

ADAMS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
September 2, 2026 at 7:00 pm**

Attendance:

Members - Attending In-person:

Craig Yingling, Dave Wenk, Doyle Waybright, Tyler Nell, and George Weikert

Members - Attending by phone:

Sidney Kuhn, Ben Mearns, and George Taughinbaugh

Absent:

Dave Boyer

Staff-Attending In-person:

Ellen Dayhoff, Mark Clowney, and LeighAnn Abraham

Staff- Absent:

Kelly Koch

Staff-Attending by phone:

Assistant Solicitor Sean Mott (7:38 pm – 7:50 pm)

Guests:

Roy Pool, Ginger Bryant, Kurt Dustin and Gayl Dustin

The September 2, 2026 meeting of the Adams County Agricultural Land Preservation Board commenced at 7:02 pm in the Planning Conference Room at the Adams County Agricultural & Natural Resources Center. Mr. Yingling called the meeting to order.

I. Board Business

A. Approval of August 5, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Wenk made a motion to approve the August 5, 2026, ACALPB minutes; Mr. Nell seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

B. Public Comments/Updates/Announcements – Board reappointments for the three citizen positions and one contractor position are due in January. Please let Ellen know if you intend to remain on the Board.

The Chair acknowledged Gayl and Kurt Dustin who were in attendance as well as Mr. Pool and Ms. Bryant. Neither party wished to speak at this time.

C. New Business

1. PFPA Roundtable – Roundtable meeting was held August 19, 2026 via zoom call. Discussions included: Rural enterprise, barn weddings and parking, York County transmission lines, subdivisions and Federal easements.

Member meeting is scheduled for November with further discussion on the above topics.

2. Governor Event – (D. Wenk) – Governor Shapiro and Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding visited Three Springs Farm on Thursday, August 20. The Governor announced a \$10 million recovery grant program to help fruit growers who lost crops during the April freeze. The program will pay those affected on a per acre payment for any farm with more than 30% damage. September 30, 2026 is the deadline to submit a claim. Link to apply will be shared with the BOD.

Also, a low interest emergency loan is also available via the FSA office.

3. Chobani plans to invest \$1.2 billion to establish its first dairy manufacturing operation in Pennsylvania. The project is expected to create more than 900 jobs and dramatically increase demand for milk produced by the state's dairy farmers.

D. Legislative Updates/Issues

1. PA Farm Bureau Updates (Mark Clowney, Dave Wenk) - none
2. HB 1059 (non-profits) and HB 2584 (smaller tracts)- nothing new at this time.

II. Updates

A. Township Updates

1. ASAs (Mark Clowney) - Freedom Township recently conducted a 7-year ASA review. A 2.77 acre parcel requested to be included into the township ASA. After staff review, it was determined the parcel did not meet the requirements to be part of the ASA. The Adams County Planning Commission recommended not including it into the Freedom Township ASA.

B. Mt. Joy (Ben Mearns) – comp plan review

1. Discussions about downsizing the mixed-use district along Baltimore Pike.
2. On the current Zoning Map parcels are split and they plan to put the entire parcel in one or the other zoning district.
3. Ben mentioned that they have received positive feedback from the County on the zoning map changes. The County recommends using parcel-based zoning designations versus setting a specific distance back on a property.

- C. LCAC Updates (Mark Clowney)
 - 1. Land Conservancy recently preserved the Bishop property off Bullfrog Road, 100.21 acres. It was preserved by the new owners, Jeff and Betsy Yingling.
 - 2. The annual summer picnic is September 13th at the Daniel Lady Farm.
- D. Parks, Recreation and Green Space Grant Program

The application cycle closed August 31, 2026. Kelly will provide an update at the October meeting.
- E. Ag Discovery Center (Mark) - Amanda Gietka has been hired to fill the Executive Director position.

III. Round 16 - Please refer to Round 16 Financial/Status Report

- A. Sentz Farm (XVI-53) – Offer accepted. In process to ACC and State.
- B. Heller Farm (XVI-42) – Offer accepted. In process to ACC and State. There is an issue with 2 driveway encroachment areas. Mr. Jerry Boyd Smith admitted that they put the driveways in without Heller’s permission. Attorney George drafted documents for the Smith’s to sign stating that once their house is sold, they are responsible to remove these two encroachments. Mr. Smith plans to discuss this with Mr Heller and hopefully sign the document soon so we can move forward with this farm.
- C. Jeffcoat (XVI-41) – Butcher house discussion/appraisal process. Landowners decided to not exclude the Reichart’s butcher shop, as the Clean and Green rollback would not make it worth it Appraisal has been ordered.
- D. Fletcher (XVI-04) – Appraisal ordered

IV. Inspections, Transfers, Subdivision, Rural Enterprise Applications, Other Issues

- A. Welty Farm – wetland restoration. Assistant Solicitor Sean Mott joined the meeting via the conference line to explain that after speaking with State Department of Agriculture Attorney, it was decided that these types of wetland mitigation projects will not be approved in the future in any way. We were hoping that PDA would work with DEP toward a solution but according to Attorney Adam Morris, conversations are not going well. Legal reasoning – Department’s concern is that ag land where the Commonwealth and/or County paid for a conservation easement would be taken out of production. Discussion regarding those that have been approved in the past and it was answered that those decisions were made ‘under different leadership’. Mr. Waybright asked from a legal standpoint, how solid is the PDA position? Is there an appeal process? Ellen answered that at the County level, no, but the landowner could appeal.

