

# AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD

## MINUTES

**Thursday**

May 17, 2007 - 7:00 p.m.

County Administration Building, Conference Room B  
200 Grand River Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Port Huron, MI 48060

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Jim Reid called meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Present: Jim Reid, Chuck Kwasnik, Jim Hayes, Sue Sniegocki, Ken Langmesser

Support Staff: Dave Struck, Senior Planner

Excused: Dianna Seifert, Steve Simasko

Absent: Rick Mills, Terry Gill

**3. Citizens Wishing to be Heard**

None.

**4. Approval of April 19, 2007 Minutes**

Chuck Kwasnik stated that there was an error in the minutes, which state that Jim Reid called the meeting to order. However, Chuck called the April meeting to order since Jim Reid was not at the meeting. Chuck made a motion to accept the April 19 minutes with corrections, Jim Hayes seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.

**5. Communications**

Dave explained the various letters and memos that were included in the packet. Ken Langmesser made a motion to receive and file the communications, Jim Hayes seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.

**6. Financial Report**

April Report

a. Jim Reid asked that Metropolitan Planning Commission staff send letters to existing donors asking for renewals. He also asked the Board to consider other potential donors. Ken Langmesser stated that the Board should let contributors know about the MSU project and other activities. Ken asked Dave to print a copy out to send along with the letters.

b. Chuck Kwasnik made a motion to acknowledge receipt of the financial report, Ken Langmesser seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.

**7. Old Business**

a. Brockway Township Visit

Chuck Kwasnik gave his impression of the Brockway Township Planning Commission meeting on that took place on May 14. Chuck mentioned that he

thinks the Planning Commission will recommend the resolution of support to the Township Board. Jim Reid said he was able to get some farmers to attend. Travis Fahley, a farmer in Brockway Township, spoke up in favor of farmland preservation. Dave said that he thought the Township Planning Commission was positive and seemed to be interested. They asked some good questions and reiterated that they are in the process of updating the township master plan and that they was farmland preservation to be a part of it.

b. Fall Farm Tour Update

Dave told the board that he was contacted by Gromek Farms in Brockway Township and they are interested in participating in the Farm Tour this year. The Gromek's also suggested some other potential locations in the Brockway area that may be interested. Jim Hayes suggested that if there is already an expressed interest in that location, the Board should designate that area as the focus for this year's tour. Ken said he knows of some farmers in the southern part of the county that would do it as well. Dave asked if the Board wants to do two locations. The Board agreed that one focused location would be best. Two locations would spread the tour thin. Ken said that we need at least two livestock farms and a dairy farm. The Board agreed that the Farm Tour will be on October 13. Chuck Kwasnik made a motion to focus the 2007 Fall Farm Tour in the Brockway/Yale/Emmett area, Jim Hayes seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously. Following the motion, members said they would contact various farms in the focus area to fill out the tour stops.

c. Agricultural Preserve Boards of Michigan Contract

The Board discussed the contract for services and the by-laws sent by Scott Everett. The contract states that not more than \$2,500 is required. Chuck stated that with times being tough, the Board should only send \$1,500 to start in order to see what type of benefit the new organization can provide. Chuck Kwasnik made a motion to rescind a previous motion to give Agricultural Preserve Boards of Michigan \$2,500 and to instead give \$1,500, Jim Hayes seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.

d. St. Clair County Capital Improvement Program – Meeting Review

Jim Reid gave an overview of the CIP meeting, which he attended to answer any questions from the committee. Jim said the committee asked many good questions. There seemed to be a heightened interest from committee members in light of the state's focus on alternative fuels. However, there are still reservations due to a lack of dedicated funding at both the state and local levels.

e. Overview of MSU Urban Planning Project

Dave gave an overview of the student project and showed the Board the team's final PowerPoint presentation. He mentioned that the project has been nominated for a Michigan Association of Planning Student Project Award. He also mentioned that a lot of the analysis contained in the report

will be valuable as the county updates the Master Plan. Ken stated that the final document is impressive and it looks like the students did a great job. Jim Hayes agreed. Ken asked Dave to look into how much it would cost to reproduce the document and distribute to the townships. Dave said he would find out. Jim Reid suggested the Board send a thank you letter to each student. Jim Reid asked about the winning poster from last year's 4-H poster contest. Dave said he would still work on getting the poster incorporated into the Board's marketing. The Board discussed this year's 4-H fair and talked about a photo contest for agriculture in the county. All submitted photos could be used on the Website, the newsletter, and in the Master Plan. Ken suggested there be prizes for first, second, and third place. Ken Langmesser made a motion to contact 4-H to do a photo contest for agriculture in St. Clair County with a \$75 first prize, \$50 second prize, and a \$25 third prize, Sue Sniegocki seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.

## **8. New Business**

### **a. Revised Meeting Schedule**

Dave explained the proposed revisions to the meeting dates. Switching to meeting every other month would be easier on Board members, especially during the busy summer months. Jim Hayes made a motion to approve the proposed meeting schedule as presented, Ken Langmesser seconded, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.

### **b. International Day Parade – July 18**

Dave informed the Board that all the pertinent parade information was in their packets. The parade will be on July 18 and the application is due by June 27. The theme of the parade is "Celebrating our Past, Imagining our Future." Jim Reid said he could not get the cow again for the parade as it is being used at the Ag Expo on that date. Jim mentioned he is looking into a restored milk truck or an old tractor. Ken suggested an old John Deere and a new one, which would fit in with the theme. He also said a neat idea for the parade would be an old Port Huron thrasher. The members said they would keep thinking of potential parade ideas. Jim Reid suggested that perhaps Dianna could take care of the parade application, just as she did last year.

### **c. Fundraising Training Workshop – June 27**

Dave informed the Board of a fundraising training workshop being held in East Lansing on June 27. He mentioned that he should be able to attend as it could be valuable in generating new donations to the Ag Board. Jim Hayes noted the Website listed on the flyer and a short web-based session that highlighted some of what the workshop will discuss.

## **9. Other Business**

### **a. Staff Report**

Dave said that everything in his staff report was covered earlier in the meeting. He also pointed out the professional courtesy invoice for the GIS services the Metropolitan Planning Commission provided the MSU students.

b. Items for next Meeting

Ken mentioned that the forestry industry is trying to protect forest lands in much the same way that many agricultural preservation boards are seeking to protect farmland. He said that the forestry sector is trying to show its importance and convince the government it is under-funded. At the July meeting, the Board will talk more about the Fall Farm Tour and the next newsletter, among other items.

c. Newspaper Articles (for information only)

There was no discussion of the newspaper articles

**10. Adjournment**

Jim Hayes made a motion to adjourn; Chuck Kwasnik seconds; motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianna Seifert  
Secretary

Prepared by:  
David Struck, Senior Planner