

Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board
Division of Planning



Minutes for a Regular Meeting of the
MONMOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
January 13, 2026, 7:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting at One East Main Street, Freehold, NJ or Audio and Video Conference via WebEx

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Bullock called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Mr. Bullock read the “Open Public Meetings Act” Compliance Statement.

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Bullock, Clayton, Errickson (online), Giambrone, Holmes, Incatasciato, Mosley, Pettyjohn, Van Mater
Staff: Beekman, Bezahler, Honigfeld, Kiley
Representatives: Chris Helmlinger, Jack McNaboe (online), Katie Mazzella (online), Sean Pizzio, Betty Velez-Gimbel
Public: Anna Kristjansdottir

REORGANIZATION

Mr. Beekman opened the floor for appointments of Chairman, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the Board.

Mr. Giambrone nominated Mr. Bullock as Chairman of the Board which was seconded by Mr. Van Mater. Mr. Bullock was named Chairman of the Board by voice vote.

Mr. Giambrone nominated Gary DeFelice as Vice Chairman of the Board which was seconded by Mr. Pettyjohn. Mr. DeFelice was named Vice Chairman of the Board by voice vote.

Mr. Bullock nominated Mr. Pettyjohn as Secretary of the Board, which was seconded by Mr. Van Mater. Mr. Pettyjohn was named Secretary of the Board by voice vote.

ADOPTION OF CALENDAR

Mr. Holmes motioned for the adoption of the calendar which was seconded by Mr. Pettyjohn and approved by voice vote.

APPOINTMENT OF RIGHT-TO-FARM AND STEWARDSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Pettyjohn motioned to affirm Mr. Bullock, Mr. DeFelice, and Mr. Van Mater as regular members of the subcommittee and Mr. Holmes, Mr. Mosley and Ms. Incatasciato as alternates. Mr. Van Mater seconded the motion, which was approved by voice vote.

ADOPTION MINUTES

Mr. Pettyjohn motioned for the adoption of the December 2025 regular meeting minutes which was seconded by Mr. Giambrone and approved by voice vote. Mr. Mosley and Ms. Incatasciato abstained.

CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Ms. Honigfeld indicated that there will be a discussion with the SADC in a week to determine if RTF mediation can be pursued if easement violations exist. Ms. Honigfeld also reported that staff had received a report of findings from the SADC regarding a farm in Upper Freehold (formerly Walnford Stud). It was agreed that the subcommittee would meet virtually to discuss the next steps.

REGULAR REPORTS

- A. *Chairman*: Mr. Bullock requested staff to look into a change in policy regarding municipal cost share funding for preservation given the new formula value implications.
- B. *State*: Ms. Mazzella reported that the SADC is holding a public auction for a preserved farm in Hunterdon County. Brian Wilson took the position of Deputy Director of the SADC. Ms. Mazzella mentioned some updates to the SADC website.
- C. *Staff*: Ms. Honigfeld mentioned a recommendation by Joe Barris to request a liaison from the County Health Department. Ms. Kiley gave an update on Farm Summit (March 25th) planning.
- D. *Municipal Representatives*: Chris Helmlinger spoke about concerns from the Upper Freehold administration regarding fee simple purchases of large parcels of land by the County. Betty Velez-Gimbel introduced herself as the new Howell municipal representative.
- E. *County Board of Agriculture*: No report. Ms. Honigfeld mentioned that there was the need for the Board of Agriculture to officially recommend an alternate to the MCADB.
- F. *Rutgers Cooperative Extension*: Dr. Errickson reported that the Central Jersey Vegetable Growers meeting is February 20th and the Central Turf and Ornamental meeting is February 27th.

NEW BUSINESS

State Direct Easement Program

Ms. Mazzella presented two farms in Upper Freehold (Block 23, Lot 1.01 and Block 55, Lot 20.07) that the State will be appraising through their Direct Easement Program. Ms. Mazzella gave an overview of each of the farms and requested the Board indicate whether the Board has any objection to the State pursuing preservation.

Mr. Pettyjohn offered a motion and Mr. Van Mater seconded to support the State's preservation of Upper Freehold - Block 23, Lot 1.01, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Pettyjohn offered a motion and Mr. Holmes seconded to support the State's preservation of Upper Freehold - Block 55, Lot 20.07, which was unanimously approved.

House Replacement Request (Block 20, Lot 5, Colts Neck)

Ms. Kiley introduced a house replacement requested by Chris Mosley. Mr. Mosley recused himself from the matter. The house replacement consists of a modest barn-style home (2,000 square feet) and a new driveway. Mr. Bullock asked Mr. Mosley to confirm there would not be any significant change in tillable acres. Mr. Mosley confirmed. Mr. Pettyjohn motioned and Mr. Giambrone seconded the approval of the house replacement, which received a unanimous vote.

RIGHT-TO-FARM AND STEWARDSHIP ISSUES

Status Reports

Mr. Beekman reported on a few matters. There was no change on *Basselini v. Crawford*; further updates are expected in February. There is a potential appeal pending for Winding Brook Farm LLC.

The Samrock Stables hearing will be continued in February. Ms. Honigfeld mentioned an upcoming mediation on Carm's farm in Colts Neck.

Ms. Honigfeld mentioned a meeting with staff and County Counsel regarding the Board of County Commissioners' resolution that is the companion to the MCADB's RTF Policy 6. Ms. Honigfeld reported that procedurally County Counsel and Board of County Commissioners will not rescind the resolution but will amend or replace the resolution. She gave some examples of possible amendments. Ms. Honigfeld also mentioned that Mike Fitzgerald, County Counsel, may attend the March meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from Mr. Pettyjohn and seconded by Mr. Bullock, the meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM, which was approved by voice vote.