

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019 · 8:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot	Rick Stuchal	Commissioner Kim Geyer
Bill Duncan	John Allen	
Luke Fritz	Alvin Vogel	
Rob Burr	Larry Baumgartel	
Eugene Bergbigler		
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:15pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, January 24, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Appointment of 2019 Officers:

* Chairman Ken Moniot asked if the board would like to keep the current officers for 2019 or make changes. There was a motion by Luke Fritz to keep the current officers with a second by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was carried. Officers for 2019 will be:

- Ken Moniot, Chairman
- Bill Duncan, Vice-Chairman
- Larry Baumgartel, Treasurer
- Rob Burr, Secretary

2. Public Comment:

* Commissioner Geyer reported that the Board of Butler County Commissioners passed a Resolution at the January 23rd public meeting which commits 25% of the county's yearly marcellus shale legacy funding to the county's agricultural preservation program. Another 25% has been committed to the Butler County Conservation District and 50% is committed to Butler County Parks and Recreation. Funds will be dedicated to project funding. Although the amount will fluctuate from year to year depending on what the county receives, the amount for agricultural preservation is roughly \$40,000 (currently) and this in addition to the county's normal allocation. A copy of the Resolution will be forwarded to the Agricultural Land Preservation Board once it is signed by the Commissioners.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

* With a call for a motion from Chairman Ken Moniot, Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan made a motion that the December meeting minutes be approved as corrected. There was a second from Secretary Rob Burr. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. Old Business:

* King Farm – Sheryl reported that all information for State Board approval has been submitted and she is waiting to hear back from them if any clarification is needed. Once she receives the go-ahead, letters will be sent to all adjacent landowners as required by the state. There was a motion by Secretary Rob Burr to approve the appraisal costs of \$8,145.25 for Land Surveyors with a second by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

* Graham Farm – Mr. Graham called Sheryl on Jan. 23rd to let her know that he can't find an appraiser to complete his appraisal in time for the 120 day deadline and to see what will happen next. Sheryl advised him to be at the board meeting to discuss with the members. Since Mr. Graham was not in attendance, the board discussed the fact that there is really no exact direction in this instance and that the board's original offer per their appraisal stands. Chairman Moniot called for a motion and the motion was made by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan to follow up with Mr. Graham to see if they will accept the county board's original offer per Clint Champagne's appraisal, if the Grahams cannot have an appraisal completed in time. There was a second from Secretary Rob Burr. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

* The McGowan, Kennedy, Jordan and Allen farms were all closed in December. There was a motion by Luke Fritz to approve the appraisal costs from Champagne Appraisals for \$2,000 for the Allen Farm. There was a second by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan, all were in favor and the motion was approved.

* Sheryl reported that as listed in her report that had been sent out, Doug Wolfgang said the board can use the new scoring system as long as the state finds no problems. It will then be approved in February retroactively to the beginning of the year.

* Vice-Chairman Duncan discussed the progress of the Clinton Township farm preservation program and that Doug Wolfgang will speak at a dinner being held on the 31st about creating a township program. He has also spoken to Dan Zimmerman in Lancaster County to discuss any agreements between the county and township. There are a lot of details that still need to be explored on how the program will operate in relation to the county such as how appraisals will be paid for, etc. Clinton Township is using 2019 as a "development" year and will keep the board updated.

4. New Business:

* The 2019 application round was discussed and Sheryl handed out a list of everyone in the round to date. Since there will only be \$135,000+ remaining in 2018, it will be rolled over into the 2019 budget for the 2019 application round. Sheryl will be discussing the 2019 applications with Andy Gaver of NRCS to assure that Conservation Plans are being implemented, since this is one of the criteria for scoring.

ADJOURN

Chairman Moniot requested a motion to adjourn at about 8:00pm. The motion was made by Luke Fritz with a second by Vice-Chairman Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, February 28, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building
(meeting room)
625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001**

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2019 – 8:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot		Commissioner Kim Geyer
Bill Duncan		
Luke Fritz		
Rob Burr		
Eugene Bergbigler		
Rick Stuchal		
John Allen		
Alvin Vogel		
Larry Baumgartel		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, February 28, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

* Commissioner Geyer reported that the Board of Butler County Commissioners received word and is very pleased that Butler County will have over one million dollars to spend on agricultural preservation for 2019.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

* With a call for a motion from Chairman Ken Moniot, Rick Stuchal made a motion that the January meeting minutes be approved as written. There was a second from Vice Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Old Business:

* King Farm – Sheryl reported that the King farm has been approved by the state and is just waiting for paperwork to be completed and checks to arrive for closing, which should happen around late May.

