

Orange County Agricultural Preservation Board

Meeting Summary: March 20th, 2019

Environmental & Agricultural Center—Food Lab
306 Revere Rd., Hillsborough, NC
7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Anderson, Compton, Dawson, McAdams, McKnight, McPherson, A. Parker, R. Parker, Ranells, Redding, Saiers, Vanhook

Members Absent: Finley, Shambley, Woods

Guests: None

Staff: Gail Hughes, Resource Conservation Coordinator-DEAPR-Orange Soil and Water; Peter Sandbeck, Cultural Resources Coordinator; Mike Ortosky, Ag Economic Development Coordinator

1. **Call to order:** Chair McPherson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **Chair Comments/Introductions:** None.
3. **Considerations of Additions to Agenda:** Hughes wished to present the updated VAD brochure and share maps from the statewide VAD meeting in January.
4. **Meeting Summary/Minutes:** November 14th, 2018 (**Attachment 1**): Vanhook moved to accept the minutes/summary; seconded by Dawson; motion carried.
5. **Discussion Items:**
 - a) **Orange County Agricultural Trust Fund (Attachment 2):** Dawson reviewed the highlights of the proposal as described in the handout. This was developed by the Food Council with help from Ortosky and Ranells. This program could partner with the Lands Legacy and Ag Grant programs. So the proposal is to take the money that is collected when farms cease to be in the Present Use Value (PUV) program, and channel those funds into these two existing programs that are already operating very effectively; no new staff needed. They envision having a joint committee with members of the Food Council and APB to review how much to allocate to each of the two programs. The proposal includes language to comply with current BOCC requirements that new programs meet social justice and racial equity goals. Staff noted that the APB agreed to include language of support for this program in our 2019 annual report to the BOCC. Ranells voiced support for language except for wording of first full sentence at top of page 2, where there is a stipulation that this can only move forward if the assessment by the racial equity tool resulted in satisfactory findings. Discussion followed about the timing and coordination of how to coordinate this with the current budget cycle. Ranells moved that the APB supports presenting the concept to the BOCC for consideration for the 2019-20 fiscal year, but change by striking out the first phrase of that sentence as follows: ~~“Should that assessment result in satisfactory findings.”~~ Then just start with: “A formal proposal will be

prepared....” Motion seconded by McAdams; motion passed. Next steps will be to ask the Food Council to agree to this language revision. Then Ortosky and his office will prepare the abstract for consideration by BOCC at a meeting later this spring. Ultimately, this program will provide equal funding for the Lands Legacy program and the Ag Grant program, but should allow for variations in this formula based on need. This money could accumulate for funding a large land project.

6. Items for Decision:

- a) **New VAD/EVAD Applications (Attachment 2):** Hughes presented the current applications listed below. All of these farms meet the requirements/criteria for VAD/EVAD enrollment.
- **Lynn and Teresa Holloway; Alene Holloway (son/wife/mother):** 122.05 acres for VAD, Cedar Grove Ag District. The farm is in tobacco, small grains and managed woodland. Ranells moved to approve, seconded by Saiers; motion carried.
 - **Howard and Karen McAdams-McAdams Farm:** 22.68 acres for VAD, High Rock-Efland Ag District. The farm is in pasture, beef cattle and managed woodland. A. Parker moved to approve, seconded by Saiers; motion carried. McAdams abstained.
 - **Claude Hughes/Linda Sakiewicz:** 2.56 acres for VAD, Cane Creek-Buckhorn Ag District. This is in pasture for livestock, and is an addition to existing acreage they already have in VAD. Saiers moved to approve, seconded by A. Parker.
 - **Susan Snipes Nichols/Karen Snipes Sexton:** 268.33 acres for VAD, Cane Creek-Buckhorn Ag District. The farm is in corn, soybeans, wheat and hay crops. McAdams moved to approve, seconded by Compton; motion carried.

Hughes reported that with approval of these farms, this will bring us up to 14,719 acres in VAD and EVAD. She will present all farms approved tonight and at the May meeting to the BOCC in June.

7. Informational Items/Future Agenda Items:

- a. **Report on APB Breakfast held on Nov. 30, 2018:** Hughes reported that about 90 people attended another successful breakfast, at the Schley Grange Hall. Meal expenses were \$614.96, or about \$6.80/person so costs were in line. Members agreed to hold the 2019 breakfast on Nov. 14th, at Schley. Everyone would like to use the same caterer again.
- b. **Upcoming minor/technical ordinance revisions:** Hughes explained the need for a few simple corrections and updates to our ordinance, based on her attendance at the statewide VAD meeting in January. One of the new requirements is something we already do: recording our VAD agreements with the Register of Deeds. This ensures that all property owners within a half mile radius know that they are near an active farm, with the various noise or smell that might be associated with a farm operation. She handed out new maps showing counties that have VAD programs etc.

8. **Information Sharing:** Sandbeck reported that the APB is scheduled to appear before the BOCC at their annual work session for boards and commissions on April 4. Since the chair will not be able to attend, a volunteer is needed. Vice chair Redding agreed to attend to make the brief overview presentation. Hughes and the Parks maintenance team put up more VAD signs, despite all the rain. She shared an advance copy of the newly revised VAD brochure, as designed by Melissa Blackburn who does graphic design work for the county’s public relations programs. They will continue to look for better Orange County photos to include. Members were asked to share photos they think might be appropriate.

9. **Adjournment:** Ranells moved to adjourn, seconded by Redding. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.