

**Agriculture Advisory Committee Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 15, 2012**  
**8:00 PM**

In Attendance:

Chairman Bob Puskas, Gary Randolph, Cathy Blumig, Fran Varacalli

Absent: Manny Manioudakis, Frank Hasner

Meeting called to order 8:12pm by Chairman Puskas

Approval of February 16, 2012 Meeting minutes

G. Randolph made a motion to approve minutes of the February 16, 2012 minutes

C. Blumig seconded the Motion. Motion passed.

F. Varacalli gave the OSTF financial report - \$15,064,397,64.00 in the Fund as of March 1, 2012.

There being no one from the public present the public portion of the meeting the Chairman Puskas proceeds to Old Business on the Agenda.

Old business:

Farmland Outreach letters C. Blumig made a motion to approve the Farmland Outreach Letter and mail it to the targeted farm owners.

G. Randolph 2nd the motion. Motion passed.

Farmland Leases:

F. Varacalli is waiting for copies of the leases from the Clerk who is out until the end of March.

New business

F. Varacalli reported that the township holds the farmland easements on eight farms the town preserved. The township will begin a yearly monitoring program to ensure the deed restrictions are being upheld by the farmer. The monitoring visit consists of walking the property and taking pictures. The monitoring report and pictures are kept in a binder. F. Varacalli will draft a letter to send to the farm owners advising them of an upcoming monitoring date. The farm owners are invited to attend the monitoring visit. F. Varacalli and Chairman Puskas will monitor the farms. The anticipated dates of the monitoring will be later in 2012.

Somerset County 2011 Preserved Farmland Annual Report -was released. F. Varacalli will get copies for the Committee Member.

MyCentraljersey news Article Business Group looks to Promote Somerset County as agri-tourism attraction. Copies of the article were handed out to the Committee Members as it may be a topic of interest for farming in the County.

F. Varacalli Notified this Committee about March 26, 2012 7pm - Needs and Recreation the Franklin Twp. Farmland Plan needs to be updated and approved by the State Agriculture Development Committee(SADC). F. Varacalli, J. Loos have a meeting scheduled with M. Healey, Township Planner, to discuss what needs to be updated and submitted for the SADC approval.

There being no new business on the Agenda for Executive Session C. Blumig made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

G. Randolph seconded the Motion. Motion Passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm

Next Agriculture Advisory Committee is April 19, 2012