* Graham Farm – Sheryl announced that Mr. Graham stopped in on February 26 and handed in a note stating that he was withdrawing from the program for this year. He could not have his appraisal completed by the deadline of February 27. After discussion and noting that the #2 farm from 2018 will not use up all the money that needs to be encumbered by the end of the year, Luke Fritz made a motion with a second by Larry Baumgartel that Sheryl should begin work on the #2 (Kennedy) and #3

(Cooper) farms from 2018. Sheryl will contact them for their appraisal deposits. In case there are any problems with either of these farms, there was a motion by Vice Chairman Bill Duncan with a second by Luke Fritz that the board also approve moving forward with the #4 (Taggart) 2018 farm if needed.

* Site visits for the new applicants in the 2019 round will be visited by a subcommittee of members on Wednesday and Thursday, March 6 and 7. Sheryl will contact all farms and coordinate the visits with the members.

*Sheryl discussed the new scoring with Doug Wolfgang who was going to try and have this approved at the February State Board meeting. He said he did not see any problems and that the state board could approve the changes retroactively. It did not make it on to the state meeting agenda, however. Rick Stuchal made a motion to use the new scoring system for 2019 with a second by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

*Sheryl contacted Andy Gaver at NRCS and per the Ag Board's request, he has made comments on each 2019 applicant's Conservation Plan which can be used for scoring the "stewardship of the land / use of conservation and best management practices" question.

*Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan reported that Clinton Township is working on their ordinance regarding a township ag. preservation program, with a goal of having this completed by August.

4. New Business:

* Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan discussed the possibility of inviting a representative of Western Pa. Conservancy to discuss any initiatives that the Butler County Ag Preservation Board might be able to partner on with them. Sheryl will contact them and invite the appropriate representative to the next meeting on March 28.

*Two donation / \$1.00 bargain sale farms are being proposed from Greenspace Land. They are 35 and 36 acres each. The Conservation Plans are being completed by NRCS and will be submitted. Treasurer Larry Baumgartel made a motion to accept both of them pending all guidelines for acceptance are met. There was a second by Secretary Rob Burr. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

*Sheryl discussed a call she received from Jim Foertsch regarding their preserved farm and that a lot line revision had been completed on an adjoining lot that added preserved acreage. It looks as though the deed does not have the correct acreage and that a corrective deed will need to be filed. The board asked Sheryl will get in touch with them to resolve.

*The board discussed raising the deposit for appraisals to meet current costs. Luke Fritz made a motion to raise the deposit on appraisals to \$2,500 beginning in January 2020 and with the 2020 applicants. He added to this motion that there now, effective immediately, be a three year waiting period for any applicant who withdraws from the preservation program after the appraisal process has begun. There was a second made by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

ADJOURN

Chairman Moniot requested a motion to adjourn at about 8:15pm. The motion was made by Secretary Rob Burr with a second by Alvin Vogel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, March 28, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building
(meeting room)
625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001**

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot	Alvin Vogel	Commissioner Kim Geyer
Bill Duncan		
Luke Fritz		
Rob Burr		
Eugene Bergbigler		
Rick Stuchal		
John Allen		
Larry Baumgartel		
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, February 28, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

* Commissioner Geyer reported that she has just returned from the County Commissioners Association of Pa. (CCAP) conference and had very informative meetings with various public officials including representatives of DEP and the Dept. of Agriculture. The new Pennsylvania Farm Bill being proposed by the Governor was discussed with the Board and organic farming is being encouraged under the proposal. Also composting, including large-scale composting, is being encouraged. There are two proposals within the bill regarding ag. preservation including a tax break for selling preserved farms to a qualified new farmer and permitting subdivision of preserved farms. Details have not yet been released.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

* With a call for a motion from Chairman Ken Moniot, Rick Stuchal made a motion that the February meeting minutes as amended be approved. There was a second from Vice Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Old Business:

* Sheryl reported that the Cooper farm appraisal is underway but that she has not yet received the appraisal deposit from the Kennedy farm. Per the suggestion of the board, she will contact them again as a reminder. Appraiser Clint Champagne notified Sheryl that he can have each appraisal completed within eight weeks from notification to begin. The board should have the Cooper appraisal completed by the May meeting.

