

**MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM  
(MAEAP) ADVISORY COUNCIL (AC)**

**JUNE 12, 2017**

**1:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Lori Phalen and the Clinton County Conservation District  
Russell and Laura Braun, Golden Maple Farms  
1774 S. Shepardsville Road  
Ovid, MI 48866

**ATTENDEES**

Laura Campbell (Co-Chair), Dr. Ronald Bates (Co-Chair), Warren Suchovsky, Scott Simon, Tom Zimmicki, Brian Geerlings, Jody Sharrard, Emily Marx, Dean Letter, Ken Blight, Lori Phalen, Rich Bowman, Dan Zorn

**RESOURCE**

Joe Kelpinski, Josh Appleby, Laura Doud, Emily Reinart, Meredith Smith, Kevin Gould, Ben Tirrell, Tom Young, Heather Casteel (Scribe)

**PARTNER/GUESTS**

Ben Chapin, Jon Bartholic, Mary Kelpinski, Lindsey Martin, Kelcie Sweeney, Russell and Laura Braun, Andrea Polverento

**WELCOME, APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES AND ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

Ron Bates started the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and thanked Mr. and Mrs. Braun for hosting this meeting on their farm and to Lori Phalen and the Clinton County Conservation District for arranging a tour and the MAEAP AC meeting.

Meeting began with a round of introductions around the room.

No additional agenda items.

**MOTION: WARREN SUCHOVSKY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES FROM APRIL 10, 2017. SECONDED BY LORI PHALEN. ALL IN FAVOR SAY AYE, UNANIMOUS AYES, HEARING NO NAYS, MEETING NOTES WERE APPROVED, MOTION CARRIED.**

**AROUND THE HORN**

Everyone around the room shared their recent activities and events from their organization.

**SYSTEM COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**LIVESTOCK**

Kevin Gould reported that the Livestock System Sub-committee meets tomorrow on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Kevin also informed the group that in May 2017, Charles Gould has launched a manure haulers certification program that has been in progress for the past 15 years. Charles has been working in conjunction with the Michigan Agri-Business Association.

The sub-committee will include some standards for hauling manure in next year's recommendations for the Livestock\*A\*Syst.

## **FARMSTEAD**

Laura Doud reported that the Farmstead System Sub-committee has not met since the last AC meeting.

## **CROPPING**

Josh Appleby thanked all of the sub-committees for their work regarding all of the MAEAP Standards. Josh reported that the Standards changes have been incorporated into the A\*Syst bulletins. The revised protocol developed by MAEAP staff has allowed for more efficient printing of the documents by MSU.

## **FOREST, WETLANDS AND HABITAT**

Warren Suchovsky reported that the FWH System Sub-committee has not met since the last AC meeting.

Karen Potter-Witter is ready to retire from MSU and the FWH committee will be looking for a new chair or co-chairs.

## **COMMUNICATIONS WORKGROUP**

Emily Reinart suggested that a MAEAP thank you card be sent out to Karen Potter-Witter, MSU and Mike Bitondo, DEQ, for their work on the Advisory Council.

Emily reported that she attended the MACD Conference, in Bay City, and enjoyed the opening speaker, Bobby Whitescarver, retired NRCS Conservationist. Mr. Whitescarver shared 7 things that Emily wanted to pass along: 1.) Set your own goals, 2.) Build trust, 3.) Build a winning team, 4.) Master the processes, 5.) Make it simple, 6/) Market and remarket, and 7.) Know your product. Emily recommended Mr. Whitescarver's web site: [www.gettingmoreontheground.com](http://www.gettingmoreontheground.com)

Emily welcomed Meredith Smith, MDARD, MAEAP Communications Representative, and introduced Meredith as the MAEAP Communications Co-chair.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

Joe reported to the group that he would like to ask all the commodity partners to discuss with MDARD staff what data/information their organizations would like to have collected in the new MAEAP database.

Partners should review their sustainability information needs and let us know what they would like to show to their end users. Also, what practices that producers implement would they like to document, to demonstrate environmental sustainability to their customers focus.

Joe reported that he is hopeful to have a list from all interested partners by the end of August.

**MOTION: LORI PHALEN MADE A MOTION TO WORK WITH COMMODITY GROUPS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY DATA COLLECTION, DEAN LETTER SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR SAY AYE, UNANIMOUS AYES, HEARING NO NAYS, MOTION CARRIED.**

### **MAEAP DATABASE UPDATE**

Joe informed the group that MDARD is finally working with DTMB for improvements to the database that DeLoitte / Salesforce has delivered. The new DTMB team has started addressing the issues right away. MAEAP staff have provided the top 20 most urgent fixes required. Structural fixes are on the way and staff will continue to work on improvements through September 2017.

### **MAEAP VERIFICATION REPORT**

Joe read the MAEAP Verifications Over Time spreadsheet.

Joe reported that the Director has approved all the implemented funding recommendations and gave a brief overview of the items.

### **BMP PROJECT**

Kelcie Sweeney, Clinton County Conservation District's Watershed Coordinator, informed the group that the Maple Cost Share Program has been working on implementation of practices that 1.) reduce the sediment going into the rivers, by using buffer strips and cover crops, and 2.) tile control structures, similar to what has been implemented on Russell and Laura Braun's farm. The Braun's farm includes a tributary of the Maple River. A tour of this water / tile control will be conducted after this meeting.

The Maple River Watershed covers 2/3rds of Clinton County, with some areas in Shiawassee and Gratiot Counties as well.

### **LAURA AND RUSSELL BRAUN**

Ron Bates thanked the Brauns for hosting the meeting and MAEAP AC.

Laura Braun said one reason they wanted to be verified is because producers look at ways to improve their financial bottom line, and keeping accurate records and improving soil health can save money. The biggest expense was the fuel tank, but Lindsey moved them through the program quickly and took care of the tile structures.

Laura and Russell Braun led the group on a tour of the farm as well as the tile structure designed to improve water quality.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Laura Campbell reported that MFB is working with the DNR and the Wildlife Federation on pollinator strategy to improve Monarch butterfly native habitats.

**MOTION: LAURA DOUD MOVED THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED.  
SECONDED BY TOM YOUNG. ALL IN FAVOR SAY AYE, UNANIMOUS  
AYES, HEARING NO NAYS, MEETING ADJOURNED.**

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

### **NEXT MAEAP AC MEETING**

**Host:** Jennifer Silveri, MIFFS

**Location:** TBD

**Date:** Monday, October 16, 2017

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Casteel