

Solebury Township Farm Committee
September 29, 2020
Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

Attendance: Kaitlin Farbotnik, Graham Phillips, Josh Perlsweig, Craig Haney, Gary Manoff, Tim Luccaro
Kevin Morrissey (Supervisor Liaison) and Nicole Slack (Township Administration)

I. Call to Order

Kaitlin Farbotnik called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

II. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Gary Manoff seconded by Mr. Tim Luccaro, the minutes of the July 28, 2020 Farm Committee meeting unanimously approved.

III. Announcements

The Board of Supervisors will be conducting three interviews of applicants interested in joining the Farm Committee. There are also two associate positions available.

IV. New Business

Reforestation

The committee discussed ideas and concepts around a resident's desire to complete a reforestation project. What is required, what are the benefits, does that Township have a list of specific species of trees that they request to be planted? Yes, the Township does have a list. Best course of action is for the resident to reach out to the Township to seek guidance and coordinate approvals.

Preservation Inspections

Kaitlin Farbotnik raised concerns over a recent inspection at her farm. Are there Biosecurity procedures that are required to be followed on these preservation inspections and what are they? There are important protocols that should be taken when visiting a farm handling livestock. Concerns were also raised about the use of drones for inspections as it relates to livestock and animal safety. Ms. Farbotnik will follow up about the inspection, just wanted to make the rest of the committee aware of her recent inspection.

Committee discussed concerns over the inspections, not receiving reports after the inspections and would like better communication about scheduled inspections.

V. Discussion Items

Farmer Match Program

Josh Perlsweig reached out to the American Farmland Trust and is waiting for a response. He also reached out to the Food Shed Alliance and is also waiting for a response.

Craig Haney reached out to Congressmen, waiting to hear response. Will follow up prior to next meeting.

Ms. Farbotnik will reach out to NOFA to gauge interest in a farmer land match program. Reaching a broader audience (New Jersey and surrounding areas aside from Bucks County) may prove to be beneficial in matching farmers with land owners and vice versa.

Is the Farmer Land Match program feasible to do within the committee or will it require outside assistance (partnering with larger organizations)? The Farm Committee feels as though they can do something more meaningful and significant for Solebury Township if they team up with other organizations that have established membership bases of likeminded folks that do advocacy work.

The committee will prepare a proposal to be presented to the Board of Supervisors for year end with the most efficient approach to accomplish a land owner/farmer match program.

Before next meeting the goal is to have potential partners identified and committee members will follow up with previous messages left.

Kevin Morrissey will determine if there are protocols for communicating with the County Commissioners.

Ms. Farbotnik motions to have Farmer Match Program and Farmer Housing added to the list of recommendations for the County Commissioner's report. Mr. Luccaro seconds; passes unanimously. Committee will wait for approval from Mr. Morrissey if the committee can proceed with communication.

Mr. Manoff will reach out to Heritage again, with less specifics and more on a broader scale down the line. Mr. Manoff will also reach out to his contacts at the Food Shed Alliance.

The next Farm Committee meeting is scheduled for November 24th at 7:00pm via Zoom.

VI. Public Comment

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Slack
Farm Committee Administrator