

**Susquehanna County Agricultural Land Preservation Board
Tentative Meeting Agenda May 13, 2026 @ 5:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes – see page 2

IV. Communications – none

V. Public Comment

VI. Old Business

- A. Dobitsch Farm update – see page 4

VII. New Business

- A. Rank applications received
- B. Chianese Farm application received 4/2/2026 – see page 5
- C. Barbour Farm application received 5/7/26 – see page 6

VIII. Other items of Discussion

- A. Vote on proposed changes to ALPEP Program guide – see page 7
- B. Member concerns or questions

IX. Adjournment

Next Meeting August 12, 2026 @ 5:30 PM

Meeting Minutes February 11, 2026, 5:30 PM

I. Call to Order: Chairman Leonard Wheatley called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Members present included: Commissioner David Darrow, Gene Hubbard, John Benscoter, James Barbour, William Shay, and Allen Scott. and. Absent were Matt Hollbrook, Samantha Ellsworth. Also attending was Agricultural Easement Program Director Patti Peltz.

II. Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge of allegiance was said.

III. Reorganization:

The Chairman appoints a Chairman Pro Tem and a Secretary Pro Tem.

Chairman Pro Tem W Shay asked the Nominating Committee for their report.

The Nominating Committee recommends

Leonard Wheatley as Chairman, W Shay made a motion to accept, A Scott seconded, so carried.

William Shay as Vice-Chairman L Wheatley made a motion to accept, G Hubbard seconded, so carried.

Staff as Secretary.

Chairman Pro Tem called three times for additional nominations from the floor.

There were none. L Wheatley moved that nominations be closed, seconded by W Shay and carried.

Chairman Pro Tem instructed the Secretary to cast the unanimous ballot for the slate of officers as presented for Susquehanna County Agricultural Preservation Board 202.

Chairman Pro Tem closed the Reorganization meeting.

IV. Approval of Minutes: W Shay made the motion, seconded by A Scott to approve the minutes of the December 29, 2025, meeting.

V. Communications: none.

VI. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

VII. Old Business:

Dobitsch Farm update:

To: Farmland Preservation Board

From: Patti L. Peltz

Date: 2/03/2025

Subject: Dobitsch Farm – Update

A survey will need to be conducted.

A complete deed will need to be typed by Attorney Gathany to include the full Agricultural Easement and legal description.

When all paperwork, legal, and survey work is complete, we may then move to get on a state board meeting agenda.

VIII. New Business: none.

IX. Other items of Discussion

Susquehanna County Farmland Preservation updates: Future meeting date Nov 11, 2026 will need to be rescheduled as that is Veterans Day. We will revisit a date for rescheduling at a future meeting.

Member concerns or questions – Board members discussed what it would take to increase the \$1500/acre they are currently offering. W Shay made a motion to look into increasing, seconded by J Barbour.

Ag Days are March 20, 2026, 10am-3pm. They also discussed farm owners that are potentially interested in preservation.

X. Adjournment: L Wheatley made a motion to adjourn at 6:01 PM, J Barbour seconded.

Next Meeting May 13, 2026

Minutes Prepared by:

Patti L. Peltz,

Agricultural Easement Program Director

Certified to be a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Susquehanna County Agricultural Land Preservation Board held on February 11, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leonard Wheatley, Chairman

Susquehanna County Agricultural Land Preservation Board

Dobitsch Farm

To: Farmland Preservation Board
From: Patti L. Peltz
Date: 05/05/2026
Subject: Dobitsch Farm – Update

Outstanding are a completed survey and an Agricultural Easement deed.

A survey is almost complete. The survey description will then be sent to Attorney Gathany for a deed completion.

A state review of the file was requested to see what is still outstanding in the requirements on the county end.

I have requested to have the easement on the agenda for the August 20 state board meeting. Requirements will need to be met by July 31 for final submission with the state.

Once the state approves to move forward, all adjoining landowners will need to be notified of the Agricultural Easement, and a settlement will be scheduled.

Nothing needs to be voted on at this time. We are moving forward as expected.

Chianese Farm

To: Farmland Preservation Board

From: Patti L. Peltz

Date: 05/05/2026

Subject: Chianese Farm

Edward & Gwen Chianese have submitted an application for Agricultural Preservation; it was received on 4/4/2026. The farm is located on Lakeview Road in Jackson Twp.

They are currently listed in the Ag Security Area for Jackson Twp.

Staff visited the farm and met with Ed to address any questions or concerns he would have with the program and explained the process. The farm is beautiful and well maintained. He is a first-generation farm owner and has been on this parcel since 1967. They do have beef cows on the property. There are no natural gas well pads or compressor stations on this parcel.

The landowner does have two parcels but is not including the .77-acre parcel that houses the original 160-year-old farmhouse. They will be preserving 92+ acres.

The Board can review their application and vote to conditionally accept the farm based on their ranking which is available.

The appraiser in the past for Farmland Preservation was VanFleet Appraisals, Clarks Summit, PA.

Staff Recommendation: After ranking, vote to accept the Chianese Farm to advance to the next steps in the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. First would be an appraisal from Van Fleet Appraisals. Followed by a title search, and a survey.

Barbour Farm

To: Farmland Preservation Board

From: Patti L. Peltz

Date: 05/05/2026

Subject: Barbour Farm

Jim & Kim Barbour have submitted an application for Agricultural Preservation; it was received on 5/7/2026. The farm is located on Barbour Hill Road in Liberty Twp.

They are currently listed in the Ag Security Area for Liberty Twp.

Staff visited the farm earlier this year and met with Jim. The farm has quite a family history and is very well maintained. He is a multi-generation farm owner. They do have a specialty A2A2 raw milk. They sell their raw milk to the public along with fresh meats, and a variety of other products in a shoppe right on the family farm.

The landowner does have multiple parcels but will be preserving two parcels totaling 222+ acres.

The Board can review their application and vote to conditionally accept the farm based on their ranking which is available.

The appraiser in the past for Farmland Preservation was VanFleet Appraisals, Clarks Summit, PA.

Staff Recommendation: After ranking, vote to accept the Barbour Farm to advance to the next steps in the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. First would be an appraisal from Van Fleet Appraisals. Followed by a title search, and a survey.

To: Farmland Preservation Board

From: Patti L. Peltz

Date: 05/05/2026

Subject: Program updates

- Page 5, III. Purchase Procedure currently reads “**Submit Application between November 15-March 31 for consideration.**”

Update to “**Submit application for consideration.**”

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XI. Inspection and Enforcement Procedures reads “The Susquehanna County Agricultural Land Preservation Board will do a yearly inspection of the properties on which they hold a conservation easement according to subsection
A. below.

A. A. (138e.202) Inspections.

(1) The county board shall inspect all restricted land within the county at least annually to determine compliance with the applicable deed of easement.

The act was updated in 2013 to State of Pennsylvania Act 914.1(b)(xvii) on page 23:

(xvii) To inspect all agricultural conservation easements within the county on at least a **biennial** basis to determine compliance with the applicable deed of easement. The following shall apply to inspections:

(A) The first inspection shall be completed within one year of the date of easement sale.

- Update our guide to inspect on **biennial basis**, with the exception of newly preserved farms.