

**Minutes
Hope Township
Agricultural Advisory Committee
Wednesday April 1, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 7:16 pm by Chairman, Bob May.

Open Public Meetings Act:

Under the provisions of the “Open Public Meetings Act” adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by publishing notice in the legal section of the Express Times and by posting notice in the Hope Post Office and on the Township bulletin boards—all by April 1, 2015.

- Present at this meeting were members: Bob May, Richard Goodbody, Josh Miller and Sandy Urgo of the Land Conservancy of New Jersey.
- The minutes from the last meeting, December 3, 2014 were approved with Mr. Miller abstaining.

Old Business:

- In response to a question posed at the December meeting, Sandy Urgo confirmed that monies for Farmland Preservation cannot be used in the Open Space Program.
- Farmland Preservation signs have been ordered for many of the Preserved Properties.

Correspondence:

- The Land Conservancy had, as of March 30, 2015, written outreach letters to qualifying properties suggesting that land “values are up a bit”, and that values for preserved properties have also increased “a bit”.
- A letter from SADC’s Stefanie Miller informing municipalities that only by filing written evidence (*actual paperwork*) of farmland preservation projects *in process* will that municipality continue to satisfy the SADC’s requirement for maintenance of their PIG funding. She reminded us that Hope’s PIG fund is valued at \$1,250,000.

Update on Farmland Preservation Efforts:

- Sandy Urgo spoke of her continued and sanguine efforts to preserve the Campbell Foundry Farm.
- Ms. Urgo told of her efforts to contact various farm owners in Hope, and she and the committee spent some time reviewing a number of these potential properties.

New Business:

- The committee and Ms. Urgo spent considerable time discussing the population trends in both Warren and Sussex counties. Ms. Urgo suggested that the population migration from this region of New Jersey might present an opportune time for land owners to consider Preservation as land values, and so appraisals, are likely to diminish in the near future.
- Ms Urgo spoke of the opportunity presented by a local landowner willing to donate 12 acres of land adjacent to the existing preserved Beaver Brook Farm.

Adjournment:

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Goodbody
Secretary

