

***AGRICULTURAL AND PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT
RIGHTS COMMITTEE MINUTES
October 22, 2018***

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural and Purchase of Development Rights Committee for Monday, October 22, 2018, was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman John Howe in the County Administration Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center.

Members Present: Jeff Adams, John Howe, Marty McClevey, Benjamin Rudasill, Chad Young

Members Absent: Robert Broxton and Joshua Pepper

Staff Present: Kathy Baker and Denise Knighting

Guests Present: Robin Long, Lester Long, Marshall Locklear, Vivienne Chiodo

1. Call to Order

Mr. Howe called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and asked Ms. Knighting to call role. With 5 members present Mr. Howe stated there was a quorum.

2. Public Presentations

Mr. Howe introduced Mr. Locklear.

Mr. Locklear stated he saw in the minutes mention of concern about bacteria at his market by Mr. McClevey.

Mr. Howe stated he didn't think it was specific to Mr. Locklear's market.

Mr. Locklear stated that's what the minutes said. He stated they turned in all the correct forms to Kathy and as of yesterday he has 15 items at his market from within 100 miles.

3. Approval of Minutes

September 24, 2018

Ms. Baker stated the audio from the last meeting malfunctioned and no sound was recorded. She stated the minutes were completed using a combination of Ms. Marr's notes and her own notes.

Mr. McClevey stated he would like a correction for lines 204, 205, and 206 regarding Mr. Locklear's bacteria. He stated he would like to correct those lines to state this, "Mr. McClevey mentioned concern over the possibility of an outbreak of bacteria. He stated if they didn't know where Mr. Locklear's products were really from, it would be difficult to determine the origin of the bacteria"

Mr. Adams made a motion to approve the minutes with Mr. McClevey's correction.

Mr. Young seconded the motion.

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The motion passed 5-0 (Mr. Broxton and Mr. Pepper were absent).

4. Staff Update

- Purchase of Development Rights Program Applications

Ms. Baker stated the Board of Supervisors authorized the PDR Committee to proceed with the application for matching funds to VDACS. She stated they have \$633,000 statewide this year even though they initially stated they would only have \$250,000. She stated last year there were 6 applicants so the funds were split six ways, and she is estimating it will be similar this year which would come out to roughly \$105,000 for each applicant. She stated they currently have \$544,000 in PDR funds that are not allocated for any other project. She stated they still have \$61,000 in VDACS funds from last year so if they received the \$105,000 that would give them about \$166,000 total of the matching portion. She stated they would need to look at the current pool of applicants and come back to the PDR committee after they know for sure the amount of matching funds they will receive from VDACS and talk about next steps.

Mr. Adams asked if there was a deadline for when they had to spend the \$61,000.

Ms. Baker replied they had two years from when they signed the agreements, which was January of 2018. She stated that money could also be added to another pot of matching funds but it gets a little convoluted when you try to use more than one source of matching funds. Ms. Baker stated the Board's Finance and Budget Committee recommended the financial policies for PDR be updated and they'll continue to place all rollback money to the PDR program but will remove the caveat that says "if there are year end funds with the County \$250,000 goes towards the PDR program." She stated they have had \$2.85 million from rollback since 2011, the lowest being \$66,000 in FY11 and the highest being \$690,000 in FY16. She stated the average from FY11-FY18 comes out to \$357,000 per year. She stated in FY18 they ended up with \$473,000 from rollback plus the additional \$250,000 in year end funds. Ms. Baker stated she mentioned at the last meeting they submitted the applications to the USDA for the Moore, Secrest/Harding, and the Harris properties. She stated she's hoping to get some feedback on those in November.

Ms. Baker asked the Committee if they wished to move their meetings to the Board chambers, because there is better more reliable audio recording equipment there.

Mr. Adams asked if that would require them to move the date or time of their meeting.

Ms. Baker replied it should not. She also stated that applicants or guests could come speak at the podium, and staff would sit up at the dais.

Mr. Adams stated it might feel strange at first but they could get used to it.

Mr. McClevey stated if it's helpful to the County they could do it.

Mr. Howe stated they used to meet there a long time ago.

The Committee gave Ms. Baker a consensus that they were okay with trying it out.

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Ms. Knighting asked if they wanted to start meeting there in November or wait until 2019.

The Committee replied they would start there in November.

5. New Business

- None

Mr. Adams stated that Soil and Water met on Friday and that there's been a big change. He stated that their Board requested Stafford County to pay the same amount to Soil and Water as Spotsylvania in their annual budget. Prior to this, King George was paying roughly \$53,000, Spotsylvania \$41,000, Fredericksburg \$10,000, and Stafford \$25,000. He stated it can be broken down in different ways depending on which way you want to look at it.

Mr. McClevey stated statistically Spotsylvania has 369 farms and Stafford has 215; Spotsylvania has 42,000 acres and Stafford has 15,000 acres; average farm size in Spotsylvania is 114 acres and in Stafford is 71 acres. He stated going by those statistics, it doesn't look proportionally right that Stafford should pay the same to Soil and Water as Spotsylvania.

