

**Millstone Township
Agricultural Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2008**

Chairman Romano called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

Roll Call:

Present – Mr. Asprocolas, Ms. Butch, Ms. Pinhas, Mr. Romano, Mayor Grbelja
Absent - Mr. Halka

Approval of September 10, 2007, minutes was postponed until the February meeting.

Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas to approve the December 3rd meeting minutes with a Second offered by Ms. Butch and all in favor.

Reorganization

- **Appointments and re-appointments** – Mr. George Asprocolas was welcomed as the new Council member, appointed to seat #5 for a two year term commencing 1/1/08 and ending 12/31/09; Ms. Butch was re-appointed to seat #1 for a two year term commencing 1/1/08 and ending 12/31/09 (Resolution 08-22). Mayor Grbelja thanked Mr. Asprocolas for joining the Council and announced that she will be the Township Committee liaison for 2008.
- **Election of Chairman** – Ms. Pinhas made a motion to nominate Mr. Romano as Chairman with a second was offered by Ms. Butch. Roll call vote: Aye – Pinhas, Butch, Asprocolas, Romano.
- **Election of Vice-Chairman** – Mr. Romano made a motion to nominate Ms. Pinhas as Vice Chairperson with a second offered by Ms. Butch. Roll call vote: Aye – Romano, Butch, Asprocolas, Pinhas.
- **Designation of Official Newspapers** - The Asbury Park Press and The Messenger Press were designated as the Council’s official newspapers.
- **Adoption of Calendar of Meeting for 2008** – Ms. Pinhas made a motion to adopt the calendar of meetings for 2008 with a second offered by Ms. Butch. With all in favor, the following meetings dates were adopted:

February 4	May 5	August 4	November 3
March 3	June 2	September 8	December 1
April 7	July 7	October 6	January 5, 2009

Old Business

- **Correspondence**
 - **D&R Greenway Land Trust Thank You Letter dated 11/29/07** – Ms. Butch received a letter of appreciation from D&R for commitment and support of land preservation; the letter was accompanied by a plaque acknowledging Millstone Township’s partnership with Monmouth County and D&R Greenway in the preservation of the Assunpink Greenway.
- **Open Farm Market** – Ms. Pinhas provided a draft survey which will be distributed to local farmers requesting input regarding the open farm market. Mr.

Asprocolas will assist Ms. Pinhas with updating the survey to include a list of produce that farmers would be selling. Council members agreed that the greater the variety of items at the market, the more successful the market will be. Health and food safety regulations were discussed such as the requirements for baked goods which must be prepared in a commercially inspected kitchen. The acquisition of educational material was also discussed. Mr. Asprocolas provided contact information to the Secretary for Jersey Fresh marketing and explained to the Council that there are matching funds available to non-profit organizations for Jersey Fresh Farm Market supplies.

- **Farm Lease** – The Lee farm closing is expected mid March of 2008; the current bridge lease extends through crop harvest in June or July. The Council will submit guidelines to the Township Committee to assist with the preparation of a municipal farm lease. Guidelines include limiting crops to avoid undesirable crops, requiring a winter cover crop to reduce soil erosion and restricting certain types of pesticide applications which may persist in the soil or limit future plantings. The lease will be yearly and the leased area will be reduced as the land is developed. A site inspection of the farm is required to receive reimbursement from the state. The farm lease topic will be discussed in more detail at the February Council meeting.
- **Outstanding Young Farmer Nominations** – The nomination deadline is January 15th; any nomination forms received after the deadline can be submitted for the 2008 competition.
- **OEM Large Animal Action Plan**
 - **Plan Preparation** – Mayor Grbelja announced that the County feels that animal rescue plans are the responsibility of the municipalities, not the County. The Council will make the preparation of an OEM Animal Action Plan a goal for 2008. The plan will need to go beyond household pets (cats, dogs, etc.) and will need to include poultry, livestock and equine. A list of local vets who would be interested and available to help with rescue and evacuation will be compiled. Potential safe haven areas were also discussed. M/Grbelja will be meeting with the mayor of Upper Freehold within the next 2 weeks to discuss partnering and sharing evacuation and rescue services.
 - **Plan Coordination** - Ms. Butch explained that the State highly recommends that either the Ag or OSFP Councils have representation on the Economic Development Council (EDC) to economically plan to support farmers. M/Grbelja will look into crossover among the Ag, OSFP, OEM and EDC councils.
 - **The 11th Annual Emergency Working Group (AEWG) Symposium** - will be held on February 25th in Westhampton, NJ. Ms. Butch attended the symposium last year and suggested that a member of the OEM group attend this year's program. M/Grbelja agreed that an OEM member, such as Mr. Ken Gann and/or Mr. Lester Jargowsky, as well as a member of the fire department attend the symposium.
- **Farm Conservation Plan Seminar** – The speaker, Nicole Ciccaglione, would like to use a Millstone farm as an example for the seminar. Ms. Butch suggested using the Lee Farm; M/Grbelja will speak with Township Committee members and request the necessary permissions. Ms. Butch will contact Ms. Ciccaglione to

request re-scheduling the seminar for the OSFP Council regular monthly meeting on February 28th because farm conservation plans are required for all preserved farms.

➤ **Fundraisers**

- **Clambake** – Potential dates for the fundraiser are June 1st or June 8th at the Clarksburg Inn.
 - **Millstone Day 2008** – The Secretary will submit an application to the recreation department for the same location and requirements as 2007.
- **2007 Annual Report** – The 2007 Annual Report was submitted to the Township Committee. M/Grbelja read the list of accomplishments and commended the Council for a tremendous job compiling the Municipal Farmland Plan and for educating the public through seminars and the Council's website and for partnering with the Open Space Council to produce newsletters and organize fundraisers. Chairman Romano explained that any 2007 goals that haven't been achieved will become goals for 2008.

New Business

- **2008 Annual State Agricultural Convention** – The convention will be held beginning Monday, February 4, through Wednesday, February 6, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cherry Hill. The registration deadline is January 19th. Mr. Romano distributed program information and encouraged Council members to attend Monday's session which will be about protecting the environment and farm viability. Mr. Asprocolas will be attending the convention.
- **2008 Goals** – The Council's goals for 2008 include the following:
- Preparation of a municipal OEM Animal Action Plan
 - Establishment of a local Open Farm Market
 - Agricultural/Open Space representation on the OEM and EDC
 - Updating the Council website with state and county Department of Agriculture and DEP contact information
 - Educational goals: farm conservation (re-scheduled from 2007), food safety and pesticide handling seminars for local farmers

Next Meeting

February 4, 2008

At 8:52 PM a Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas with a Second offered by Ms. Butch and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher