

STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting

September 25, 2025

Secretary Wengryn called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Mr. Roohr read the notice stating that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq.

Roll call indicated the following:

Members Present

Secretary Wengryn, Chairman
Martin Bullock
Scott Ellis
Jess Niederer
Richard Norz
Charles Rosen
Gina Fischetti
Julie Krause
Brian Schilling

Members Absent

Tiffany Bohlin
Lauren Procida

Charles Roohr, SADC Executive Director
Jason Stypinski, Esq., Deputy Attorney General

Minutes

Approval of SADC Open and Closed Session Minutes of July 24, 2025.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Ms. Niederer to approve the SADC Open and Closed Session Minutes of July 24, 2025. The motion was approved.

Report of the Chairman

Secretary Wengryn stated the new funding formula has been rolled out and acquisitions using the formula are taking place. He noted he has been attending various conferences regarding preservation and agricultural viability.

Report of the Executive Director

Mr. Roohr informed the committee several new part time employees were recently hired to assist the GIS, legal and acquisition teams. He noted the advertisements for an attorney and the deputy director have been closed and interviews for those positions will take place shortly.

Mr. Roohr stated a memo regarding the importance of ADAs was sent to partners in July in response to a number of applications received outside of a county's ADA. The memo provided

options for CADBs to amend their ADAs to help focus agricultural efforts. Applications received for farms outside of a county's ADA will be presented to the committee.

Mr. Roohr stated the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Bank is within the SADC but is its own independent entity with its own board members. There are only three towns in the state that have attempted to start a TDR program and one of those townships has asked for amendments to a 2016 agreement it made with the bank. The next TDR Bank meeting is scheduled for October 9th.

Mr. Roohr discussed the event held at Three Willows Farm in Pemberton, NJ to celebrate the first closing using the new statewide formula value. He stated the farm owners are a young and energetic family who run a cattle farm, and the event had a great turnout which included members from the agricultural community, government officials, and the public.

Public Comment

Ms. Patricia Springwell from Hunterdon County noted a recent NJ Farm Bureau newsletter reporting that the biggest impediment to purchasing farmland is its cost. Ms. Springwell stated that land is more expensive due to "McMansions" being built on preserved farmland, and the committee needs to address this issue.

Old Business

A. Stewardship

1. Review of Activities – Discussion Only

Santini, June, SADC ID# 21-0029-DE, Harmony Twp., Somerset Co. 51.867 acres.

Mr. Willmott stated this review of activities initially was presented in 2023 to the committee, which directed staff to work with the landowner on remediation plans and implementation. He reviewed the violations, stated the landowner has been cooperative with staff, and that there has been gradual progress in the remediation process.

Mr. Willmott stated staff worked with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to delineate a regulated stream buffer and wetland areas on the Santini farm. Using those delineations, staff established the correct 2-acre pre-existing non ag use area.

Mr. Willmott said that the most significant violation was the dumping of fill material of which the committee had required removal. Mr. Clapp showed the committee pictures of the violation areas and the progress that has taken place. Mr. Clapp stated the contractor performing the remediation is successfully sorting the material while being mindful of the topsoil.

Mr. Roohr stated that Mr. Clapp and Mr. Willmott can make recommendations to the landowner regarding how remediation efforts can continue. Mr. Roohr reminded the committee that litigation also could be an option, but staff does not think litigation is the most effective path at this point.

Mr. Norz commented that if the landowner is working in good faith to rectify the violations, it would be good to give her more time. Mr. Roohr agreed and stated staff recommends setting milestones for the landowner to meet. The committee agreed with staff's recommendations.

The committee discussed the transfer of property to new owners and how to communicate the restrictions associated with the deed of easement. It was decided that a subcommittee will be formed to help facilitate these ideas.

B. Subchapter 5, Soil and Water Conservation Cost-Share Grants: Authorization to publish adoption of revisions to regulations

Mr. Smith stated he is seeking approval from the committee for publication of the revisions to the soil and water conservation rules that were published in the NJ Register in June. Mr. Roohr stated staff presented the revised rules to the committee in April and public comment ended in August. Staff responded to the comments and staff is requesting approval for final adoption today.

Mr. Smith reviewed the comments received and stated this adoption is without change to the proposal that was approved in April.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Mr. Schilling to approve the adopted regulations that were presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Next Gen Farmer Program: Incubator Farm Concept Update – Case Farm

Mr. Pearsall and Ms. Brandeisky reviewed the incubator farm concept on a portion of the SADC owned Case farm, initially discussed at the June meeting. At the committee's direction, staff researched a variety of incubator programs throughout the nation and presented pros and cons and estimated costs of an SADC managed incubator farm. Staff proposed a partnership with The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA-NJ) for its high-value organic grain project which would decrease agency costs and responsibilities while providing land access to new farmers. Mr. Pearsall provided general details of the NOFA-NJ project and the committee requested additional information to be presented at an upcoming meeting.

