

***AGRICULTURAL/LAND CONSERVATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES
August 22, 2022***

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural/Land Conservation Committee for Monday, August 22, 2022, was called to order at 7:02pm. in the Activities Room in the George L. Gordon Government Center by Carlos Bratton, Chairman.

Members Present: John Howe, Chad Young, Carlos Bratton, Jeff Adams, Benjamin Rudasill

Members Absent: Alandra Simmons, Elizabeth Cameron

Staff Present: Kathy Baker and Vicki Sowers

1. Call to Order

Carlos Bratton called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and confirmed there was a quorum.

2. Public Presentations

None

3. Staff Update

Land Conservation Program Improvements – Northern Virginia Conservation Trust Partnership

Kathy Baker announced that the Board of Supervisors authorized the MOU, a partnership with Northern Virginia Conservation Trust to work on a donated easement program. They will hire a 40 hour per week dedicated staff person to work for Stafford County to help develop, educate and outreach to the public to get interest in the donated easement side which will help leverage other parts of the PDR program.

The county will be responsible for half of the salary and the partnership is authorized until June 30, 2025. Ms. Baker said advertising for the position will begin soon with a projected start date of January, 2023. Discussion will be forthcoming with regards to candidates. John Howe suggested that the county be involved with the selection and interviews for this position. Ms. Baker will discuss that during her scheduled meeting.

PDR Property Updates

Moore and Jones Appraisals are done and both are fully funded. Contracts are currently with the attorneys and should be closed by the end of the year. These are the last two from the 2017 application round.

4. New Business

• PDR Funding

The committee discussed crafting a letter to submit to the Board to request monies for FY24. Ms. Baker provided previous years' totals and averages in order to aid in creating a 5-year planning budget. In the past 13 years the committee has purchased the development rights of 12 properties at a county cost of about \$3.2 million with an average of \$250,000/year. The average per property is \$534,000. The PDR program saves the county from providing additional buses, teachers, schools, emergency services, etc.

Ms. Baker recommended the letter should be sent no later than the October meeting. The Planning and Zoning Department will draft the letter once the committee agrees upon an amount. After much discussion Mr. Adams made a motion that the Committee requests \$3 million from the Board for the PDR program. Mr. Rudasill seconded the motion. Motion was approved (5-0). Ms. Baker will work on the draft letter and forward to the committee.

- **Appraisal Review Committee Establishment**

The Committee needs to determine which member will sit in on the Appraisal Review Committee. The panel will consist of one member of the Agricultural/Land Conservation Committee, one person from the Commission of Revenue Department and a professional Real Estate Appraiser. They will meet on an as needed basis. The member will help determine if the appraisals that come in were done according to local standards. Some localities negotiate appraisals, Stafford will not negotiate. Ms. Baker felt it better to wait until the next meeting to nominate a committee board member until she clarifies the term of the commitment.

5. Unfinished Business

- New PDR Application Round

There were a lot of good questions asked at the PDR meeting. Ms. Baker will answer the questions and add them to the website. The next step is as the applications are received the staff will go through them to make sure the ones that are submitted are eligible and start the ranking process.

6. Approval of Minutes

- May 23, 2022

John Howe made a motion to approve the May 23, 2022 meeting minutes. Jeff Adams seconded. May 23, 2022 meeting minutes were unanimously approved and adopted (5-0).

7. Member Comments

Mr. Howe requested an update on the Farmer's Market held at the Stafford Hospital site. Stafford County's Code Enforcement Officer visited the market and was told the market was for the hospital community/staff. Code enforcement didn't feel they were in violation.

Mr. Adams announced on Thursday, September 1 VSU in Petersburg, VA, will hold its annual field day at Randolph Farms, 8am - noon. They are having hydroponics and raising fish and four/five other stations.

8. Next Meeting

September 26, 2022

9. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss Mr. Bratton adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.