



DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING AND PLANNING
Division of Planning & Economic Development
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County of Sussex

SUSSEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MINUTES

February 17, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:32p.m. by Chairperson Peter Southway. The meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, (P.L. Chapter 231.) Proper notice has been sent to the local newspaper, County Website and has been posted on the bulletin board of the County Administrative Center, One Spring Street, Newton, NJ 07860.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Day
Brian Hautau, Vice Chair
Billy Marotta-LaRegina
Caleb Orr
Peter Southway, Chair

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Lisa Chammings
Anthony Lentini

STAFF PRESENT: Autumn Sylvester, P.P. SCADB Administrator/Planning Director
Michael Lavery, Esq., SCADB Counsel
Rudy Dragan, Principal Planning Aide
Summer Malone, Ag. Resource Specialist 3
Corey Minnick, Recording Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: Dianna Morrison, USDA
Steve Komar, County Ag. Agent
Dave Silverthorne, Commissioner Liaison to the SCADB

MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:

A motion was made by Brian Hautau to approve the Minutes of January 20, 2026 as presented. The motion was seconded by Billy Marotta. A roll-call vote was taken. Results were as follow: Brian Hautau-Yes; Lori Day-Yes; Billy Marotta-Yes; and Caleb Orr-Yes. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A. Resurrecting the Beef Industry in New Jersey Forum

Autumn Sylvester briefed the SCADB members on event at the Sussex County Community College about the local beef industry to be held April 29, 2026 10a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

B. USDA Meat & Poultry Expansion Program

Ms. Sylvester briefed the SCADB members on the an email that was requested to be sent out about an event related to the USDA Meat & Poultry Production Expansion Program, which is a grant program. She explained the details of the grant.

RIGHT TO FARM:

A. Commercial Farm - Jamna Farms Resolution

MOTION

A motion was made by Billy Marotta to memorialize the resolution for the SCADB's decision to decline jurisdiction on the complaint that was filed against Jamna Farms. The motion was seconded by Lori Day. A roll-call vote was taken. Results were as follow: Brian Hautau-Yes; Lori Day-Yes; Billy Marotta-Yes; and Caleb Orr-Yes. Motion carried.

AG. AGENT'S REPORT:

Steve Komar briefed the SCADB member on the Vegetable Growers program. He gave an update on the drone program.

FARMLAND PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE:

Ms. Sylvester updated the SCADB members on the changes to the Farmland Plan. She highlighted that the draft, from Barbara Davis, it was reviewed and emailed out. She went over some of the substantive changes that occurred.

There was some discussion between the SCADB members, Mr. Lavery and Ms. Sylvester about the plan update timeline and process. Ms. Sylvester provided the timeline and plan adoption process.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Green Valley Farms – SOE Application & B. Tranquillity Farms – SOE Application

Ms. Sylvester reviewed the Special Occasion Event (SOE) Applications for Green Valley Farms and Tranquillity Farm with the SCADB concurrently. There was discussion on the number of events, event types, and qualifying criteria. Both farm operations met the statutory criteria to qualify for SOEs and each application complies with SOE regulations. There was a request to approve both in the same motion.

MOTION

A motion was made by Lori Day to approve the Green Valley Farms SOE Application and the Tranquillity Farms SOE Application. The motion was seconded by Brian Hautau. A roll-call vote was taken. Results were as follow: Brian Hautau-Yes; Lori Day-Yes; Peter Southway-Yes; Billy Marotta-Yes; and Caleb Orr-Yes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Wilson Taylor Farm received Green Light Approval

Ms. Sylvester briefed the SCADB members that the Wilson Taylor Farm received Green Light Approval on January 29, 2026. There was some discussion between Ms. Sylvester and the SCADB members about the property and appraisal.

- B. Duddy – White Horse Estate, LLC Site Visit Update

Ms. Sylvester briefed the SCADB members about the site visit not happening due to the snow recently. The SCADB members decided to wait until warmer weather to do the site visit.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairperson Southway opened the meeting to the public.

Commissioner Dave Silverthorne introduced himself to the SCADB members.

Dianna Morrison, USDA, briefed the SCADB members on the various funding plans that are going to be coming in the near future. She described some details of some of the programs that are eligible. There was some discussion on dissemination of the material between Ms. Morrison and the SCADB members.

Chairperson Southway also wanted to inform the SCADB members that the NJ State Board of Agriculture is looking for a candidate for their board. There was some discussion between SCADB members and Ms. Sylvester about particulars of the position.

Chairperson Southway closed the meeting to the public.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION

A motion was made by Lori Day to move into executive session to discuss ongoing litigation. The motion was seconded by Billy Marotta and carried unanimously.

MOTION

A motion was made by Brian Hautau to emerge from executive session. The motion was seconded by Lori Day and carried unanimously.

The SCADB emerged from Executive Session at 8:16p.m. No official action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Caleb Orr. The motion was seconded by Brian Hautau and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:17p.m.