



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE

Department of Agricultural Preservation

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

Katie Stevens, Director
Shannon O'Neil, Administrator

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board

Open Session Meeting

Minutes of Monday, September 22nd, 2025
Winchester Hall – Second Floor, Hearing Room
Board Approved 10/27/2025

- I. **Call to Order:** Matt Toms called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.
- II. **Attendance:** Matt Toms, Vice Chair, Caroline Orlowski, Secretary, Lisa Gaver, Brenda Ripley, Council Member Steve McKay, Liaison, absent, and Sandra Tucker, Chair, absent
Shannon O'Neil, Ag Preservation Program Administrator, Beth Ahalt, Ag Preservation Program Specialist II, Jenna Zimmerman, Ag Preservation Program Specialist I, and Katie Stevens, Director of Office of Ag
- III. **Approval of the Agenda:** Lisa Gaver made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Caroline Orlowski. The motion was approved 4-0-0-1.
- IV. **Approval of the Minutes from August 25th, 2025 Ag Board Meeting:** Caroline Orlowski made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 25th, 2025 Ag Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Lisa Gaver. The motion was approved 4-0-0-1.
- V. **Reports-** No reports.
- VI. **Old Business-** No old business.
- VII. **New Business-**
 - A. **Miranda Ducey, Board and Commissions-**Miranda presented to the Ag Board about her position and her role with the county, as the Administrative Coordinator of all the Boards and Commissions. This year the boards and commissions created an online application and will be more of a streamlined process. There is another board and commissions training scheduled for October 7th, 2025 at Winchester Hall. This Open Meetings act training is a requirement for anyone who holds a title on the Ag Board.
 - B. **CDI Map Letter Recommendation-**The Board reviewed a draft letter regarding the draft CDI map currently under review by the Planning Commission. Lisa Gaver made a motion to recommend that the Board send the letter with the edits discussed by the Board and add MD Department of Planning and MALPF to the cc list. The motion was seconded by Caroline Orlowski. The motion was approved 4-0-0-1.

Ag Board Members	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Sandra Tucker				X
Matthew Toms	X			
Caroline Orlowski	X			
Lisa Gaver	X			



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Brenda Ripley	X			
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- C. **Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary Elections:** Matt Toms nominated himself to be the Board Chair. Brenda Ripley made a motion to nominate Lisa Gaver to be Vice Chair and Caroline Orlowski to be Secretary. The motions for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary were approved 4-0-0-1.

Ag Board Members	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Sandra Tucker				X
Matthew Toms	X			
Caroline Orlowski	X			
Lisa Gaver	X			
Brenda Ripley	X			

VIII. Comments and Announcements

a. Program Updates

- MALPF-** Extended 5 offers for FY25. One baseline has been completed as the landowner has already had the property surveyed. The next application deadline will be 4/1/2026.
- IPP-** There are 2 settlements in October, Adams and CFW. For the FY26 IPP cycle, staff received 47 applications.
- Rural Legacy-** Still receiving interest in this program. We are working on a few projects currently, working their way toward settlement.
- CREP-** Staff continue to receive a lot of interest in this program. One easement is set to settle at the end of October. We are waiting for the Deed of Easement from DNR.
- Critical Farms-** There are no new updates for critical farms. The next cycle will open sometime in 2027.
- Next Generation-** There is currently a project going through the works. It was submitted at the end of May. It typically takes 6-9 months to get to the settlement table. We still receive a lot of interest in this program, along with Small Acreage Next Generation.

B. Other Comments:

- MPRP Proposed Transmission Line Route-** There are no new official updates. The Maryland Public Service Commission filed a proposed schedule to assess a PSEG's application. The proposed procedural schedule recommended to the commission by its staff and the state Power Plant Research Program (PPRP) begins in fall of 2025, includes public hearings in 2026, and continues through March 2027.



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ii. **September Ag Board Meeting-** Staff notified the Board that the next Ag Board Advisory Meeting will be held on Monday, October 27th, 2025.

IX. **Public Comment** – None.

X. **Adjournment** – Lisa Gaver moved to adjourn the meeting. Caroline Orlowski seconded this motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:36pm.