

Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board
Board Meeting - Monday, June 17, 2024 - 7:00 PM

JCDA Conference Room, 1948 Wiltshire Road, Kearneysville, WV

Minutes

* Action item

In Attendance:, Mr. Banks, Ms. Benites (JCDA representative), Mr. Berndt (by telephone), Dr. Hetzel, Dr. Stine, Ms. Tabb (County Commission liaison), Ms. Wheeler, (Director) Absent with notice: Ms. Johnson

- A quorum was met with at least four voting members present.

7:17 PMCall to Order and Opening Remarks

Introduction of Guests (none present)

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting (May 20, 2024) * Dr. Hetzel moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Dr. Stine. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Treasurer’s Report: (May 31, 2024) * Dr. Stine moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Mr. Banks. The motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Report

New Business:

1. Consider for Approval: FY25 Budget * Discussion included the suggestion that the new director be added to line items for education and travel and to confirm the term of the Auditor’s contract. Ms. Benites moved to accept the FY25 Budget, seconded by Dr. Stine. The motion carried unanimously.

1. Consider for approval: Policy manual revisions:

- **Personnel Policies** * The Board discussed the precedence of the current County Commission Personnel Policy and that it is currently under review for revision. The proposed Farmland Protection Board’s Personnel Policy has sections that are particular to the Board that should be retained, which include: Staff Definitions, Performance Review, Compensation, and Education. Ms. Benites suggested that the Education Policy should include the statement that the County may have additional education benefits. The Board should follow the other current County Personnel Policy sections and adopt the updates.

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- **6.1.3 Easement Funding Policy 2025 – 2029** * The Board discussed the limitations of the policy as stated and recommended that it be recast as a Standard Operating Procedure and to delete the reference to a time limit.
 - **6.1.14 Funding Decisions for Local Applications at the Beginning of a Fiscal Year, NRCS Funding Decisions toward the End of the Fiscal Year.*** The Board discussed the limitations of the policy as stated and recommended that it be recast as a Standard Operating Procedure and to delete the reference to a time limit.
 - **6.7 Fundraising** * Approved by unanimous consent to remove the policy as it is obsolete.
 - **8.2.2 Policy on Property Currently Marketed for Sale*** Approved by unanimous consent, with minor corrections to dates in the text.
 - **8.2.4 Policy on Tied Scores** * Approved by unanimous consent
 - **8.4.6 Policy on Impervious Surfaces** * Approved by unanimous consent
 - **11.10 Contingency Plans for Backup Holder*** Approved by unanimous consent to remove the policy as it is obsolete.
 - **Draft Education Policy** * The Board recommended that the Director confer with the Auditor’s office regarding the tax implications of this benefit.
2. **Consider for approval: JCFPB commitment of a maximum of \$1,012,500 to match Natural Resources Conservation Service offer of \$1,012,500 for Property 2024-04 easement purchase** * The Board discussed the misaligned notification timelines for the two supplementary grant applications that had been submitted and determined that it is necessary to continue to wait for the decision made by the Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund at the end of June, and notice from the Fish and Wildlife Foundation in September. It was noted that the Board’s original funding agreement was approved contingent on the grant awards.
 3. **Consider for Approval: Revised MOU for the Jefferson and Berkeley County FPB Joint Oversight Committee** * This item was approved by consensus.
 4. **Consider for approval: Promotion of Administrative Assistant/Stewardship Coordinator to Stewardship Director at a salary range of \$45,000 to \$55,000, with a starting salary of \$46,000.** * Ms. Benites moved to approve the promotion and pay raise, seconded by Dr. Hetzel. The motion carried unanimously.
 5. **Consider for approval: Reimbursement of \$294.20 to Berkeley County Farmland Protection Board for salary underpayment to Administrative Assistant/Stewardship Coordinator from July 1, 2023 to the present.** * This item was considered a correction not requiring Board approval.
 6. **Discuss research findings for current agricultural property values.** This item was tabled.

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7. **Discuss the feasibility of joint conservation easements with multiple property owners.** This item was tabled.
8. **Discuss prioritizing applications for properties with streams.** This item was tabled.
9. Public Comment
10. Closing Remarks
11. Adjourn: 9:15PM

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