

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 10, 2023**

Ms. Butewicz called the Meeting to Order at 7:38 p.m.

Adequate Notice read at 7:38 p.m. by Chairperson Butewicz

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mr. Asprocolas, Ms. Butch, Ms. Butewicz, Ms. Coppinger

Absent: Deputy Mayor Morris; Mr. Peck, Ms. Posten

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No Public

MEETING MINUTES:

September 12, 2023 Minutes - Councilperson Butch made a motion to approve the minutes. Chairperson Butewicz offered a second.

Roll Call: Butch, Butewicz voted in favor

CORRESPONDENCE:

1) SADC Proposed Soil Protection Standards – The SADC has put forth new soil protection standards for preserved farmlands. The Millstone Township Ag Council will be sending a letter in opposition to the current proposal for the following reasons:

- a. The proposed changes will be retroactively applied to current preserved farms without any recourse being provided to the landowner. This is viewed as a violation of the agreement already in place on these properties. The addition of stricter impervious coverage rules on current deeds of easement erodes trust in the SADC and should not be unilaterally applied.
- b. Rather than providing soil conservation methods and programs, they are over regulating. The NRCS should be assessing soil conservation methods not SADC.
- c. Restrictions being proposed will negatively impact certain kinds of agricultural production like the greenhouse industry, equine industry and nursery industry.
- d. The proposed changes will take away the value of preserved properties without consent from the landowners and without financial compensation.
- e. If agreements can be breached and deeds of easements modified retroactively, there is no incentive for landowners to preserve their farms.

Councilperson Butch made a motion for the Chairperson and Secretary to compose the letter and send to the SADC. Councilperson Asprocolas offered a second. Butch, Asprocolas, Butewicz and Coppinger voted in favor.

Amy will work on the letter and circulate for any added comments.

OLD BUSINESS:

Newsletter: Open Space is doing the Fall newsletter. Getting articles in on time is very difficult.

Municipal Labor Housing Ordinance: Nothing new. Carry over to next meeting.

Deer population management: Council could look at incorporating landowner meeting with discussion on deer management for an early Spring meeting.

SADC Municipal PIG Program - The per acreage value should be reduced to between 16k and 19k from 29k used previously. The Cady property needs to be included in Clarksburg West Area. Theung Lee has been removed since it was purchased by Green Acres and Open Space. Any new owner changes were made and highlighted. Everything else looks good.

NEW BUSINESS:

Spring Road – The Spring road (Theung Lee) property was closed on. Part of the property is currently farmed and will need to be leased starting next year. Councilperson Asprocolas is concerned about the timeframe between the current lease's end and going out to bid for a new lease. Due to timeframe, we may have to extend current lease for ½ year or more.

Chairperson Butewicz moved to go to executive session at 8:19pm.

Council returned from Executive session at 8:29 PM

Seeing no further business, Councilperson Asprocolas moved to adjourn. Chairperson Butewicz offered a second. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew DeFelice