

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING-MINUTES
FEBRUARY 6, 2013**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ron Hoover called the meeting to order at 7:16pm. Other members present were Bob Eberhart, Ben Pisoni, Christine Braken-Piper, Joe Tylka and Andy Merritt. Staff present was Amy Smith OSPB Administrator and Rebekah Seymour, Recording Secretary. No audience was present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. MINUTES

- ***MOTION: Mr. Pisoni moved to approve the minutes of November 7, 2012 as submitted; Mr. Merritt seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.***
- ***MOTION: Mr. Merritt moved to approve the minutes of January 9, 2013 as submitted; Mr. Pisoni seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.***

4. PALTA MEETING DISCUSSION

Mr. Hoover asked Bob to outline his idea for putting an exhibit together for PALTA. Mr. Eberhart stated that PALTA is a leading organization for land trusts and that he thought it might be a good idea to put together an exhibit. Mr. Eberhart explained that the cost of just an exhibit is about \$45 and possible \$300-400 to have someone there to answer questions. Mr. Eberhart further stated he wasn't pushing the idea but thought it might be a good idea to put an exhibit in due to the unique nature of the program since it has tied up a lot of land for not a lot of money. Mr. Hoover stated that he agreed it might be a good idea but because of some issues being looked over/worked out it might be better to put this idea on hold until those issues can be dealt with and this can be put toward the Board of Supervisors for budgeting so there can be money available to do it. Ms. Braken-Piper suggested that perhaps an informational brochure could be made that possibly Clearwater could put on their table since we are kind of partnered with them now. Mr. Eberhart stated that he could make and hand out the brochure but it sounds like the issue is, is this the right time to take part in this. Mr. Hoover stated that he would hate to promote and share information about the program if in a year it is disbanded due to the issues being looked into right now. Ms. Smith stated that this was Ms. Steele's concern as well. Mr. Hoover stated that perhaps this could be revisited in the summer so it can be proposed at budgeting and maybe next year there could be an exhibit when all issues might be worked out. The OSPB all voiced agreement with this suggestion.

5. STATUS OF ACT 153-ATTORNEY OPINION

Mr. Hoover stated that the Board of Supervisors had received comments back from the attorney Ms. Steele consulted but they had not had a chance to comment or discuss them yet.

6. CENTRE COUNTY FARMLAND TRUST

Mr. Eberhart stated the Centre County Farmland Trust is interested in sending out letters to qualifying landowners in Halfmoon Township to see if they are interested in donating their conservation easements. Mr. Eberhart commented that this would allow the landowners to take a tax deduction. Mr. Eberhart reviewed the samples of what a deduction may mean to a landowner. Mr. Eberhart pointed out that the land value could diminish. Mr. Eberhart stated if the landowner was interested they were to contact the county and set up a meeting. Mr. Hoover suggested Mr. Eberhart draft a letter to the landowners to let them know if they are

interested in the County program to contact the township so we may be in on the process as well. Ms. Smith questioned that if the landowner is in the OSPP then they would have to terminate that lease to participate in the County program and voiced some concern regarding any advanced payments that were paid on the property. Ms. Smith reviewed the Ordinance and commented that there was a provision for termination under the advance payment options that states the Board of Supervisors would have to approve this request and make an assessment on the property that shall not be less than the total lease payments paid in advance on any lease for the remaining term of any lease that has been paid in advance. Ms. Smith will consult with Ms. Yurchak to clarify this language if there are any interested property owners.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

8. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

There were no citizen's comments.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13pm.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Pisoni moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:13pm; Mr. Tylka seconded; Vote 6-0-0; Motion carried.***