New Business

A. Stewardship

1. Resolution: House Replacement

- a. Flanagan, C. Kenneth and Kenneth M., SADC ID #17-0036-EP, Upper Pittsgrove Twp., Salem Co., 216.3 acres.**

Mr. Berkowitz referred the committee to a request for a house replacement. He reviewed the specifics of the request with the committee and stated staff's recommendation is to grant approval to replace the existing structure with a single-family residence consisting of approximately 2,300 sq./ft. of heated living space.

It was moved by Mr. Bullock and seconded by Mr. Schilling to approve Resolution FY2026R9(1) granting final approval, as presented, subject to any conditions of said resolutions. The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2026R9(1) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

2. Resolution: House Replacement

- b. Case, Marjorie, SADC ID #03-0296-EP, Mansfield Twp., Burlington Co., 107.008 acres.**

Mr. Pizzio referred the committee to a request for a house replacement. He reviewed the specifics of the request with the committee and stated staff's recommendation is to grant approval to replace the existing structure with a single-family residence consisting of approximately 2,000 sq./ft. of heated living space.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Mr. Schilling to approve Resolution FY2026R9(2) granting final approval, as presented, subject to any conditions of said resolutions. The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2026R9(2) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

B. Resolution: First Right and Option to Purchase (Municipal Term Agreement)

NOTE: Mr. Bullock recused himself from this agenda item.

1. Fusco, Heidi, M., SADC ID #13-0004-8M, Upper Freehold Twp., Monmouth Co.

Ms. Miller referred the committee to a term agreement for the 10.8-acre Heidi Fusco farm located in Upper Freehold Twp., Monmouth County. The farm was enrolled in the 8-year term program in 2013 and is now in the 4th year of its second term. These agreements provide SADC with the first right and option to purchase the property should it go up for sale during its enrollment. Ms. Fusco is now under agreement with a contract purchaser, and the SADC must decide if it wants to exercise its first right and option to purchase the farm. Ms. Miller stated the 2025 farmland assessment information reflects that the property has a variety of ag production and is 37% tillable, 52% prime soil and 50% wetlands. Due to the farm's acreage and amount tillable, it does not appear the farm will meet minimum eligibility criteria, and staff's recommendation, set forth in the resolution, is for the SADC not to exercise its first right and option.

It was moved by Mr. Rosen and seconded by Ms. Niederer to approve Resolution FY2026R9(3), as presented, subject to any conditions of said resolutions. The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2026R9(3) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

CLOSED SESSION

At 11:26 a.m. Mr. Roohr read the following resolution to go into Closed Session:

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-13, it is hereby resolved that the SADC shall now go into executive session to discuss legal issues regarding the SADC's direct easement program and any other matters under N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) that arose during the public portion of the meeting. The minutes of such meeting shall remain confidential until the Committee determines that the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

It was moved by Ms. Niederer and seconded by Mr. Norz to go into closed session. The motion was unanimously approved.

NOTE: The Committee returned to Open Session at 11:42 a.m.

C. Resolutions: Preliminary Approval – Direct Easement Purchase Program

Ms. Kreiser and Ms. Bacon referred the committee to four requests for preliminary approval under the direct easement purchase program. They reviewed the specifics of the requests with the committee and stated staff's recommendation is to grant approval.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Mr. Rosen to approve Resolution FY2026R9(4) granting preliminary approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolution.

1. ThreeMCs, LLC, SADC ID# 01-0048-DE, FY2026R(4), Block 3602, Lot 16 and Block 3801, Lot 5, Mullica Township, Atlantic County, 88.14 acres.

The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2025R9(4) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

NOTE: Mr. Schilling recused from the Henry matter because he's a resident of the town and has had contact with the landowner.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Ms. Niederer to approve Resolution FY2026R9(5), granting preliminary approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolution.

2. Henry Realty, Co., LLC, SADC ID# 12-0016-DE, FY2026R9(5), Block 2.01, Lot 1, Cranbury Township, Middlesex County, 21.06 acres.

The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2025R9(5) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Mr. Rosen to approve Resolution FY2026R9(6), granting preliminary approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolution.

3. Lamborn, Gloria M. and Messenger, Marion M., SADC ID# 10-0313-DE, FY2026R9(6), Block 1010, Lot 46, Franklin Township, Hunterdon County, 55.04 acres.

The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2025R9(6) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Mr. Rosen to approve Resolution FY2026R9(7) granting preliminary approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolutions.

4. Furlong, Brendan W., SADC ID# 10-0280-DE, FY2026R9(7), Block 27, Lot 12, Franklin Township, Hunterdon County, 50.47 acres.

The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolution FY2025R9(7) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

D. Resolutions: Final Approval – Direct Easement Purchase Program

Staff referred the committee to seven requests for final approval under the direct easement purchase program. They reviewed the specifics of the request with the committee and stated that the staff recommendation is to grant approval.

It was moved by Ms. Niederer and seconded by Mr. Schilling to approve Resolution

FY2026R9(8) through FY2026R9(13) granting final approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolutions.

