



State of New Jersey

## **BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**September 11, 2024**

**(Wednesday)**

Public meeting notice was certified by communication on September 6, 2024.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by giving written notice of the time, date, location and to the extent known the agenda of this meeting. At least 48 hours in advance this notice has been posted on the third floor, Riverview Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey; mailed to the Newark Star Ledger; the Camden Courier Post; the Trenton Times and filed with the Office of the Secretary of State.

President Robert Blew called the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture to order at 1:15 pm. Board members in attendance included President Robert Blew; Vice President Lisa Specca, Kurt Alstede, David DeFrangé, John Hart, Stephen V. Lee, IV and Joel Viereck. The meeting was held virtually via Teams.

Also in attendance were Secretary Wengryn; Assistant Secretary Joe Atchison; Frank Minch, Director, Division of Agricultural & Natural Resources; Tameko Webster, Chief of Staff and Nathan Schatz, Office of the Secretary; Nichole Steward, Division Marketing & Development. Also in attendance were Ashley Kerr, NJ Farm Bureau, and Nancy Wood, NJ Department of Agriculture.

President Blew called upon SPS Chair David DeFrangé to give his report. David DeFrangé reported that the subcommittee met to review the SPS Resolution and developed a statement regarding SPS. He thanked the subcommittee for their hard work.

ON the MOTION of David DeFrangé, seconded by Holly Sytsema, offered the following statement for consideration by the Board: *"The State Board of Agriculture appreciates the efforts that the SADC invested into creating a Soil Protection Standard that both protects soil resources, but also recognizes long-term farm business viability. The Board supports the current proposal. The State Board of Agriculture looks forward to continued cooperation with the SADC and other governmental agencies as we continue to preserve the farmland and the farmers of New Jersey."*

President Blew called for discussion. Board member Kurt Alstede said that he reviewed the resolution approved by the Delegates and highlighted their concerns regarding deed of easements and suggested language about deed of easements be added to the statement.

ON the MOTION of Kurt Alstede, seconded by Joel Viereck, offered the following amendment to replace the original statement's final sentence: *"The Board wishes to emphasize the priority of maintaining the intent of the Deeds of Easement, as the delegates have requested, and encourage you to continue to consider this going forward."*

President Blew called for discussion. David DeFrange stressed that the subcommittee has had those discussions and brought these concerns to the table. Vice President Specca stressed that the original statement is simply a statement by the Board to the SADC and not to be submitted to the NJ Register for comment. There was extensive discussion on the purpose and intent of the statement and whether the deed of easement should be added to the statement.

President Blew called for a Roll Call Vote of the Amendment Motion to amend the original statement's final sentence offered by the SPS Committee:

Joel Viereck – Yes	John Hart – Yes	Stephen Lee – No	David DeFrange – No
Kurt Alstede – Yes	Holly Sytsema – No	Lisa Specca – No	Robert Blew – No

Four votes for No; three votes for Yes. Amendment motion fails.

President Blew called for a Roll Call Vote of the Original Statement Motion offered by the SPS Committee:

Joel Viereck – Yes	John Hart – Yes	Stephen Lee – Yes	David DeFrange – Yes
Kurt Alstede – No	Holly Sytsema – Yes	Lisa Specca – Yes	Robert Blew – Yes

One vote for No; seven votes for Yes. Original Statement motion passes.

ON the MOTION of Joel Viereck, seconded by John Hart, to submit the SPS Statement from the SPS Subcommittee to the New Jersey Register for comment.

President Blew called for discussion and noted that the Governor's Office does not like when Departments make public comment about another.

Following discussion, President Blew called for a Roll Call Vote to submit the SPS Statement to the New Jersey Register for comment:

Joel Viereck – No	John Hart – No	Stephen Lee – No	David DeFrange – No
Kurt Alstede – No	Holly Sytsema – No	Lisa Specca – No	Robert Blew – No

Eight votes for No. Motion unanimously fails.

#### **RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board adopts the following resolution:

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4–12(b)(7), the Board will also discuss a matter involving pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation other than in subsection b.(4) herein in which the public body is, or may become, a party, or matters falling within the attorney–client privilege. The Board will not disclose the contents of this part of the discussion because it falls under attorney–client privilege.

ON the MOTION of Lisa Specca, seconded by Joel Viereck, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Board member Stephen Lee attended the Atlantic County Board of Agriculture meeting and Atlantic CBA is going to send a letter to the Board saying they're interested in having a convention that gets down into one day in terms of the business of the Department and informed them that the Board's Ag Convention Committee would meet to discuss the convention. They also asked where the Department is in the search for a new SADC Executive Director.

Secretary Wengryn informed the Board that the job was posted that morning and closes on October 4, 2024.

Vice President Specca asked the Secretary if it would be possible for him to share who the members of the SADC Executive Director search committee are and if possible, could a member of the State Board be on that search committee. Secretary Wengryn responded that he would get the list of who is on that committee to the Board but that the committee is set but can double check to see if it would be possible for a member of the State Board to be added to the search committee.

Joel Viereck said that the Ag Convention Committee will be meeting prior to this month's Board meeting. President Blew questioned whether a one-day ag convention is realistic given the number of resolutions brought to the floor of the convention. Secretary Wengryn said staff have reviewed the convention and we have a proposal for realigning things and making some changes that we'll be sharing with the Ag Convention Committee when they meet. It will be a different looking convention.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

ON the MOTION of Joel Viereck, seconded by John Hart, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the special meeting at 2:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward D. Wengryn