1. **Call to Order**

Chairman Melba Matthews called the February 3, 2015 meeting of the Agricultural Land Preservation Board (ALPB) to order at 2:05 p.m. in Room 250, GSC.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Melba Matthews, Chairperson; Richard Abbott, Duane Hershey, Amy McKenna, and Eli Silberman. 
Staff: Bill Gladden, Director, Tom Abrahamsen, Solicitor, Diana Hoopes, Geoffrey Shellington, Annette Bethke, and Kimberly Gordon.
Absent: Donald Cairns, John Diament, Mark Dunphy, and Judy Noyalas.
Visitors: None

2. **Public Comment**

Mr. Gladden introduced Ms. Bethke, Administrative Support Staff, to the Board.

3. **Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2014**

The Board meeting minutes were approved as sent. Motion made by Rick Abbott, seconded by Duane Hershey. Motion carried.

4. **Presentation - Preservation Compliance – Geoff Shellington**

Geoff Shellington, Agricultural Programs Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the inspection/monitoring process under the regulations of Act 43, as well as other land use laws. He explained that staff is responsible for inspecting each farm within a year of acceptance into the easement program, and biannually after that. In 2014, 317 farms and approximately 20,000 acres were inspected. Follow-ups and landowner concerns are managed as they arise. He showed examples of how staff works with landowners to correct issues before they become violations with several before and after photographs, and explained that it is much more effective to approach the monitoring process in a positive way to promote cooperation, rather than in a punitive manner.

The compliance staff has also been trained to write conservation plans, and their goal is to write 10 plans in 2015. In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Gladden noted that as time permits, the staff is monitoring more than required by law to foster positive responses to the monitoring and compliance process.

5. **State Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Status Report**

**2012 Round**

#38 Lofting Trust ----- Settled Easement 12/22/14 – W. Marlborough Twp  

**2012 Round – 50% Donation**
#1 Pannell, Bootsie

#4 Pannell Revocable Trust

2013 Round

#5A Stoltzfus, John and Priscilla #2

#4 Pannell Revocable Trust

2014 Round

#1 Tigue Family

#2 Stoltzfus, Chester and Rebecca

#3 Umble, Kenneth and Marilyn

#4 Martin, Noah and Rachel

#5 Kolly, John

#7 Beam, Nelson and Marilyn

#9 Suback, Beth

#10 Herr Foods, Inc.

#11 Brown Partnership #1

#12 Miller Family

#14 Lapp, Samuel and Barbara

#15 Kauffman, Amos and Elizabeth

#16 Miller, Jeffrey and Mary Rita

#22 Cuprill, Charles and Luisita

#23 Stoltzfus, Steven and Sylvia

#24 Brown Partnership #3

#25 Mowrer, Cory and Megan

#36 Brown Partnership #2

6. Challenge Grant Program – Status Report

2011 Round

#78 Stoltzfus, Emanuel and Emma

7. Updates and Other Business –

- Mr. Gladden reported that 38 farms settled in 2014, with 2,607 acres preserved – a record setting year. Municipalities and other partners participated and contributed over $1.5
million to the Commonwealth program, and the County was able to leverage the funding from the Commonwealth/County program for more state funding. As a result, the Commissioners certified County funds to the Commonwealth for the 2015 easement program year in the amount of $4.65 million. The Commonwealth will use the certification to determine the state funding allocated to each county.

He also mentioned that one of the Department’s goals for 2015 is to rank 100 farm easement applications. To that end, staff is composing and distributing letters to reach out to landowners who may not be aware that their farm is eligible for the easement programs, and the Board was encouraged to ask staff to present the ALPB programs to any group that they are involved with.

- Ms. McKenna mentioned that the Buck and Doe Trust, in conjunction with the Cheshire Hunt, are planning a seminar for landowners on the importance of Open Space and preservation. Conservation organizations and other preservation professionals will be invited, and she will relay staff’s willingness to present the easement programs to the Trust.

8. Executive Session –
   - Appraisals (9)

9. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. Motion to adjourn made by Rick Abbott, seconded by Duane Hershey. Motion carried.

10. Next Meeting – February 24, 2015 at 2:00 PM.