1. Paxton, Helene, SADC ID# 17-0403-DE, FY2026R9(8), Block 13, Lots 4, 4.13 and 4.14, Oldsman Township, Salem County, 53.83 acres.
2. Coles Brothers Properties, LLC, SADC ID# 17-0405-DE, FY2026R9(9), Block 68, Lot 11.01, Block 60, Lot 2 and Block 70, Lot 1, Pilesgrove Township, Salem County, 130.59 acres.
3. Winkels, Lawrence S. and Frances J., SADC ID# 17-0398-DE, FY2026R9(10), Block 34, Lot 39.01, Quinton Township, Salem County, 69.20 acres.
4. Gifford, Brian L., SADC ID# 06-0095-DE, FY2026R9(11), Block 4, Lot 8 and Block 5, Lot 1, Hopewell Township, Cumberland County and Block 108, Lot 3 and Block 112, Lot 2, Alloway Township, Salem County, 103.76 acres.
5. Harcarik, Michael and Roelant, Jessica, SADC ID# 10-0307-DE, FY2026R9(12), Block 25, Lots 7, 7.03, 7.04 and 7.05, Delaware Township, Hunterdon County, 25.09 acres.
6. Gyongyosi, Matthew K. and Lipschutz, Sarah E., SADC ID # 10-0314-DE, FY2026R9(13), Block 2, Lots 2 and 8, Kingwood Township, Hunterdon County, 87.45 acres.

The motion was unanimously approved. A copy of Resolutions FY2026R9(8) through FY2026R9(13) are attached to and part of these minutes.

NOTE: Secretary Wengryn recused himself from the Sytsema approval.

Mr. Zaback referred the committee to one request for final approval under the direct easement purchase program. He reviewed the specifics of the request with the committee and stated that the staff recommendation is to grant approval.

It was moved by Mr. Norz and seconded by Mr. Schilling to approve Resolution FY2026R9(14) granting final approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolutions.

7. Sytsema, William R., SADC ID# 19-0039-DE, FY2026R9(14), Block 133, Lot 4.01, Wantage Township, Sussex County, 77.84 acres.

Secretary Wengryn recused himself from the vote. The motion was approved. A copy of Resolution FY2026R9(14) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

E. Resolutions: Final Approval – Municipal Planning Incentive Grant

Ms. Bacon referred the committee to one request for final approval under the municipal planning incentive grant program. She reviewed the specifics of the request with the committee and stated that the staff recommendation is to grant approval.

It was moved by Mr. Bullock and seconded by Ms. Niederer to approve Resolution

FY2026R9(15) granting final approval, as presented, subject to any condition of said resolution.

1. Brynes, Gale, SADC ID# 10-0447-PG, FY2026R9(15), Block 6, Lot 7, Delaware Township, Hunterdon County, 25.22 acres.

The motion was approved. A copy of Resolution FY2026R9(15) is attached to and a part of these minutes.

F. Acquisition Process Update

Mr. Roohr referred the committee to an acquisition process spreadsheet which highlights the steps from application to closing, the responsibilities of the parties involved and the approximate timeframe associated with the various phases of the process. Mr. Roohr stated the average farm closing takes approximately 18 months, with the timeframe being relatively evenly split between the efforts of partners/landowners, and the SADC.

Mr. Roohr noted staff is working on ways to revise or eliminate steps in order to make the process more streamlined, some of which would require regulatory changes. Staff will present initial recommendations after consultation with the subcommittee.

Public Comment

Christina Chrobokowa from 360 Earthworks commented that the presentation of the incubator program was wonderful, and complimented the SADC and staff for a job well done.

SADC Member Comment

Mr. Norz commended SADC staff on having regular meetings with the CADB staff as it will foster better communication.

Ms. Niederer stated that she is the chairperson of the Organic Regenerative Farming board which has recently published survey results from a needs assessment. She requested that Mr. Roohr ensure staff has access to the information so that it can help meet the needs of that particular subset of farmers. She requested time to present to the committee at a later date, and committee members agreed.

Secretary Wengryn congratulated Norz Hill Farm, which was honored earlier this week for outstanding work in New Jersey's "Farm to School" program.

NOTE: Mr. Rosen left the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

At 12:28 p.m. Mr. Roohr read the following resolution to go into Closed Session:

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-13, it is hereby resolved that the SADC shall now go into executive session to discuss certifications of value for properties in Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County and Pilesgrove Township, Salem County; attorney-client privileged communications regarding deed terms upon SADC sale of fee simple properties, and any other matters under N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) that arose during the public portion of the meeting. The minutes of such meeting shall remain confidential until the

Committee determines that the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

It was moved by Mr. Schilling and seconded by Ms. Niederer to go into closed session. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action as a Result of Closed Session

A. Real Estate Matters – State Acquisition Program (easement or fee)

It was moved by Mr. Ellis and seconded by Ms. Niederer to approve the certification of values for the Keris, Joseph and Margaret Farm and the Norma M. Kurtz Irrevocable Trust Farm as discussed in closed session. The motion was approved.

B. Resale of Fee Simple Recommendation

The committee was satisfied with the discussion in closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Charles Roohr, Executive Director
State Agriculture Development Committee