* The Board discussed the 2019 application round ranking. Sheryl spoke with Doug Wolfgang and he informed her that the State Board did approve the new ranking system at their February meeting so it could be used for the 2019 round. Based on how the new applicants whose farms were visited and ranked by the County Board were completed, all farms that had applied previously were re-ranked under the new system. Chairman Moniot discussed and went through all the rankings with the Board.

- There was a motion by John Allen with a second by Secretary Rob Burr that the first two farms (Thurber and McGowan) be contacted and started through the preservation process. All were in favor and the motion was passed. Per the Board's request, Sheryl will contact Andy Gaver at NRCS to see if either farm would qualify for Federal funding, which wouldn't be available until next year since we don't have signed Agreements of Sale yet.

* When Sheryl spoke with Mr. Wolfgang, he was reviewing the Butler County Guidelines for recertification and the changes that had been proposed. He will place this on the April State Board meeting agenda but found one item that will need to be changed. In the section regarding \$1.00 bargain sales, the county permits farms to be outside of an agricultural security area which is in contrast to state requirements so this will need to be removed.

- Vice-Chairman Duncan made the motion to remove the clause from the Butler County Guidelines which permits \$1.00 bargain sale farms from being outside of an agricultural security area. There was a second from Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved. Sheryl will notify the state that this clause has been removed.

* Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan discussed the proposed Clinton Township ag preservation program and stated that the Clinton Township Supervisors may have some draft ordinance language to review for their April meeting. Sheryl has been in touch with the county solicitor regarding a cooperation agreement with the township. Sheryl also mentioned that the county guidelines will need to be changed in order to accommodate this program.

4. New Business:

* The proposed Pa. Farm Bill was previously discussed and there was no other new business.

ADJOURN

Chairman Moniot requested a motion to adjourn at about 8:00pm. The motion was made by Vice-Chairman Duncan with a second by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, April 25, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building**

(meeting room)

625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot	Alvin Vogel	
Bill Duncan	John Allen	
Rob Burr	Luke Fritz	
Rick Stuchal		
Eugene Bergbigler		
Larry Baumgartel		
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, April 26, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

* There was no public comment.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

* With a call for a motion from Chairman Ken Moniot, Treasurer Larry Baumgartel made a motion that the March meeting minutes as amended be approved. There was a second from Vice Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Old Business:

* Sheryl reported that she received a call earlier in the day from Champagne Appraisals that the Cooper appraisal would not be completed for this month's meeting. Clint explained that this farm is very large and in a unique area and he had trouble finding comparables that could be used that would be accepted by the state. He said that he could have it done for the May meeting along with the Kennedy appraisal.

* Sheryl has sent letters asking for the deposit checks from both of the 2019 farms – Thurber and McGowan. Andy Gaver at NRCS said that both farms might qualify for federal funding so Sheryl spoke to the State Ag Preservation office. They said to go ahead with the normal process and if these homeowners are interested in participating, we can apply next spring for the federal funding through their office. If not approved, then the farms are preserved through the normal process using state and county funding. If approved, the county will receive half of the funding used to preserve the farm – this

is then held by the state for Butler County and can be used within a couple of years to preserve additional farms. In the letters sent to Thurber and McGowan, both the regular state deed plus the federal deed (which is a bit more restrictive) were sent and they were asked to review both and let us know if they would participate in the federal program. Sheryl has not heard back from either farm yet.

* Doug Wolfgang emailed Sheryl and let her know that the Butler County Ag Preservation Program was recertified at the state board meeting on April 11 for another seven years and that the state board also approved the proposed changes to the program. Sheryl updated the guidelines and gave everyone a copy for review. Rick Stuchal suggested and everyone agreed that the board will look over everything before the May meeting and then they could be formally approved if nothing needs to be corrected.

* Sheryl sent Clint Township's proposed ordinance changes regarding their township preservation program to the county solicitor for review but hasn't heard back yet.

4. New Business:

* Board members received a Preserved Farm reference Sheet that was developed to send out to all preserved farms in the county. The state reviewed everything and made a couple of suggestions which were incorporated. The county solicitor also reviewed and added the disclaimer. This will also be sent to all applicants just to give them a better idea of how the program operates and what they will be required to adhere to if they are chosen for easement purchase.

* Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan mentioned the possible visit by Ann Sand of the Western Pa. Conservancy at the May meeting. Sheryl will send an email to remind her (she had emailed that she could possibly attend the May meeting). He suggested that the county board prepare a presentation for Ann to show the farms we would like to work on (farms further down the list that we haven't been able to preserve) and see if WPC can come up with additional funding. A former representative of WPC had mentioned that they might be able to raise additional funds for preserving farms in Butler County. Perhaps that funding could be used with the county match to secure additional funding from the state in 2020. Sheryl will prepare some details on the farms that aren't currently "in the works" to give WPC a clearer picture of the location, size and types of farms we have on the ranking list.

* There was discussion on lot line revisions, subdivisions, etc. and what constitutes a violation of the deed of easement. Sheryl will contact the state and get some clarification on this.

ADJOURN

Chairman Moniot requested a motion to adjourn at about 7:45pm. The motion was made by Vice-Chairman Duncan with a second by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, May 23 (week before Memorial Day), **7:00pm** at the
Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot		Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer
Bill Duncan		
Rob Burr		
Rick Stuchal		
Eugene Bergbigler		
Larry Baumgartel		
Luke Fritz		
Alvin Vogel		
John Allen		
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, May 23, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

* There was no public comment.

2. Commissioner's Office Report

*Commissioner Geyer reported that the Board of Commissioners attended a Dairy Roundtable in Grove City hosted by the Center for Dairy Excellence. There are 54 community gardens and people are in the process of planting, following a draft horse plowing demonstration with final plowing by tractors. Commissioner Geyer also recently attended the Succop Conservancy's educational barn. Butler County is the only county with two properties owned by the Audubon Society.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

* With a call for a motion from Chairman Ken Moniot, Treasurer Larry Baumgartel made a motion that the April meeting minutes be approved. There was a second from Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Old Business:

* Sheryl updated the board on the Kennedy and Cooper farms and had both appraisal reports at the meeting for board review. After review and discussion, Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan made a motion to accept and offer to each farm:

1. Kennedy appraisal at \$3,590 per acre; and
2. Cooper appraisal at \$2,512 per acre.

There was a second by Secretary Rob Burr. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

* Sheryl reported that the Thurber farm appraisal is underway and that the McGowan appraisal deposit had been sent by the owners to the state and is on its way back to the county. Once received, Sheryl will let Clint Champagne know that he can begin this appraisal.

* The two Greenspace Land, Inc. farms that are being "donated" as \$1.00 bargain sales are on the Commissioner's agenda for May 29. Once they are approved for acceptance, Sheryl will have the appraisals completed.

* The board discussed the changes to the guidelines and there were a couple of mistakes that need to be corrected. On page 7, Vice-Chairman Duncan mentioned that the word "maintain" needs to be added to replace "implement" under Conservation Plan (a). He also discussed board meetings on page 16 and the group decided that "monthly" needs to be added in case meetings days need to be changed from year to year. Rick Stuchal discussed page 49 and that "District" (referring to the Conservation District) needs to be removed. Sheryl will make those changes and provide updated pages to the board.

* Vice-Chairman Duncan stated that he will be meeting with the Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, May 28 to discuss the proposed Clinton Township Ag Preservation program and how this will operate in conjunction with the county program.

4. New Business:

* John Allen discussed multi-generational farms that apply for the program and the role of the Ag Preservation Board might have regarding this if possible. Commissioner Geyer suggested that perhaps Doug Wolfgang could be invited back to discuss this.

* Since Ann Sand from Western Pa. Conservancy was not able to attend the meeting, Treasurer Larry Baumgartel made a motion to invite her back with a second from Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved. Sheryl will invite her.

ADJOURN

Chairman Moniot requested a motion to adjourn at about 8:10pm. The motion was made by Luke Fritz with a second by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, June 27, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001**

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING NOTES (NO QUORUM)

**BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD**

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, ^{JUNE 27}~~MAY 23~~, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot	Rob Burr	Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer
Bill Duncan	Rick Stuchal	Kathy Allen (Clinton Twp. Supervisor)
Larry Baumgartel	Luke Fritz	
Alvin Vogel	Eugene Bergbigler	
	John Allen	
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, May 23, 2019. A quorum was not present and no official business was conducted.

