

MINUTES – September 22, 2025

The Union County Agricultural Land Preservation Board met for a regularly rescheduled meeting at 7:00 pm. on the above date in the Union County Government Building at 155 North 15th Street, Lewisburg, Pa.

Board members present: Dave Epler, Ivan Yoder, Wayne Stahl, Dennis Keefer, Terry Snoddy, Dennis Hess and Dave Masser

Board members absent: None

Staff Present: Cindy Moyer & Greg Bonsall

Guests: Sara Hudock, Stacy Richards, Craig Howe, Ben Dietrich, Logan Stoltzfus, Jon Dewald, Shawn McLaughlin, Beau Hoffman, Mark Wehr, Jason Brudecki, Preston Boop, and Jeff Reber

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dave Epler called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **Motion** by Dennis Keefer and second by Dennis Hess to approve July 21, 2025 meeting minutes as presented; passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) Noll Family Farms – pending survey
 - a) Revisions to the survey are being corrected by the surveyor.
- 2) Joanna Hoover – pending survey
 - a) Received survey and Joanna accepted.
- 3) Kyle Stoltzfus #1 – pending survey
 - a) Revisions to the survey will be completed once recorded right a way agreement is received.
- The intent is to send all three easements to the December State Ag-land board meeting for approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Recertification of program
 - a. Every seven years the program needs to be recertified
 - b. The state Ag-Land preservation board recertified our program at the July board meeting.
 - i. Approved previously discussed “combination home” language.
 1. Combination home can only be built if the additional housing allowance has NOT been utilized.
- 2) Rural Enterprise complaint
 - a. Shawn McLaughlin, Union County Planning Director, received two complaints about non-farm related businesses taking place on preserved farms.

- i. The issue also came up at a Planning Commission meeting and an official complaint was filed with the Union County Commissioners.
- b. Jon Dewald, Union County Solicitor, was requested to look into the complaints for the Union County Commissioners.
 - i. Based on similar situations in other parts of the state, Mr. Dewald found the complaints to be valid and sent letters to the two landowners.
- c. Preston Boop, Union County Commissioner, explained his understanding of what he helped create 35 years ago
 - i. Mr. Boop served on the county Ag-land board until 2004, at which time he became Commissioner.
 - ii. He has been instrumental in providing approximately \$4.6 million dollars to the program and an additional \$1 million in AARPA funds.
 - iii. What is happening with rural enterprise is NOT what he advocated for.
 - iv. Mr. Boop encouraged the board to rescind their previous motion to allow both businesses to continue under rural enterprise.
- d. Ben Dietrich, one of two landowners in question, explained his process and how he has gotten to where he is
 - i. Applied to township, zoning board and ag-land preservation board and all three approved his plan.
 - ii. To his surprise, he received a letter from the county solicitor on September 12, 2025.
 - iii. Mr. Dietrich feels like he has three options:
 - 1. Revert back to March 17, 2025 when he got approval and proceed as planned.
 - 2. Abandon the project and seek economic compensation.
 - 3. Have further legal review.
 - a. He argues that if mowing stops, the land will revert back to farmland – does not want to pursue option 3.
- e. Beau Hoffman, Ax Runkle Lawyers, delivered a message to the board that they took the proper steps, reviewed the rules and regulations of the program, and made a formal decision.
 - i. Furthermore, he feels that it would be improper to revoke the previous decision and that the landowner relied on the boards written decision.
- f. Logan Stoltzfus, second landowner in question, relayed that no-one has talked to him personally.
 - i. He is passionate about Ag-land Preservation and has tried to be “transparent from the beginning”.
 - ii. The parts he will house in his warehouse are from an ag business, Pik Rite which he is part owner.
- g. Cindy Moyer, Union County Ag-Land Administrator, explained process
 - i. Stoltzfus project could have been run through the 10% building coverage
 - ii. Stoltzfus and Dietrich are limited to two acres by rural enterprise language.
 - iii. The state DOES NOT approve rural enterprise requests.
 - iv. ALL rural enterprise requests will need to come to the local board for approval.

- h. Further discussion and questions by Mr., Dewald, Mr. Hoffman, and Commissioner Stacy Richards ensued.
 - i. A **Motion** by Terry Snoddy and second by Dave Masser to leave previous motion and decision as is; motion passed unanimously.
- 3) Reword language on Page 69 of the “Union County Agricultural Land Preservation Program” manual.
 - a. Remove the wording “must be approved by state Ag-land Preservation board”.
 - b. If passed, this change will be sent to the state for action at their October meeting.
 - c. A Motion by Dave Masser and second by Dennis Hess to remove the language; passed unanimously.
- Mr. Jeff Reber, Union County Commissioner, asked how other violations are handled.
 - Cindy Moyer explained the process
 - Drive by inspection, formal inspection report, other agency involvement if needed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE:

HANDOUTS:

- 1) Summary of Easements

NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME: Monday, November 17, 2025 @ 7:00 pm

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Gregory Bonsall