



**MEETING MINUTES**  
**VIRTUAL AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

January 6, 2022  
8:00PM

WebEx Meeting ID:

<https://franklintwpnj.webex.com/franklintwpnj/onstage/g.php?MTID=e9cbb422a5a14f5dcf97fcb3581d36ee6>

Password: FranklinAAC

Audio Information: (408) 418-9388

Access Code: 179 956 0726

**PRESENT**

Bob Puskas, Chair  
Cathy Blumig, Vice-Chair  
Al Puchalek  
Craig Feibel  
Michael Peacos  
Councilmember Ed Potosnak – Liaison to Franklin Township Council

**CALL TO ORDER IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6)**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Puskas at 8:06pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*The meeting will be opened to the Public to provide time for comments and/or questions related to the agenda*  
As there were no members of the Public present, Public Comment was not heard.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Al Puchalek made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 2, 2021, which was seconded by Michael Peacos. All agreed and the motion carried.

**ANNUAL REORGANIZATION OF THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Cathy Blumig nominated Bob Puskas as Chair of the Franklin Township AAC for 2022. The nomination was seconded by Al Puchalek. Hearing no other nominations, this portion of the meeting was closed. All agreed and the motion carried. Congratulations to Chairman Bob Puskas!

Rik Johnson nominated Cathy Blumig as Vice-Chair of the Franklin Township AAC for 2022. The nomination was seconded by Bob Puskas. Hearing no other nominations, this portion of the meeting was closed. All agreed and the motion carried. Congratulations to Vice-Chairwoman Cathy Blumig!

Tara Kenyon introduced our new Liaison to the Franklin Township Council, Councilmember Ed Potosnak. Councilmember Potosnak was recently elected and is also serving as the Liaison to the Open Space Advisory Committee. He is the Executive Director of the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters and was instrumental in the *New Jersey Keep It Green Campaign*, which established a stable source of funding for farmland, open space, and historic preservation using the existing Corporate Business Tax.

## NEW BUSINESS

### ***Goals and Potential Projects for 2022***

The Committee discussed its goals and potential projects for 2022, which include:

- Get more landowner interest in the program – this can be achieved by holding an in-person workshop or sending out information
- Work with at least one of the landowners of larger Targeted Farms, and get property appraised.
- Continue to follow pertinent legislation and submit feedback to the SADC

### ***Letters to Landowners of Targeted Farms***

Michael Peacos had emailed Tara Kenyon earlier in the month to recommend methods to gain landowner interest in farmland preservation. Mr. Peacos felt that sending out letters to the landowners of Targeted Farms would be a good starting point.

The Committee agreed that solicitation of landowner interest is needed but would prefer to hold an in-person meeting or have direct in-person meeting with Targeted Farm landowners, as this seems to be more effective. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, the Committee is unsure if in-person meetings will be allowable in the near future. The Committee agreed to discuss this again in April/May when we will have better information about the availability for in-person meetings. If this is still not a possibility, the solicitation can be held virtually or sent via mail and social media postings.

### ***Farm Leases Through New Jersey Fish and Game***

Bob Puskas updated the AAC that after the Statehouse Commission approved the bids for leases of State-owned farmlands, it was decided that no neocides could be applied on the property. Additionally, the contracts were only provided to potential leases one week in advance of the due date. Bob recommends that we keep an eye on this process, and if necessary, speak with our Township Council and legislators to address these undue hardships for farmers.

## OLD BUSINESS

### ***Submittal of Annual Municipal PIG Grant Application***

Tara Kenyon reported that the Annual Municipal PIG Application was submitted to the SADC on December 15, 2021. This application is required annually and allows the Township to have access to cost-share funding through the State's Farmland Preservation Program.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was not held during the January 2022 meeting.

## ADJOURNMENT

Cathy Blumig made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Al Puchalek. All agreed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

**The next AAC meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2022, at 8:00pm.**