



St. Mary's County Government
AGRICULTURE, SEAFOOD, AND FORESTRY BOARD
P.O. Box 653, 23115 Leonard Hall Drive, Leonardtown, MD 20650
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John K. Parlett, Jr., Chairman

David Paulk, Vice Chairman

Phil Dorsey

Adam Dyson

Dr. Edward Falta

James Moore

Patrick Russell

Jon Shenski

Michael Sirk

James Spence

Melissa Thompson

Joseph Wood

Agricultural, Seafood, and Forestry Board
November 13, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The Agricultural, Seafood, and Forestry Board meeting was held in the Conference Room of the Agriculture Services Center. Members in attendance were John Parlett, David Paulk, Edward Falta, James Moore, Patrick Russell, Michael Sirk, James Spence, and Joseph Wood. Also present was Bruce Young and Tom Koviak from the St. Mary's County Soil Conservation District, Ben Beale from the University of Maryland Extension, and Donna Sasscer and Lisa Ledman from the St. Mary's County's Economic Development Department. Guests in attendance at the meeting included

Sharon Saez, Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust (PTWLT)

Dudley Lindsey, Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust (PTWLT)

Dave Kelsey, Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust (PTWLT)

Wendy Schaller, Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust (PTWLT)

James Scott Smith, St. Mary's County Interim Superintendent

J. Bradley Clements, St. Mary's County Public Schools Division of Supporting Services

Susan McQuilkin, Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission

Jamie Raley, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau

James B. Norris, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau

Joan Bearden, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau

Willy Goddard, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau

Barry Roache, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau

Shelby Guasso, St. Mary's County Planning Commission

Randy Sloan, Citizen

Todd Morgan, Commissioner for St. Mary's County

Mike Hewitt, Commissioner for St. Mary's County elect

Karen Bailey, St. Mary's County Public School Board elect

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. It was confirmed that there were enough members present to form a quorum. Minutes from the October 9, 2014 were read and approved by the Board, motioned by Mr. Spence and seconded by Mr. Moore.

Old Business

Mechanicsville School Site – Mr. Parlett recused himself from any discussions about the proposed Mechanicsville School Site as he has property in the area he has asked to be considered for a school site. Mr. Scott and Mr. Clements briefed the Board on their site selection process which includes looking at maps of properties that are in or near the Priority Funding Area or Development District and considers the impacts of steep slopes, hydric soils, roadways, sewer connections and other criteria. This selection process takes time to complete. The proposed Mechanicsville School Site was in the development district in 2010, at which time it was rezoned to Rural Preservation District (RPD) and then placed in the Rural Legacy Area. St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) worked with the current landowner and have a contract with a feasibility study clause initiated in June/July. In August a letter from the County Administrator was sent to the SMCPS requesting to halt this project until further notification. On October 15th SMCPS received a letter from the Maryland Department of Planning stating that the proposed project must be submitted to the Maryland State Clearinghouse for review; this letter was distributed to the Board. SMCPS hopes to resume the feasibility study soon with permission from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County as it is ultimately a Commissioners of St. Mary's County decision to move forward with the purchase of the selected site.

Mr. Clements presented a draft site plan for the proposed school site in Mechanicsville which shows little disturbance to the forested lands and uses mostly existing cleared land. The site plans shows use for both a high school and middle school. The plan is to begin construction with the middle school and then as the children grow into the high school that construction will follow.

Representatives from the Board, Planning Commission, St. Mary's County Soil Conservation District, St. Mary's County Farm Bureau, and the Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust expressed their concerns over the placement of this proposed school site. SMCPS is also looking at 2 additional sites for the proposed school.

Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE) Program – The Board is concerned that there was not sufficient interest in the high schools this year for this program to begin when other schools in more urban areas (Southern High School and Gwynn Park High School) are at capacity for participation. The Interim Superintendent informed the Board that the CASE program would be implemented in the next school year.

Envirothon – Mr. Young updated the Board on the status of the Envirothon program. Due to the budgeting concerns from the teachers and the cut of the stipend for after school activities, the teacher involvement is greatly impacted. This in addition to the delayed roll-out of the CASE program sends a negative message to the agriculture community. The Interim Superintendent informed the Board that he would look into rectifying the situation with the Envirothon program funding.

Rural Legacy – Ms. Saez from the PTWLT updated that with using the services of RC&D they are moving forward with the purchase of the Schillinger property. Ms. Sasscer updated the Board that she has received word from the Navy that they would like to see the Rural Legacy Area expanded to include Webster Field. She has requested a map of their proposal and also

asked for assistance in determining priority of easements. Currently the Mattapany Rural Legacy Area is focusing on properties closest to Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

New Business

Hughesville Tobacco Warehouse – Susan McQuilken from the Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission (SMADC) gave a brief update that there is speculation that Charles County is planning to purchase the Hughesville Tobacco Warehouse Buildings. The Board would like assurance that the Commissioners of Charles County will still support the North St. Mary's County Farmers Market. SMADC has plans for an Agriculture Service Center to possibly house a slaughter facility and other agriculture infrastructure needs. SMADC is a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland and it cannot own land.

Sub-Committee Reports

Farmers Markets Sub-Committee

Members – Joseph Wood (Chairman), James Moore (Vice Chair), David Paulk, Edward Falta

The Home Grown Farm Market is at maximum occupancy for indoor vendors and is doing well this season.

The California Farmers Market is also doing well and has extended their hours into November. The North St. Mary's County Farmers Market is still faced with complaints about the parking problem. Funds for the farmer's market project have been allocated in the FY16 Capital Improvement Budget, however the Board is concerned that the selected location limits the growth of the market. A meeting with the vendors was held and they discussed creating an entity that would allow them to enter into agreements with the County to lease land once the market is moved. The vendors believed that moving to Hughesville would not be beneficial to their businesses and this would remove their presence from St. Mary's County. They were open to the idea of exploring additional sites to the "Triangle Property" and felt that that the property that splits Charles and St. Mary's Counties would be a potential option. The Board has extend an invitation to the County Administrator, Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, and the Director of Public Works and Transportation, George Erichsen, to their December meeting to discuss the County's site selection process and future plans for this market.

Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board

Members – James Spence (Chairman), James Moore (Vice Chair), Adam Dyson, David Paulk, Joseph Wood

The Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board met after the Board meeting and voted to approve a Tenant Lot Request for the Magnani Property and a Child's Lot Request for the Belvidere Farm Property.

Agricultural Reconciliation Committee

Members – James Moore (Chairman), Michael Sirk (Vice Chair), Phil Dorsey, Adam Dyson, & Jon Shenski

No updates at this time

Open Comment

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m., motioned by Mr. Wood and seconded by Mr. Spence. The next meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, December 11, 2014 at noon in the Conference Room of the Agriculture Services Center.