

MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Michigan State University
Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center
1791 Hillandale Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

PRESENT:

Trever Meachum, Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Brian Pridgeon, Vice Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Dru Montri, Secretary, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Patricia Bergdahl, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Charlie Meintz, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Gary McDowell, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Meachum called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development to order at 9:04 a.m. on September 18, 2019. Commissioner Montri called the roll with Commissioners Bergdahl, Meachum, Meintz, Montri, and Pridgeon, and Director McDowell present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MEINTZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 18, 2019. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF JULY 18, 2019, MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY 18, 2019, MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON. MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, November 6, 2019, to be held at Byron Center Township Board Room, 8085 Byron Center Road, Byron Center, Michigan.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND TRAVEL

Commissioners shared information relative to agriculture in their respective areas, and details around recent industry meetings they attended, as well as their upcoming agriculture events. They noted farmers continue to endure various weather-related challenges, as well as labor issues.

Commissioners Bergdahl, Meintz, Montri, and Pridgeon expressed their appreciation to Commissioner Meachum for hosting the agriculture tour in his area yesterday, noting it was both educational and enjoyable.

Commissioners Bergdahl, Meachum, Meintz, Montri, and Pridgeon traveled to attend today's meeting. There was no other travel submitted for approval.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MONTRI. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES

Commissioner Meachum reviewed a retirement resolution before the Commission honoring Jim Byrum in recognition of his outstanding service and advocacy for the Michigan agriculture industry.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED THE RESOLUTION FOR JIM BYRUM BE ADOPTED WITH BEST WISHES FOR HIS LONG AND HEALTHY RETIREMENT. COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Montri reported the Farm Market Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMP) Task Force is moving forward with changes in the GAAMP for inclusion in the 2020 GAAMPs process. She also shared information on the Michigan Agricultural Mediation Program available to farm communities.

Commissioner Montri requested the Commission and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) help ensure the implementation of reasonable wastewater permitting for the agriculture processing industry that also allows transition periods for small business.

Commissioner Montri asked the topics of Industrial Hemp and Recreational and Medical Marijuana be included on the November Commission agenda, particularly issues with which farmers are dealing.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director McDowell thanked Commissioner Meachum for the outstanding tour yesterday. He shared details of internal meetings in which he recently participated, including the Governor's Agriculture Roundtables across the state, Center for Excellence Field Day held in Clayton, Governor's Great Lakes Presidential Agenda, UP State Fair, visit to Sklarczyk Seed Farm (named Ag Exporter of the Year), Farm Progress Show held in Decatur, Illinois, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Annual meeting held in New Mexico, and Michigan Agri-Business Association Outlook Conference. He reported the department continues to work toward an official crop disaster declaration.

He invited Commissioners to join the MDARD Annual Employee Awards Ceremony which is scheduled for November 5 in Lansing.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

There was no public comment relative to agenda items.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (MSU) SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER (SWMREC) OVERVIEW: Dr. William Shane, Station Coordinator

Dr. Shane welcomed the Commission to SWMREC today, noting it is one of five MSU Research Centers in the state with an emphasis on fruit research. He shared an overview of SWMREC's history and outstanding professional staff members, and reviewed the equipment and facilities upgrades and wide range of recent and ongoing projects being conducted. All of that is made possible through the MSU collaborating departments, as well as numerous external funding contributors, toward the mission of enhancing the economic viability of Michigan's agriculture industry.

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM (MAEAP) STANDARDS PROPOSED REVISIONS: Jim Johnson, Division Director, and Joe Kelpinski, MAEAP Program Manager, Environmental Stewardship Division

Mr. Johnson advised the MAEAP Standards before the Commission today are the culmination of work which is happening throughout the entire year. The Commission has the statutory responsibility to annually approve the MAEAP Standards, changes for which were introduced at the last meeting, with consideration for approval during today's meeting. If approved, these standards would be implemented and used for risk mitigation and MAEAP verification for individual operations over the next year. Most of the system changes are minor. The exception is the Forestry, Wetlands, and Habitat System, which is relatively new and continues to be improved.

Mr. Kelpinski reviewed changes in the Forestry, Wetlands, and Habitat System.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR THE FORESTRY, WETLANDS, AND HABITAT SYSTEM AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEINTZ. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Kelpinski advised only minor changes for consistency were made to the Farmstead System, including one relating to fuel tanks to comply with state law.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR THE FARMSTEAD SYSTEM AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Kelpinski advised there are no substantial changes recommended for the remaining systems.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM STANDARDS FOR THE CROPPING SYSTEM FOR FRUIT, THE CROPPING SYSTEM FOR FIELD CROPS AND VEGETABLES, THE GREENHOUSE SYSTEM, THE CROPPING FOR NURSERY AND CHRISTMAS TREE SYSTEM, AND THE

LIVESTOCK SYSTEM AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEINTZ MOTION CARRIED.

GENERALLY ACCEPTED PROCESSING PRACTICES (GAPP): Jim Johnson, Division Director, Environmental Stewardship Division

Mr. Johnson advised the Commission is statutorily required to annually approve the Generally Accepted Fruit, Vegetables, Dairy, Meat, and Grain Processing Practices for Noise and Odor (GAPP) as dictated by the Legislature in 1998. Practices were developed specifically around noise and odor related issues, and although the department continues to work with processors, the GAPP has never been used. Processors have been able to handle issues themselves, making whatever changes are needed to address any complaints. As indicated in the materials provided to the Commission, there are no changes recommended this year and they can be approved as they currently exist.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE THE GENERALLY ACCEPTED FRUIT, VEGETABLES, DAIRY, MEAT, AND GRAIN PROCESSING PRACTICES FOR NOISE AND ODOR AS PRESENTED, WITH CORRECTION TO UPDATE REFERENCES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MEINTZ. MOTION CARRIED.

