

**MEETING MINUTES
EAST AMWELL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 23, 2018; EAST AMWELL MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1070 ROUTE 202, RINGOES, NJ**

CALL TO ORDER & OPEN PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

The meeting of the East Amwell Agricultural Advisory Committee began at 7:35 p m. Notice of this meeting was published in the April 26, 2018, issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat, with an agenda filed in the Township Clerk’s Office, sent to the Hunterdon County Democrat, and the agenda posted on the municipal bulletin board.

2018 ATTENDANCE

Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	1/15/18	2/19/18	3/22/18	4/16/18	5/23/18	6/18/18	7/16/18	8/20/18	9/17/18	10/15/18	11/19/18	12/17/18
Kit Crisafulli	X	X			X							
Ann del Campo	X		X	X	X							
Rob Garrett	X	X	X	X	X							
John Perehyns												
Candice Wiggum	X	X	X	X	X							

Others present: Terri Stahl as recording secretary

CALL TO ORDER

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

The meeting was open to the public for comments. There being no public in attendance, motion by Rob Garrett, seconded by Kit Crisafulli, and carried unanimously to close to the public.

PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES

Candice Wiggum said that Secretary Sharon Brighthaupt made some corrections to the March 22, 2018 minutes, which were posted on the bulletin board. Motion by Ann delCampo, seconded by Kit Crisafulli, and carried unanimously to approve the corrected minutes.

The April 16, 2018, Minutes were approved on a motion by Rob Garrett, seconded by Ann del Campo, and carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Deer Management: Candice Wiggum attended a symposium and as a follow up, Ag Advisory will be sending something in farmland assessment mailing as a way to reach farmers and to get them involved in identifying issues and to learn about depredation permits and contiguous farm hunting. Candice drafted the notice, which as reviewed by Rob Garrett. Candice thanked Office Staff (Pam Dymek, Terri Stahl, and Marianne Busher) for their team effort in getting the information into the mailing. Ann del Campo asked if email addresses were available for farmers for communication – she felt that the farmers should be asked to provide the email addresses so that the Township could keep the farmers abreast of agricultural issues. Rob Garrett said that the request for email/phone information was made in the first mailing. Candice Wiggum said that the information being sent out now was specifically about deer management, and it is hoped that some more farmers will

MEETING MINUTES
EAST AMWELL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 23, 2018; EAST AMWELL MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1070 ROUTE 202, RINGOES, NJ

provide contact information and direct questions to her.

Ann delCampo will be hosting a table at the upcoming Sourland Festival on June 23, and Candice Wiggum will provide her with a copy of the information that will be going out with the tax bill mailing so Ann can distribute it at her booth. Candice Wiggum spoke about information from Caroline Katmann of Hunters Helping the Hungry. She mentioned some issues that the program is having, including needing help with grant applications and needing more butchers, including out of season butchers. With more legalized hunting, the NJ DEP may be passing butchering guidelines, which some of the butchers may not meet. The organization also needs more refrigerated trucks for transporting meat, with the Ag Committee acknowledging that there are a number of challenges that many people are trying to address.

Rob Garrett spoke about depredation permits, some of which can be issued without a consumption tag; deer can then be covered and buried. Some comments were made about what can and what cannot be done in terms of hunting with one of these permits.

Candice Wiggum said that Farm Bureau is working on deer management, and they will be doing a survey with a drone and infra-red camera, hitting high density areas of deer population, and this will confirm numbers in the recent deer survey that was completed. Candice spoke about many groups, e.g., conservationists, farmers, ag committees, etc. all coming together to address the problem. Rob Garrett commented on getting enough annual drives, both individually or groups of property owners, to address the numbers.

Report on Agricultural in East Amwell: Rob Garrett is trying to work through existing tables and trying to update data. There are a lot of references to reports but there have not been any updated reports on work that may have been done 10-12 years ago. He will have to reach out to individual groups or go to the state or federal government for updated information. He added that getting information from Hunterdon County was difficult because if the County did not contribute funds to the preservation costs, they do not have information on the farms in East Amwell.

