth would have been between then and now and set up a separate account. Both Mr. Blank and Mr. Bankoske agreed.

Mrs. Reiss asked "How do you raise money?" The board stated they do not raise money as they are non-profit and their money comes from the Farmers paying their rent.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.

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Respectfully submitted,

Michael Blank, President