

MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Michigan State University
Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center
1791 Hillandale Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

PRESENT:

Trever Meachum, Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Brian Pridgeon, Vice Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Dru Montri, Secretary, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Patricia Bergdahl, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Charlie Meintz, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Gary McDowell, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Meachum called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development to order at 9:04 a.m. on September 18, 2019. Commissioner Montri called the roll with Commissioners Bergdahl, Meachum, Meintz, Montri, and Pridgeon, and Director McDowell present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MEINTZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 18, 2019. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF JULY 18, 2019, MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY 18, 2019, MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON. MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, November 6, 2019, to be held at Byron Center Township Board Room, 8085 Byron Center Road, Byron Center, Michigan.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND TRAVEL

Commissioners shared information relative to agriculture in their respective areas, and details around recent industry meetings they attended, as well as their upcoming agriculture events. They noted farmers continue to endure various weather-related challenges, as well as labor issues.

Commissioners Bergdahl, Meintz, Montri, and Pridgeon expressed their appreciation to Commissioner Meachum for hosting the agriculture tour in his area yesterday, noting it was both educational and enjoyable.

Commissioners Bergdahl, Meachum, Meintz, Montri, and Pridgeon traveled to attend today's meeting. There was no other travel submitted for approval.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MONTRI. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES

Commissioner Meachum reviewed a retirement resolution before the Commission honoring Jim Byrum in recognition of his outstanding service and advocacy for the Michigan agriculture industry.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER MONTRI MOVED THE RESOLUTION FOR JIM BYRUM BE ADOPTED WITH BEST WISHES FOR HIS LONG AND HEALTHY RETIREMENT. COMMISSIONER PRIDGEON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Montri reported the Farm Market Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMP) Task Force is moving forward with changes in the GAAMP for inclusion in the 2020 GAAMPs process. She also shared information on the Michigan Agricultural Mediation Program available to farm communities.

Commissioner Montri requested the Commission and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) help ensure the implementation of reasonable wastewater permitting for the agriculture processing industry that also allows transition periods for small business.

Commissioner Montri asked the topics of Industrial Hemp and Recreational and Medical Marijuana be included on the November Commission agenda, particularly issues with which farmers are dealing.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director McDowell thanked Commissioner Meachum for the outstanding tour yesterday. He shared details of internal meetings in which he recently participated, including the Governor's Agriculture Roundtables across the state, Center for Excellence Field Day held in Clayton, Governor's Great Lakes Presidential Agenda, UP State Fair, visit to Sklarczyk Seed Farm (named Ag Exporter of the Year), Farm Progress Show held in Decatur, Illinois, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Annual meeting held in New Mexico, and Michigan Agri-Business Association Outlook Conference. He reported the department continues to work toward an official crop disaster declaration.

He invited Commissioners to join the MDARD Annual Employee Awards Ceremony which is scheduled for November 5 in Lansing.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

There was no public comment relative to agenda items.