

FARMLAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING JUNE 26,2019
GOVERNMENT ANNEX BUILDING 3 PM

Those attending: Carole Ludwig, Delmar Finco, Sam Mitchell, Thomas Verner

Carole called the meeting to order after passing out 2019 meeting schedules and today's agenda.

First order of business were the new directives from USDA that had come to us through the Athens Land Trust: the main instruction was that the county would no longer be required to contribute 25% of the assessed value of the protected farm. Oconee county could volunteer any amount they wanted and individuals could also contribute funds. Delmar made the point that because Preservation of land was of such value to the county as a whole that they should want to continue to support the program. He made the motion that our committee ask the Oconee BOC to contribute approximately what they had in years past which was 25% and varied between \$90,000 and \$240,000 per farm, depending on their assessed value. The motion was seconded by Thomas and voted in by all members.

Thomas made the point that farms presented for preservation but not yet ranked would probably get bonus points if partially funded by the county. Sam pointed out that farmland contributed more to the county tax base than developed land as it did not have to provide infrastructure like crime control, highways, septic and water systems and schools.

Delmar suggested we ask the BOC what duties our committee would have if the BOC decide not to contribute funds for preservation.

It was decided that Carole would contact a member of the BOC for any new information.

Next on the agenda was the upcoming Farmland Preservation Public meeting to be held at 7:00 PM on July 10, 2019 at the Phil Campbell Building. Dyan Holt will be one speaker and Thomas motioned that we also invite Gerald Grace or Jose Denada from the NRCS also speak. The motion was seconded by Sam and voted in.

The meeting was adjourned by Carole

Respectfully submitted,

Carole Ludwig