1. General Discussion

- The Cooper and Kennedy farms have both accepted the Board's offer of purchase. Both are currently being surveyed by Land Surveyors. The Coopers have signed their "Agreement of Sale" (one of the things needed to encumber the 2018 funds by the end of this year) and the Kennedy AOS will be sent tomorrow for their signature. Jim Coulter is also beginning the title work which is also needed to encumber funds.

- The Greenspace Land Inc. donation farms will also be sent an Agreement of Sale. They are also being appraised at this time.

- The Thurber and McGowan farms are being appraised and Clint Champagne said that both appraisals will be completed for the Ag Preservation Board's July meeting so that offers can be considered.

- The proposed Clinton Township Preservation program was discussed and the county, after having several questions answered about how the township intends to operate the program, is having a cooperation agreement between the Board of Butler County Commissioners and Clinton Township drawn up for approval and signature. Sheryl has spoken with Doug Wolfgang and he has sent some suggested wording that the Ag Preservation Board should add to the county guidelines. This will be discussed at the July meeting and Sheryl will send this to all board members with the meeting notes.

This change to the county guidelines will require State Board approval, so if the Butler County Ag Board votes on this in July, we can send it to the state for their review at their August 22 meeting.

- There was discussion on having a subcommittee of ag board members meet with Ann Sand and the head of Western Pa. Conservancy to discuss possible cooperative projects, since this would have to go back to their board for decision anyway. This could be done during the day, either by meeting here in Butler County or at their offices in Pittsburgh. Sheryl will set this up. If any other board member would like to be involved in this meeting, please let Sheryl know.

- There was discussion on House Bill 370 which has passed and is on the way to the Governor's desk for signature. (Copy enclosed for review.)

Next Meeting:

Thursday, July 25, 7:00pm at the

Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot		Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer
Bill Duncan		
Larry Baumgartel		
Alvin Vogel		
Rob Burr		
Rick Stuchal		
Luke Fritz		
Eugene Bergbigler		
John Allen		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, July 25, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the May meeting minutes (there was no quorum in June). Rick Stuchal made a motion to approve the May meeting minutes. There was a second by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Commissioner's Report

- Commissioner Geyer reported that she met with Congressman GT Thompson who is running for Chairman of the House Ag Committee. He is interested in restoring the rural economy, broadband, and will stay in touch with Commissioner Geyer. Anyone with ideas they would like to pass along to the Congressman should get in touch with her. The Board of Commissioners, Sheryl and Mark Gordon met with local company American Glass Research in in a very informative meeting to discuss glass and plastics recycling. The Board of Commissioners has also been meeting with various groups around the county on water issues.

- The Conservation District has requested a Letter of Support from the Agricultural Preservation Board in support of the nomination of the Thiele Farm for the Leopold Conservation Award from the Sand County Foundation. It recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation by private landowners and provides a platform by which agricultural leaders are recognized as conservation ambassadors to citizens outside of agriculture. John Allen made a motion to write this letter on behalf of the Ag Preservation Board. There was a second by Alvin Vogel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. Old Business

- Sheryl said that she spoke with Cheryl Hughes and the Cooper and Kennedy surveys were delayed because of an injury to her crew chief. She expects both to be started within the next couple of weeks.

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve and pay the following invoices:

- Cooper Farm appraisal - \$2,500
- Kennedy Farm appraisal - \$2,500
- King Farm title and closing costs - \$3,809.91
- Thurber Farm appraisal - \$2,500
- McGowan Farm appraisal - \$2,500
- Greenspace Land, Inc. (parcel #26) appraisal - \$2,500
- Greenspace Land, Inc. (parcel #16A) appraisal - \$2,500

The motion was made by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel with a second by Eugene Bergbigler. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- The Thurber and McGowan farm appraisals completed by Champagne Appraisal Services were presented for consideration by the board. Easement purchase values were as follows:

- Thurber Farm - \$1,656 per acre
- McGowan Farm - \$7,539 per acre

A motion was made by Secretary Rob Burr to make an offer to each owner for this appraised purchase value. There was second from Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- The proposed Clinton Township Ag Preservation Program was discussed. Vice-Chairman Duncan stated that the township will hold a hearing on August 24 with hopeful approval later that evening. He stated that the township intends to donate the entire amount of the cost of the easement in order for a purchase of a Clinton Township farm to take place through the county program in anything other than descending order of the farmland ranking. Commissioner Geyer stated that this will set the standard for all municipalities if they should choose to begin their own preservation program. Sheryl has a draft of this wording completed (as recommended by the state) and it is being reviewed by the county solicitor for inclusion in the county guidelines. Sheryl spoke with P.D.A. Ag. Preservation Secretary Doug Wolfgang and this change will need to be approved by the State Board. A motion was made by Rick Stuchal to make the state-recommended changes to the guidelines including wording that a municipality shall donate all of the cost for an easement purchase, pending review and approval

by the county solicitor. There was a second by Eugene Bergbigler. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