RECESS AND RECONVENE

Chairperson Meachum recessed the meeting at 10:14 a.m. for a brief break. He reconvened the meeting at 10:29 a.m.

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS (TB) UPATE: Dr. Nora Wineland, State Veterinarian and Division Director, Animal Industry Division

Dr. Wineland provided an update relative to Bovine TB positive cattle herds in Michigan, as well as special surveillance areas and circle testing plans.

She reported Memorandum of Understanding discussions with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) began on May 30, with the initial written proposal submitted on June 14. Subsequent conversations have ensued, as well as amended proposals, with the most recent being submitted September 9.

In addition, improved comprehensive Herd and Hunter Bovine TB Connections meetings are being facilitated and held jointly with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), in partnership with USDA Wildlife Services and MSU Extension to create discussion and engagement around bovine TB topics between hunters and cattle owners.

EMERGING CONTAMINANT UPDATE: Steve Sliver, Executive Director, Michigan PFAS Action Response Team, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

Mr. Sliver provided an update regarding Michigan's PFAS (perfluoroalkyl substances) Action Response Team (MPART). The team coordinates efforts from seven State of Michigan departments to help ensure the most effective and efficient approach to

protecting public health and the environment from PFAS contamination. MDARD is key to making sure we have that data-driven science-based approach to addressing the issues in agriculture. Estimates indicate there may be 100 impacted communities in the state identified by the end of this year. This ultimately demonstrates that Michigan currently is comprehensively and aggressively testing, continuing to learn, and ultimately protecting its citizens more than any other state.

The Director advised Michigan's PFAS efforts are being recognized nationally, as confirmed during the recent NASDA meeting. Other states are looking to Michigan for advice.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT FUND REQUEST: Peter Anastor, Division Director, Agriculture Development Division

Mr. Anastor advised two Food and Agriculture Investment Fund projects are presented for Commission consideration today.

Paul Gabriel and Brian Scherle, of SFT Foods, LLC, doing business as Browndog Creamery, shared information about their company and details around their project, which will allow for wholesale and distribution growth through an increase in production and efficiencies.

Mr. Anastor advised MDARD staff recommend the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development approve a Food and Agriculture Investment Fund performance-based grant of \$75,000 for SFT Foods, LLC.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE A FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT FUND PERFORMANCE-BASED GRANT OF \$75,000 FOR SFT FOODS, LLC. COMMISSIONER MEINTZ SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

Richard Kobe, of the MSU Department of Forestry, shared details around their outreach project, which will leverage the \$100 million mass timber Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Teaching and Learning Facility currently under construction at MSU. This is the first mass timber building (incorporating cross laminated timber) in Michigan and its adjacent states. The primary goal is to stimulate additional mass timber construction in Michigan, as well as neighboring states.

Mr. Anastor advised MDARD staff recommend the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development approve a Food and Agriculture Investment Fund performance-based grant of \$75,000 for the MSU Department of Forestry. He advised the funding requested is for assistance with the outreach partnership to magnify impact of the project.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE A FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT FUND PERFORMANCE-BASED GRANT OF \$75,000 FOR THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY. COMMISSIONER BERGDAHL SECONDED. COMMISSIONER

MONTRI ABSTAINED DUE TO HER AFFILIATION WITH MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY. MOTION CARRIED.

MICHIGAN INFRASTRUCTURE COUNCIL UPDATE (MIC): Erin Kuhn, MIC Member

Ms. Kuhn shared the philosophy behind and the importance of the Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC). This foundation for a statewide integrated asset management system includes MIC and its two sister councils – the Water Asset Management Council within MDNR and the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), and the Transportation Asset Management Council – which demonstrates a consistent, holistic approach toward asset management plans.

She shared details around the mission and goals of MIC as they work toward a 30-year plan to align collaborative strategies for infrastructure management. Their goals to educate, collaborate, coordinate, prioritize, and invest will help ensure that Michigan's assets are effectively and efficiently constructed, operated, and maintained.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Kenneth McFarlane, Chief Deputy Director

Chief Deputy Director McFarlane advised the budget has been a key dictating factor regarding almost all recent legislative activity. He referred to the MDARD Legislative Update provided to the Commissioners and reviewed the status around bills of interest to the department. The department continues to work with legislators to stress the importance of agriculture in our state, which is producing future legislative ideas.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment on non-agenda items was requested.

ADJOURN

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER BERGDAHL SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Attachments:

- A) *Agenda*
- B) *Agriculture and Rural Development Commission Meeting Minutes July 18, 2019*
- C) *Retirement Resolution Honoring Jim Byrum*
- D) *Michigan Agricultural Mediation Program Press Release*
- E) *Director McDowell – Issues of Interest Report*
- F) *MSU Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center Overview*
- G) *2019 Proposed MAEAP Standards*
- H) *Generally Accepted Fruit, Vegetables, Dairy, Meat, and Grain Processing Practices for Noise and Odor*
- I) *Bovine TB Program Update*
- J) *SFT Foods, LLC Project Memo and Terms Sheet*
- K) *MSU Department of Forestry – Mass Timber STEM Building Project Memo, Terms Sheet, and Flyer*
- L) *Magnifying the Impact of MSU STEM Facility Presentation*
- M) *Building a Strategic Framework for Michigan's Integrated Infrastructure Asset Management*
- N) *Legislative Status – September 2019*