

# MINUTES

## Anne Arundel County Agriculture Commission

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – 9:00AM

Members Present: Amy Crone (Chair), Deana Tice (Vice Chair), Al Tucker, Gary Palmer, Dr. Stacy Eckles, John Faber, Billy Ford; Online: Anna Chaney, John Faber, Brad Nordholm,

Member Absent: Gerardo Martinez

Ex-Officio Present: Shelley Garrett, Lynn Miller, Dave Myers, Emily Wilson, Michael Stringer, Eddie Franceschi, C. Jane Cox, Billy Gorski, Heather Ersts, Christina Pompa

Ex-Officio Absent: Amy Gowan, Greg Swain

Guests: none

- I. Meeting called to order at 9:05AM by Amy Crone. Quorum established.
- II. Approve Minutes- Amy Crone presented draft minutes from the August 2024 meeting. Shelley Garrett requested that they be amended to include her attendance at the August meeting. Gary Palmer moved to approve the minutes as presented. Deanna Tice seconded the motion. Motion passed.

III. Committee Discussion:

- a. Administrative: The Commission is still without a Secretary and needs someone to volunteer. Amy Crone will be resigning from the Commission after the December meeting, as she needs more time to assist family members.
- b. Agriculture Education: The Committee continues to meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month. Discussion of the four main careers needed: agricultural mechanics, veterinary science, plant and animal science, and equine skills. If these were to be added as part of schools' curricula, there is a need for industry support as to where interns would be needed. Thus a survey of the agricultural industry is needed across AA County to see where the needs are and who could help with high school graduates.

The Ag Education Committee posed the question of how do we accomplish this survey? Further discussion ensued regarding challenges and lack of infrastructure in schools (lacking shops for example), and also referenced potential assistance from MDA and/or Farm Bureau, as the latter has been working on certifications that would be accepted in CTE programs. Discussion wrapped up on the idea of a workforce study as an additional potential part of the survey.

- c. Legislative: Draft legislation to codify the Committee was finalized; need to confirm the date that it is proposed for the Council meeting. Update on discussion about equine community and issues about liability as well as about classification of equine facilities as commercial. MD Horse Council and Farm Bureau working on these issues – including potential legislation in 2025 session – and Brad Nordholm will keep Ag Commission apprised of any notable developments and/or need for support. No additional follow up on DPW discussion regarding landfills; Greg Swain to meet with DPW to determine options and potential next steps. Anna Chaney mentioned her discussion with Eddie Franceschi about

wastewater and recommended a tour with DPW; Commission members should follow up with Anna directly about this if they are interested in this topic.

- d. Research and Analysis: Region 8 zoning discussions happening now; will hold meeting specifically for Commission members to provide feedback in November/December. Anna Chaney is also serving on the Regional Ag committee.

## II. New Business

- a. MDA MD Ag Commission updates: last week held successful tour in AA County; impressed by the farms and businesses visited. New certification program called LEEF being rolled out to highlight positive practices.
- b. Discussion of concerns regarding 80 decibel limit being proposed in local ordinances; including potential need for exemption of agriculture from this limit. The legislation was state enabling; only a few jurisdictions doing pilot programs and there is a sunset provision so may not affect AA.
- c. Soil Conservation District updates: NCRS & EQUIP have obligated under contract \$725k, so there is funding through MDA's small farms projects. Mitch & Adam are points of contact at SCD for folks to follow up with regarding funding for farms.
- d. Discussion of deer raffle; trying to start one up for a 3-day hunt in January of 2025 but AAEDC is waiting for answer from DNR first. If AAEDC doesn't want to cosponsor then AA county FB will sponsor & will give out \$1k; will have 3 places to check in, will get raffle ticket, and then after hunt will provide prize.
- e. Trunk or treat had 1500 people come through at Knightongale Farm; 42 trunks signed up and was successful fundraiser.
- f. Deanna Tice summarized efforts to help those affected by the hurricane in North Carolina; many trailers have been coordinated and delivered to assist farmers there. Deanna Tice & Shelley Garrett will meet with emergency management to discuss how to ensure fair location as drop off point if any similar disaster were to happen here.

Deanna Tice moved to adjourn the meeting. Billy Ford seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 10:05AM. *A copy of the recorded minutes is available for further detail.*

### ***Meeting Dates for 2024:***

December 19

*Meeting agenda, minutes and audio can be found here:*

[www.aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions/agriculture-commission](http://www.aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions/agriculture-commission)