Mr. Adams stated that it doesn't look right proportionally for King George either, and they pay the most.

Mr. Howe stated you have to keep in mind Soil and Water is more than just services to farmers. He stated there is a lack of statistical information regarding all the other recipients of Soil and Water service.

Mr. Adams stated it's hard to turn the educational aspect of Soil and Water into a statistic. He stated there's the new trend of VCAP which is all subdivision money.

Mr. McClevey stated Etta (Lucas) came to his farm; he got the impression they don't get a farm plan because they don't have any subsidies.

Mr. Howe stated in his opinion a farm plan would include a nutrient management plan even if you don't have cost share.

Mr. Adams stated you should only get a nutrient management plan if you're using nutrients. He stated if you don't have livestock, there are no nutrients to manage.

Mr. McClevey stated he did not receive district money for his fencing, so they could put their fence wherever they want.

Mr. Adams stated if it was their money you had to go by their rules and if it's your money you can go by your rules. He stated another one of their rules is that you can't start until they come out to survey and tell you to start.

6. Unfinished Business

- Farmers Market Regulations Regarding Vendors

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Mr. Howe stated they've received a number of suggestions. He stated Mr. McClevey provided extensive recommendations in June. He stated Mr. Pepper also provided some comments.

Ms. Baker stated they need to vote whether they want to make changes to the existing regulations that were dated October 2017 and if you so, what are those changes.

Mr. McClevey suggested they move with the old regulations prior to his proposed corrections.

Mr. Howe asked if there were any thoughts on Mr. Pepper's revisions on items 3 and 4 regarding non-produce items.

Mr. Adams stated he had beaten his head against the wall on this issue for long enough and he was not going to do it anymore.

Mr. McClevey stated he did not find the revisions to be necessary.

Mr. Howe stated non-produce items are addressed in the definition section.

Mr. Adams stated it was not the wording that was the issue, it was the implementation.

Mr. Rudasill stated if that was the case he could make furniture and sell it at the market.

Mr. Adams stated if you go to the three closest markets to that market, and those vendors don't participate in the other markets because of the rules, they probably shouldn't participate in this one either.

Mr. Howe asked if there was a motion to amend the rules in some fashion or a motion to retain the rules as written and approved in October 2017.

Mr. Rudasill made a motion to approve the rules and regulations unchanged from October 2017.

Mr. Young seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4 -1 (Mr. Adams voted no; Mr. Broxton and Mr. Pepper were absent).

- Purchase of Development Rights Program Policies

Ms. Baker stated she left it on the agenda to see if there were any additional thoughts or comments or items they wanted to see addressed.

Mr. Adams stated that John Snyder's property has a for-sale sign on it and he was one of their applicants.

Mr. McClevey stated he had thought about making a statement on REPI in the B2 area.

Ms. Baker replied she would take a look at that. She stated they aren't amending the criteria yet; this is just putting into motion any types of policies they might want to consider.

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Mr. Howe asked if it would be possible to have a draft of the policies at the next meeting.

Ms. Baker replied yes.

Mr. McClevey stated they put off the target areas, they were okay on the 50% financial policy, and we talked about the survey and appraisal costs.

Ms. Baker stated based on the discussion they had last month she will put those policies into more formal language and bring it back to the Committee.

Mr. McClevey stated it's difficult to look at these things as a Committee; maybe they could have a focus group at a different time and go through them all.

Mr. Adams stated he thinks a minimum score is a good idea; he just hasn't been able to come up with that point value.

Mr. Rudasill asked if they've had a lot of low scores.

Ms. Baker listed the scores they've received over the past years. She stated there may be a bigger range in scoring once they change how the properties are scored.

Mr. Howe stated it would be great to have more flexibility when looking at a pool of applicants and be able to say the Committee reserves the right to select the more outstanding applicants.

Ms. Baker stated they just got a new Farmland Coordinator at VDACS and she's reaching out to all the different localities. She stated she could reach out to her and see who has the active programs and see what their policies are.

Mr. Howe opened the floor for any other comments Committee members might have.

Mr. Adams stated he went to a soils class in Culpeper with Mr. McClevey. He stated VSU puts out a brochure that he would like to add on to Stafford's web page if possible.

Mr. McClevey agreed that the VSU workshops are very good and free of charge.

Ms. Baker stated you can invite people from those agencies to come speak with you.

Mr. Howe stated they could invite Etta to a meeting to describe the ins and outs of who can receive a farm plan.

Mr. Adams suggested they have both Etta and Lucy attend if they do that.

Ms. Baker stated she would reach out to them and try to find a good date for that in 2019.

7. Next Meeting

- November 26, 2018

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Mr. Howe stated their next meeting would be in the Board Chambers.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Howe declared the meeting adjourned at 7:51pm.