



Thursday, October 20, 2016

8:00 PM

AAC Minutes

1. Call to order in accordance with the Sunshine Law provision.
2. Present: A. Puchalek, G. Randolph, C. Feibel, Chairman B. Puskas, Councilman Chase, M. Healey, F. Varacalli
Absent: F. Hasner
3. Approval of the September 22, 2016 meeting minutes
C. Blumig Abstain C. Feibel made a motion to approve the September 22 meeting minutes. G. Randolph seconded the motion. All members in favor. C. Blumig abstained as she as not in attendance. Motion passed.
4. Financial Report dated 9-15-16 handed out at meeting. The OSTF balance is approximately \$ 12.5M. The O&E yearly budget with debt service payments is approx. \$3.5M. The yearly open space tax collects approximately \$4.5M. The OSTF built a reserve of \$17M at the high a couple years ago. Chairman Puskas reviewed the report and states his concerns that the past four years shows that the OSTF balance decreased and no money was transferred into the reserve. His concerns are that he is worried at the pace of spending and wants to make sure Council is aware and make sure they are managing the OSTF reserve conservatively. F. Varacalli explained Council has moved forward on open space & farmland acquisition projects, recreation improvements to existing parks and new park development projects, historic home improvements and therefore the fund has decreased in the past four years.
5. Meeting opened to the public for comment
No public was present therefore the meeting was not opened to the public.
6. New Business
 - a. Comprehensive Farmland Plan Draft

Mark Healey, Township Planner, presented an overview of the draft plan included the main goals and objectives and reviewed the different sections of the plan. The Committee discussed criteria for farms that would be preserved through the Municipal Direct Easement program. The total cost of the developments rights would be paid by the Township with no funding from the County or State. The Committee felt that criteria should meet minimum criteria such as the farm is developable. The Committee felt that each application would be reviewed individually. Committee members also provided feedback on projected costs tables.

7. Old Business

- a. Increase awareness about Agriculture in Franklin Township
 - i. Township Agriculture Directory – a map of the twp. with the farms highlighted on the map will be available along with the directory. The directory will be featured in the Spring Franklin Twp. newsletter which is scheduled to be delivered in early April.
 - ii. Farmer’s Market – Over 400 surveys were filled out at Franklin Day and on the twp. website online survey. Over 99% of responders wanted a weekly Twp. sponsored farmers market in the spring and summer months. The Committee made a recommendation to form a subcommittee to plan the details of the farmer’s market. The Committee will have Twp. staff, Councilman Chase, A. Puchalek and C. Blumig as the farmer representatives on the Committee. The first meeting will take place in November. F. Varacalli to coordinate the meeting and Committee. The goal of the Committee is to coordinate a farmer’s market for the Spring of 2017.
 - iii. Township Agriculture Day, 2017 planning, Franklin Twp. Event Franklin Day - discussion that Agriculture needs to be represented at Franklin Day 2017. Represented by the Township and by each individual farmers that wishes to participate in the event. F. Varacalli to work with Franklin Day organizers to ensure an agriculture element is included for 2017. This discussion and updates to remain on future Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting agendas.
- b. Agriculture leases - F. Varacalli handed out copies of Monmouth County use and occupancy agreements for farmland. The County does not use a lease agreement but rather a use and occupancy

agreement and it is based on price. Highest bidder per acre. There is no pre certification of bidders. The Committee requested to review current leases again before those leases are up for renewal/bidding in Feb. 2017.

- c. Farm Outreach letters - F. Varacalli is updating the letter which will be mailed out to targeted farm owners once completed.
8. Executive Session to discuss possible property purchases and negotiations. The Committee did not need to enter into Executive Session.
 9. C. Blumig made a motion to adjourn the meeting. C. Febiel seconded the motion. All members in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.



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AAC Agenda

Executive Session

1. Updates on potential and pending real estate land acquisitions/negotiations