Rob Garrett mentioned a map with a report from Banisch Associates done in June 2016, and the information matches up with what he has seen in the VIP and elsewhere.

Candice Wiggum mentioned two new preserved areas, the new one on Cider Mill Road and land on Haines Road; she suggested that Rob Garrett speak with the Farmland/Open Space Preservation Administrator Katherine Fullerton for more information. Candice spoke about having some luck in comparing 2005 to 2015 information at one time.

Getting further information from the Assessor on tenant information, land types, etc. was mentioned. Rob Garrett said that he had last year's information from her. Committee members may contact Marianne Busher after the farmland assessment papers come in for this year's information. Rob Garrett concluded that he is making progress on the report.

MEETING MINUTES
EAST AMWELL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 23, 2018; EAST AMWELL MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1070 ROUTE 202, RINGOES, NJ

Some comments were exchanged about weather conditions this year that may affect farmers' income.

Community Day: Ann del Campo's poster about deer management will be displayed at the Community Day event on June 2. Patsy Wang-Iverson (Environmental Commission) is setting up the booth, and Ag Advisory will have some presence. Candice Wiggum said that she will be there.

August Meeting: There will be no June or July meeting; the August meeting will take place on Monday, August 20th.

NEW BUSINESS

SADC Resolution Process: Ann del Campo said that her attorney is very close to the agricultural community and has participated in several cases. He believes that it would be beneficial to have professional help from planners in framing matters that come before the SADC so that they would have a better understanding of matters. The thought process is that this would save time for the farmers and would clarify activities for the most part in cases that may or may not be under the purview of the farmer or their attorney. This will help in the timing process, with Ann explaining that some cases are drawn out longer without this clarity. As an example, she referenced the Den Hollander case regarding soil movement with no set standards for soil movement. Ann continued by saying that sometimes farmers will go for site specific agricultural management practices; if there was a planner involved, there would be more likelihood that they would be familiar with land use requirements and the process would move faster. Candice Wiggum summarized that Ann was asking for the Ag Advisory Committee to support having a contract with a planner.

Ann explained the process: an applicant would go to the CADB, after which time they may be sent to SADC; once at SADC, the case goes to the administrative law office, and questions may arise. The assumption is that if there was a planner involved, it would add more clarity to the application and help in some cases. Ann's attorney has asked that she have discussions about this with farmers and see what they would like; meanwhile, her attorney is talking with other agricultural attorneys, and there may be a petition to SADC at some point to request the planner be involved. The planner may work for several townships, and the townships would be asked to contribute to the cost. Ann concluded that it was tougher to farm in NJ now and the intent is to try to streamline processes.

Candice Wiggum agreed, saying that the SADC is shifting focus from preserving farmland to how they can support farmers and what do the farmers need to farm.

Ann del Campo mentioned the Den Hollander case again, saying that there were no guidelines about moving soil, and the case ended up in Supreme Court. Making sure that SADC has all the facts about issues is important and having an outside planner would be helpful. Rob Garrett spoke about the long time Den Hollander case with moving soils off site. Candice Wiggum said that the Committee would be interested in the next stages of these conversations.

MEETING MINUTES
EAST AMWELL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 23, 2018; EAST AMWELL MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1070 ROUTE 202, RINGOES, NJ

Agricultural Issues: Ann del Campo asked if the Ag Advisory Committee knew what the farming issues in East Amwell were. Candice Wiggum said that there were minimal right to farm issues in the township, with individual issues coming up from time to time, e.g., noise at wineries, weather concerns, etc. Ann del Campo said that her issue was finally settled on April 21, and as part of the settlement, she has been trying to get a driveway permit for her property. She was concerned with the length of time it was taking to do so.

Frances Gavigan has agreed to take the lead on a farmer's market to be held on the municipal property during the July, August, and September recycling depots. Candice Wiggum will check with her to see about advertising the events.

CORRESPONDENCE

None was noted.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting was open to the public for comment. There being no public, motion by Rob Garrett, seconded by Ann del Campo, and carried unanimously to close to the public.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Rob Garrett, seconded by Ann del Campo, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

/s/ Sharon L. Brighthaupt

Sharon L. Brighthaupt, Recording Secretary