Ellen noted that Berks County has a project in process which they were initially told by PDA it was 'ok' to move forward on, as long as the practices were made part of their conservation plan. Their Administrator is in the process of looking into their options.

Attorney Mott will send a letter to Mr. Welty explaining this decision.

B. Alwine Farm Rural Enterprise Acknowledgement

Ellen explained that at the time Alwine Farm was preserved, there was no approval process on Rural Enterprises. In an effort to document all the Rural Enterprises on preserved farms, we will be reaching out to those landowners to fill out these applications. Ellen, Mark and Kelly visited the Alwine farm as part of their annual inspection and reviewed the Rural Enterprise application with Travis Alwine which includes a corn maze, pumpkin patch, you pick sweet corn, produce and farm market building which they also use as a greenhouse. An existing gravel driveway is utilized for parking.

Mr. Nell made a motion to approve the Rural Enterprise application for the Alwine Farm; seconded by Mr. Weikert. Motion carried.

C. Murphy Farm – Approve location of 10-acre subdivision for the one permitted additional house and to have Board Chair sign final plan when complete.

This farm was preserved prior to any subdivision guidelines. Landowners would like to subdivide 10 acres for another house. Board discussed future subdivision possibilities. It must also be noted that the one permitted residence will be allocated to the 10-acre parcel. This also must be noted in BOTH new deeds.

Mr. Nell made a motion to approve the 10-acre subdivision for their one permitted residence and request that our current Subdivision Guidelines and the notation regarding the additional house be noted and recorded with both the new deed for the 10 acres as well as the remaining land deed. Mr. Wenk seconded the motion. Motion carried.

D. Pool/Tumbleweed Farm – Applications for Rural Enterprises (2) – See site map

1. Seasonal pick-your-own operation of pumpkins, sunflowers and vegetables, during July-October, depending on crop availability, utilizing approximately 6 acres for parking in grass, crop or hay fields

Ellen reviewed the application. It is noted that a total of 9 acres would be utilized between the two applications specifically for parking, and that these parking areas will be a crop, hay or grass field. It was also noted that the various crops as specified (pumpkins, sunflowers, vegetables) could and should be rotated as needed within the project area as depicted on the map provided with the application.

Mr. Wenk made a motion to approve the Rural Enterprise of a seasonal pick your own agricultural operation for pumpkins, sunflowers and vegetables grown primarily on the farm located at 1030 Mason Dixon Road; Mr. Nell seconded. Motion carried.

2. Seasonal corn maze with accessory uses

Ellen reviewed the application. The corn maze would operate approximately from September through November from 10 am to 6 pm. Parking as noted above.

Mr. Wenk made a motion to approve the Rural Enterprise of a seasonal corn maze on the farm located at 1030 Mason Dixon Road; Mr. Nell seconded. Motion carried.

Cumberland Township Memorandum Opinion Findings of Fact in relation to their Conditional Use Application to the Township was reviewed by Ellen.

Mr. Pool began asking questions about food trucks, etc. on the property. Ellen will send them the appropriate forms to submit a request to this Board for those uses.

OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION (Start: 8:23 pm)

V. Application Round 17

A. Preliminary Rankings and Stewardship Scoring

Mark reviewed statistics. Stewardship score is not included in the preliminary score. The Board needs to determine how far down the list we want to go for stewardship scores.

Township money for Phase I – Ellen asked, timing wise, when should we notify townships about possibly putting money in their budget for preservation? Ellen will draft a letter to the townships with farms in the top 50% at this time explaining the new process and ask for them to consider budget line item for 2027.

Brief discussion on the 2027 Adams County budget for preservation. Sherri Clayton-Williams has kept our allocation the same, and we will know in February or March what our 2027 State match will be.

Time for applicants to get back to us on scores: Send applicants preliminary score letters.

Application XVII-41: Mark gave background information on the farm. Ellen, Mark and Kelly would like to exclude 15 acres around a racetrack (commercial business) on the farm. Mark mentioned that excluding the 15 acres would not change the ranking of the farm.

Ellen would like to have a conversation with landowners about their plan for the racetrack and potential future development, etc.

CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION (Close: 8:57 pm)

VI. Application Round 17

A. Preliminary Rankings – ACTION to approve

Mr. Nell made a motion to approve preliminary rankings with exception of application XVII-41; Mr. Wenk seconded. Motion carried.

B. Stewardship Scoring – ACTION to set ranking cut off

Mr. Wenk made a motion to move forward on the first 15 farms for stewardship scoring.; seconded by Mr. Nell. Motion carried.

VII. Adjourn

Mr. Nell made a motion to adjourn the September 2, 2026 ACALPB meeting at 9:00 pm; Mr. Wenk seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



LeighAnn Abraham, Secretary