****NOTE: This change in the guidelines will be sent out to all board members prior to the August meeting for review.***

- Sheryl mentioned that a meeting at Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's office in Pittsburgh has been set for Friday, August 2 at 9:30am. All board members are invited, and Commissioner Geyer and Chief of Economic Development & Planning Mark Gordon have also been invited. In attendance will also be CEO Tom Saunders and Shaun Fenlon, Vice President of Land Conservation for the Conservancy. Tentatively – Bill, John, Alvin and Rick will attend from the Butler County Ag Board. Sheryl will also attend and Commissioner Geyer will try to attend. If anyone else would like to go, please let Sheryl know a couple of days ahead of time.

- House Bill 370 which was recently signed into law and permits the subdivision of the existing residence after easement purchase was discussed, with comments read that Sheryl had received from other counties as to why this was needed.

5. New Business

- There was no new business.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Moniot called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion made by Luke Fritz with a second by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, August 22, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001**

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot	Alvin Vogel	Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer
Bill Duncan	Luke Fritz	
Rob Burr	Larry Baumgartel	
John Allen		
Rick Stuchal		
Eugene Bergbigler		
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, August 22, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the July meeting minutes. Rick Stuchal made a motion to approve the July meeting minutes. There was a second by Secretary Rob Burr. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. Commissioner’s Report

- Commissioner Geyer reported that she met with the Lancaster County Commissioners and discussed farmland preservation in Lancaster. Their program operates through a land trust and that they borrowed \$1 million to get their program started. Money is drawn off of those funds to preserve farms. There has been competition between counties and land trusts for state funding – where counties have lost funding when land trusts are operating the same program. Most counties seem to be preserving about 2-3 farms per year. Lancaster County is about the same but their cost per acre is much higher than here. Commissioner Geyer will try to gather more information regarding this for the board.

4. Old Business

- Sheryl gave an update on the Kennedy (2018 #2) and Cooper (2018 #3) farms. We are still waiting for the survey to be completed and title work has also been ordered.

- The McGowan (2019 #2) farm has accepted the offer from the Board and we are still waiting for an answer from Thurber (2019 #1). Ms. Thurber had a couple of questions which have been answered and has until next week to accept the offer or hire her own appraiser.
 - To be able to keep things moving, John Allen made a motion to move ahead with Foertsch (the #3 farm in 2019) if Thurber rejected the board's offer. There was a second by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- The proposed Clinton Township Ag Preservation Program was discussed. Vice-Chairman Duncan stated that the township's zoning changes including the preservation program should be in effect on Monday. There was discussion on the wording in the county guidelines to allow a municipality to participate. Sheryl explained that the thought process behind how it was worded, and after discussion with the county solicitor, was to keep the language very broad so that any municipality interested in participating (no matter how money was raised) could do so. The state's board meeting was in the a.m. of August 22 and they had probably approved the wording that was proposed by the county. Also, the state meets six times per year so if anything should need changed as we move forward, we can easily request revisions.

- Vice-Chairman Duncan mentioned that the meeting with Western Pennsylvania Conservancy went well and that they seemed interested in working together with the state. Those attending were Commissioner Geyer, Chief of Economic Development & Planning Mark Gordon, board members Bill Duncan and John Allen, plus Sheryl Kelly. Attending from WPC were CEO Tom Saunders, Shaun Fenlon-Vice President of Land Conservation and Ann Sand, Land Protection Manager. WPC has been buying farms and renting them out. Commissioner Geyer mentioned that WPC may be able to cooperate with Butler County by working through foundations and echoed that the meeting went well. From an email response that Sheryl received after sending them a meeting thank you, it seems that they will be looking for ways in which they might be able to work with us. They also provided us with some good ideas to explore.

- Sheryl discussed House Bill 370 and suggested language sent from the state in order to amend our guidelines for compliance. Sheryl made some changes to the guidelines and County Solicitor Julie Graham is reviewing. There was a motion by Secretary Burr to table this issue until we have some feedback from the solicitor. There was a second by Eugene Bergbigler. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. New Business

- Secretary Rob Burr discussed his preserved farm and a gas lease he signed after the preservation of his farm. He has been approached by the company about expanding his current two wells to add

sixteen more wells encompassing about a quarter of his farm. He has been in touch with Secretary Wolfgang at the state about whether this is permitted under the terms of his easement. Mr. Wolfgang needs more information (that will be sent by Sheryl), but said they may only be able to send a letter to the company reminding them that the state and county has an interest in the easement on this property. In addition to the final 22.4 acre well pad site being proposed, there will be an additional "borrow" area on the farm and he was told that about 12,500 square feet of subsoil will be removed to help construct the well pad site. The board will be kept updated on this issue.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Moniot called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion made by Secretary Burr with a second by Eugene Bergbigler. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, September 26, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001**

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot		Commissioner Kimberly D. Geyer
Bill Duncan		
Rob Burr		
John Allen		
Rick Stuchal		
Eugene Bergbigler		
Alvin Vogel		
Luke Fritz		
Larry Baumgartel		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, September 26, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the August meeting minutes. Secretary Rob Burr asked that the minutes be amended to change the word "topsoil" to "subsoil." Secretary Burr made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. There was a second by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved. Sheryl will make the change to the minutes for the record.

3. Commissioner's Report

- Commissioner Geyer reported that on October 9 there will be a meeting for municipalities at the Butler Township Municipal Building from 2-4 to discuss Butler County flooding issues and the watersheds. Also, the Board of Commissioners will issue a check to Butler County Ag Land Preservation Program for 25% of the legacy funds to be received by the county. This should be approximately \$50,000. This will be discussed so that the 2020 budget can be planned accordingly, and these funds can be used to leverage the 2020 match provided by the state.

4. Old Business

- Sheryl gave an update on the Kennedy (2018 #2) and Cooper (2018 #3) farms. Surveys have been completed and we are just waiting for the title commitment. Not only will we have funds encumbered once the title commitment is completed, but both farms will also be ready for state board approval, although the state must review the files for completion. There is a possible boundary line dispute regarding the Cooper farm, however Jim Coulter sent Sheryl an email that this will not hold up the title commitment. Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan made a motion that the invoices for both the Kennedy and Cooper farm surveys be paid to Land Surveyors. There was a second by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved.
- Both the McGowan (2019 #2) farm and Thurber (2019 #1) farms have accepted the board's offers. Surveys are underway.
- The Greenspace Land Inc. farms are being surveyed and there should be no problems closing on the easements before the end of the year.
- Vice-Chairman Duncan reported that the Clinton Township Ag Preservation Program has been approved and is in place. Sheryl reported that the state has approved the Butler County Ag Preservation Program guideline changes that will allow this program to be carried out.
- Sheryl discussed House Bill 370, has received comments from the county solicitor, and gave a copy of suggested changes to the board members. Since the board has not had a chance to review, there was a motion by Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan to table this discussion until the next meeting. There was a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. New Business

- Sheryl gave everyone a copy of State Board meeting dates for 2020 and the Butler County Ag. Land Preservation Board meeting dates will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Luke Fritz asked and the board discussed the possibility of cancelling meetings when there is not much to discuss and no important decisions need to be voted on. In the future, Sheryl will let the board know when this occurs and meetings can be cancelled as long as they are advertised beforehand.
- Vice-Chairman Bill Duncan asked if Sheryl could follow up with the Western Pa. Conservancy to see if they have decided on any possibility of funding assistance. Sheryl will contact them.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Moniot called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion made by Alvin Vogel with a second by Treasurer Larry Baumgartel. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20pm.

