

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY**  
**AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD**  
Public Safety Complex, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 48 Court Street  
Canton, New York 13617-1169  
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**MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, April 1, 2021  
Zoom Meeting ID: 917 3095 0018  
Passcode: 130972

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Members present:** P. Ames, R. Andrews, L. Denesha, B. Green, J. Greenwood, S. McKnight, J. Pfothenauer, R. Sapp and J. TeRiele. **Members absent:** M. Finen, D. Fisher. **Staff present:** M. Larson. **Others present:** Patrick Kelly, St. Lawrence County IDA.

**Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum.** Andrews called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. Larson did a roll call for attendance; a quorum was established.

**B. Adoption of the Agenda.** The meeting agenda was unanimously adopted (Ames/Greenwood).

**C. Approval of the Minutes.** The February 4, 2021 meeting minutes were unanimously adopted (Greenwood/TeRiele).

**II. New Business**

**A. 2021 Annual Review for Agricultural Districts 1 and 2.** Larson presented this year's requested additions and an analysis of those requests based on Ag and Markets Law criteria. Larson said satellite imagery for Dinneen's property in Waddington shows a former golf course, and was unsure whether it was converted into an agricultural use. Green said Dinneen's property in Waddington was used as a golf course as recently as last fall. The Board unanimously recommended the Board of Legislators not include two parcels belonging to Matthews in the Town of Brasher (Sapp/Greenwood). The Board unanimously recommended the Board of Legislators not include one parcel owned by Dinneen in the Town of Waddington (Green/Denesha). The Board unanimously recommended the Board of Legislators include the remaining 13 parcels totaling 1,010.3 acres to Agricultural District 2. Larson said a virtual public hearing will be held on April 13<sup>th</sup> to receive comments on the Board's recommendation to the County Board of Legislators.

### **III. Old Business**

- A. Update on Article 10 Application by North Side Energy Center.** Larson and Pfothenhauer reported that since the Farmland Protection Board's review of the project's proposed stipulations in February, conversations with area County Legislators, Real Property Tax Office, the Industrial Development Agency and County Administrator's office have occurred about how payments in lieu of taxes will be collected and distributed to the County and three municipalities. Pfothenhauer said the Towns have retained Barton and Loguidice for architectural and engineering services, and have retained an environmental attorney who is familiar with the Article 10 review project for large scale energy projects.
- B. Update on Advancing Goals and Actions in County Agricultural Development Plan.** Larson reviewed activities in the Plan's matrix that were implemented by the Planning Office. Those activities include: Delivering presentations on projecting farmland when siting solar arrays; providing technical assistance to local governments when preparing land use regulations for solar arrays; creating agricultural mapping layers that are hosted online by the Development Authority of the North Country; coordinating with Cooperative Extension to promote enrollment in CCE's Ag Academy; and successfully assisting the County Highway Department with the preparation of bridge and culvert replacement and repair funds. Ames said preparing the Plan's matrix helped break down barriers between project partners, and has been helpful in securing grant funds for his agency.

### **IV. Reports**

- A. Updates from AFPB Members.** Denesha said March 22, 2021 marks the one-year anniversary since the County recorded its first COVID19 case. Denesha said the peak number of active cases last winter was 540, compared to 120 active cases today. Denesha said the County will be in receipt of \$20.9 million in Federal COVID19 relief monies, which cannot be used to cover pensions, or lower taxes. Denesha also said the County has partnered with the Development Authority of the North Country to conduct an online broadband survey. To date, 944 surveys were completed, and the survey will remain open until April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ames said thanks to work by Denesha, State funding for the Northern New York Ag Development Program will remain level, and said a County resolution co-sponsored with Legislator Acres also passed in two other counties. Greenwood thanked both for sponsoring the resolution. Kelly said the IDA's annual report will go out April 2<sup>nd</sup>, which primarily focuses on the agency's COVID19 response. Kelly said SUNY Canton's CDL Class A driver's license program is still underway, and reviewed recent IDA projects, including finding a replacement to Star Lake's Great America store closing. Both Kelly and Ames talked about a field based COVID19 vaccination initiative in partnership with Public Health. Ames said CCE received a one-year award to hire a half-time dairy educator who will work with K-12 students.

Ames said the Learning Farm has resumed in person programming, including its Farm Day Camp on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Registration for 350 students was at capacity within two weeks. Ames said new staff would be joining CCE on April 5<sup>th</sup>, a Local Foods Marketer who will help create a developer's network to access specific services and resources. Andrews said the County

Forester is fielding a tremendous number of calls as timber prices are the highest they've been in 20 years. Green said Real Property staff is currently at 50%, and is scheduled to resume 100% staffing levels on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Green said the County's annual tax sale of foreclosed properties will be held online beginning September 11<sup>th</sup> for two weeks. Green said the Town of Brasher will conduct a revaluation, and property owners with multiple parcels can have their tax bills consolidated and emailed to them.

## **VI. Other Items**

- A. Correspondence.** Larson reviewed recent correspondence from the Department of Agriculture and Markets regarding the siting of solar arrays in Agricultural Districts 1 and 2.
- B. Announcements.** Larson also said staff received additional clarification about the 2021 financial disclosure form as it applies to policy makers, and not advisory boards; they are exempt.
- C. Next Meeting Date.** The next Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board meeting will be held on Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

## **VII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned by consensus (Pfothenauer/McKnight).

Respectfully submitted,

*Matilda Larson*