



Thursday, January 19, 2017

8:00 PM

AAC Minutes

1. Call to order in accordance with the Sunshine Law provision.
Present: Bob Puskas, Craig Febiel, Cathy Blumig, Al Puchalek
Absent: Frank Hasner, Councilman Chase
2. Reorganization of the Meeting – F. Varacalli accepted nominations for Chair. C. Blumig nominated B. Puskas as Chair. No other nominations were proposed. All members were in favor. B. Puskas named Chair. Chair B. Puskas asked for nominations for Vice Chair. C. Feibel nominated C Blumig. There were no other nominations. All in favor.
3. 2017 Meeting dates 3rd Thursday 8pm. C. Blumig can not attend the Oct. and Nov. meetings.
4. Approval of the November 17, 2016 meeting minutes. C. Feibel made a motion to approve the November 17, 2016 minutes. A. Puchalek seconded the motion. C. Blumig abstained. All members in favor. Motion approved.
5. F. Varacalli provided a copy of the draft OSTF 2017 Budget.
6. As there was not public present the meeting was not opened to the public.
7. New Business
No new business
8. Old Business
 - a. Township Farmers Market
A Franklin Township Farmers' Market Committee was formed from a recommendation made at the October 20, 2016 Agriculture Advisory Committee to discuss logistics. The first Committee meeting was held on November 3, 2016. Logistical issues were discussed with recommendations on how to organize and run the market. The Committee understands that alternate locations in the Hamilton Street business area were proposed by other Twp. Committee members as a result of a Franklin Reporter article that covered the Farmers' Market discussion at the October 20, 2016 Agriculture

Advisory Committee meeting. The Agriculture Advisory Committee members point out that a Farmers' Market was located for a couple years in two different locations on Hamilton Street years ago. Those markets were unsuccessful. The visibility of the location at the Municipal Complex is the main reasons they feel the market would be more successful at the Municipal Complex. The Agriculture Committee Members and Member of the Farmers' Market Committee, of who are farmers that would participate in the farmers' market and who know other interested farmers in town would only be interested in participating at the Municipal Complex Farmers' Market.

The Committee also stresses that time is of the essence as farmers need to plan ahead now if they are to participate in a market this season. A decision needs to be made as soon as possible as the planning was halted in November and three months of planning has been lost.

C. Blumig made a motion that the Township proceed with the Franklin Township Farmers' Market for the 2017 season located at the Township Municipal Complex grounds in the field on the corner of DeMott Lane and Amwell Road. An alternate location was recommended in case of inclement weather, the parking lot behind Villager's Theater. A. Puchalek seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Motion passed.

b. Farm Leases

F. Varcalli updated the Committee on the farmland up for lease by the Twp. The bid documents will available in late January. Auction to held in February. The Committee requested that F. Varcalli inquire of the Twp. Attorney if there can be a live auction and a pre -qualification for bidders. And if Franklin Twp. Farmers could be given priority for bidding on the land first.

The Committee discussed options for the Gunther parcel on S. Middlebush Road. 13 tillable acres will go out for lease. The Committee made a recommendation that the land that was not farmed by the previous tenant not be leased out for farming and to have the trees that have grown to be mowed down and then have it mowed once or twice a year to allow successional habitat develop on the site. The cost to pull out the tree stumps and then fill the holes will be cost prohibitive. The tree stumps if pulled out may also ruin the field drain tiles.

- b. Township Agriculture Day, 2017 planning, Franklin Twp. Event
Franklin Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 23. The Committee should start thinking of ways to include Franklin farmers.
- c. Farm Outreach letters – follow up

F. Varacalli, B. Puskas and A. Puhalek met with a landowner meeting to discuss farmland preservation of his farm.

F. Varacalli received two other inquires and continues to reach out to the owners.

9. Executive Session to discuss possible property purchases and negotiations.

C. Blumig made a motion to enter into Executive session. C. Feibel seconded the motion. All members in favor. Motion passed.

C. Blumig made a motion to exit Executive session. C. Feibel seconded the motion. All members in favor. Motion passed.

10. Adjournment

A. Puchalek made a motion to adjourn. C. Blumig seconded the motion. All members in favor. Motion adjourned at 10:00pm.