Next Meeting:
Thursday, October 24, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

October 2019
Cancelled

MEETING MINUTES
BUTLER COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Farm Service Agency, 625 Evans City Road, Butler 16001

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2019 – 7:00PM

Members In Attendance	Members Absent	Visitors in Attendance
Ken Moniot	Larry Baumgartel	
Rob Burr	Bill Duncan	
Rick Stuchal	John Allen	
Eugene Bergbigler		
Alvin Vogel		
Luke Fritz		
		Staff in Attendance
		Sheryl Kelly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Ken Moniot on Thursday, November 21, 2019. A quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

2. Commissioner's Report

- Due to a prior commitment, Commissioner Geyer was unable to attend this month's meeting therefore there was no report from the Commissioner's Office.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Moniot asked for a motion to approve the September meeting minutes. There was a motion by Rick Stuchal with a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. Old Business

- Sheryl reported that the Kennedy farm (2018 #2) has been bumped by the state to their February board meeting due to the change in appraised easement value. Also, there is one small issue that needs to be taken care of by the owner before the funds for this farm can be encumbered – which must be done before the end of the year. Sheryl will contact him again. There was a motion by Luke

Fritz to make the higher offer of \$4,054⁹ per acre (per state acceptance of the appraisal corrections, which has not occurred yet) with a second by Alvin Vogel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- The Cooper farm (2018 #3) is now complete with funds encumbered, except that Sheryl is waiting to hear from the state as to whether they will require the farm to be bumped to February (from December's state board meeting) for approval due to the change in easement value from the appraisal corrections. This requires a lot of changes to paperwork and figures that have already been submitted to the state. There was a motion by Rick Stuchal to offer the Coopers the corrected easement value at \$2,779 per acre with a second by Alvin Vogel. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The state has already approved this corrected easement value.

- The Thurber farm (2019 #1) is moving along and the owner has accepted the lower easement value of her farm based on the appraisal corrections required by the state. The state has approved those corrections. There was a motion made by Secretary Rob Burr for the board to accept the Thurber offer of \$1,165 per acre with a second by Eugene Bergbigler. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The survey results for this farm should be received soon.

- The McGowan farm (2019 #2) is scheduled for state board approval in October 2020 at the request of Mr. McGowan (closing would then occur in 2021). He has accepted the corrected lower appraised easement value of his farm which has also been accepted by the state. There was a motion by Luke Fritz to approve the lower appraised value of the easement of \$7,082 per acre with a second by Secretary Rob Burr. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- Sheryl reported that the Greenspace farms (2019 donations) are scheduled for closing by year's end. The surveys are not yet complete however the surveyor has assured that they will be done soon. Sheryl checked with Attorney Coulter and he said there will be no problem holding the closing. All documents have been sent to Attorney Coulter and we are just waiting for the final acreages and deed descriptions.

- Depending on final costs for title work on all farms and survey costs for the Thurber and Greenspace farms, Sheryl estimates that there may be about \$113,000 remaining from 2019 funds that will need to be encumbered by the end of 2020. There was a motion by Rick Stuchal to use those funds towards a 2020 farm with a second by Eugene Bergbigler. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- There was motion by Secretary Rob Burr to ask Clint Champagne to attend the next meeting to explain the appraisal process to the board, with a second by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The board thought it might be helpful to understand the valuing process and the formula used to determine this.

- The board has reviewed the draft of the state's suggested Act 33 of 2019 changes to the county's preservation program guidelines which have also been reviewed and approved by the county solicitor.

There was a motion by Secretary Rob Burr to approve those changes as written with a second by Rick Stuchal. All were in favor and the motion was approved. Sheryl will send those changes to the state and she was told they will give a “blanket” approval to all counties who have adopted the changes at their December board meeting.

- There was a motion by Alvin Vogel to keep the 2020 meeting dates on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00pm at the current location, except for November and December which will be on the third Thursdays (because of Thanksgiving and Christmas). There was a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved. As has been discussed in the past, it will be assessed each month as to what needs to be discussed by the board and what decisions need to be made. Meetings can be cancelled if needed.

5. New Business

- Sheryl gave everyone a copy of the ad that will be published in the Butler Eagle for the 2020 application round for the Ag. Easement Program. There is one typo that will be corrected and the ad will be published around December 4th. It will also be sent by email to all municipalities and other contacts. For anyone who applied in 2019, their applications will be held and considered again unless withdrawn by the owner. Sheryl will also send a new signature page for them to sign with a current date so we have those for the files. The owner is required to report any changes that may have taken place in the past year that would affect their application.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Moniot called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion made by Eugene Bergbigler with a second by Luke Fritz. All were in favor and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

Next Meeting:

**Thursday, December 19, 7:00pm at the
Farm Service Agency Building, 625 Evans City Road, Butler, PA 16001**

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl Kelly for Board Secretary Rob Burr

Happy Thanksgiving!

December 2019
Cancelled