

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY**  
**AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD**  
Public Safety Complex, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 49 ½ Court Street  
Canton, New York 13617-1169  
Tel: (315) 379-2292 • Fax: (315) 379-2252 • [farming.stlawco.org](http://farming.stlawco.org)

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**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, October 4, 2018  
2nd Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Complex, 49 ½ Court Street, Canton

**I. Call to Order**

- A. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum.** Andrews called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. **Members present:** P. Ames, R. Andrews, D. Fisher, D. Forsythe, B. Green, J. Greenwood, S. McKnight, R. Sapp, J. TeRiele and K. Zimmerman. **Members absent:** A. Tubbs. **Staff present:** K. Zimmerman. **Others present:** None
- B. Adoption of the Agenda.** The modified meeting agenda was adopted by consensus (Greenwood/Fisher).
- C. Approval of the Minutes.** The April 5, 2018 meeting minutes were unanimously adopted (Greenwood/Green).

**II. New Business**

- A. 2019 Meeting Calendar.** K Zimmerman reported that Matilda Larson had determined four potential meeting dates for 2019, all the first Thursday of the given month, all at 7:30 p.m.:

**02-07-19      --      04-04-19      --      10-03-19      --      12-05-19**

- B. Smart Solar Siting Forum.** K Zimmerman reported that there would be a conversation on the issue sponsored by the American Farmland Trust on Thursday – November 15<sup>th</sup> – from 9:00 am to noon at the Gouverneur Community Center. The focus will be on large-scaled industrial solar arrays. Examples include 1,600 acres for a proposed site proximate to Massena and a reported 1400 acres under option for a large array in Canton. Any project above 25 MW is subject to approval by a State initiated “Article 10” Board. Matilda Larson from the Planning Office will be serving as a panelist. Targeted attendees are farm operators, financial lending institutions, local planning boards, municipal board members and technical service representatives to farm operations. The group is still looking for a couple of panelists: one to speak to the construction of PILOT agreements; and a second, potentially, to speak to Community Host Agreements. Recommendations for speakers would be welcomed.

Fisher asked about the composition of the Article 10 Board. Zimmerman reported that it was constructed with mandated State representation and a few local members but that, in all cases, state staff would comprise the majority membership. Greenwood asked if the Commissioner of Ag and Markets was on the panel. Zimmerman was not sure and offered to follow up in an email with the composition of the panel as described in the legislation.

### **III. Old Business**

- A. Cultivating Careers in Agriculture – In Service.** K. Zimmerman shared Matilda’s notes regarding the planned training event. The date is Friday, August 12 and the tour venues are the same as last year. This year’s session will begin with a presentation on the “Ag in the Classroom” curriculum by Katie Carpenter and a tour of the Ag Academy program with Patty Gilbert and students. After that, there is a planned tour at a nutrient management and feed operations and the Fisher farm. Following a lunch in Madrid, Todd O’Brien from DFA will lead an exercise in the money multiplier aspects of local agriculture. Multiple sponsors are contributing to the cost off-set including: SLC IDA, Cargill and Farm Credit East. BOCES is providing the transportation.

Fisher noted that it was unfortunate that the Ag Academy had such a limited attendance this year. Ames responded that the Academy had not grown quite as quickly as was hoped but that this small group of students was performing amazing things in the program. He observed that there needs to be a more concerted commitment from the schools to get this to its full potential. He felt that BOCES was committed but that this had not translated completely to the individual districts. He also noted that the educators had really worked to improve the curriculum and exercises and that the program was rounding into shape. He was hopeful that the program being planned for in service training for counselors would renew interest in the program. He noted the number of production facilities the farm now has, small in scale but adding to the hand-on experience of the program.

He transitioned his discussion to other educational efforts including the demonstration kitchen and the effort now to demonstrate scalability and reliability in particular related to the Farm-to-School initiative. He noted that “Flip” Fillipi has moved the commercial kitchen to the next phase and that a group out of Potsdam (Big Spoon) is helping CCE of SLC with QA/QC and packaging for commercial use and convenience and the market reach – while currently limited – is growing rapidly. He said a key is smart and scalable package of service ready product.

Ames explained that this effort was slightly different from the food hub development effort being headed by CCE of Jefferson County. In response to a question, he indicated that there was not a consistent effort yet to reach larger-scale institutional users of locally grown products. Zimmerman explained it was his understanding that historically this was a problem with consistent and sustainable supplies for larger-volume institutional users and that there were on-going conversations around that topic by some larger producers.

#### **IV. Reports**

- A. Board of Legislators.** Forsythe said the Board of Legislators were just presented with the Tentative budget for review and highlighted some of the policy leadership of the Board as reflected in the budget, including a shift in health care insurance which led, at least temporarily to savings with the re-set. He noted that Ruth and the staff had worked hard and observed that the Treasurer and her staff deserve credit for cleaning up the cash reconciliations and for putting important fiscal accounting policies in place. He was pleased to report that we are no longer designated as being fiscally distressed and are no longer borrowing operating cash.
- B. Cornell Cooperative Extension.** See above and Matilda wanted there to be a mention of a second round of technical assistance to create a second version of the Local Foods, Local Places plan. Matilda offered to work on the planning for the grant with Flip Filipi and Patrick and Carol Pynchon from the Village of Canton
- C. Industrial Development Agency.** Zimmerman handed out a written report. TeRiele wanted to know if IDA was paying any taxes given that they were now renting space to a manufacturer. Zimmerman reported that normally, there is a PILOT offered to start-up manufacturers that is pretty standard and that Parker was probably within the first few years of the PILOT which is designed to incentivize investment with an off-set of tax obligations (Confirmed by a phone conversation with T. Plastino on 10-14-18)
- D. Real Property.** Green reported that the office had recently completed the work on the school tax mailings and that their office helps coordinate issuance of almost all tax bills. Fisher asked if multiple tax bills could be packaged together if they go to the same mailing address. Green promised to look into it.
- E. Soil and Water Conservation District.** Zimmerman reported on the septic replacement program, supported operationally with funding from the SWCD. At the time of the meeting, the County had issued about 2,300 postcards to eligible camp and property owners, had over 80 units on a wait list, had completed 6 units and had paid out approximately \$ 38,000 in program funds and administrative expenses. Forsythe mentioned that his camp never received the mailing, nor did his Father's next door. Zimmerman promised to look into this. Comment: *Subsequently, the office determined that notices to properties with PO Boxes had not received a copy of the mailing and subsequently, approximately 280 additional postcards announcing the program were mailed.*

#### **V. Other Items**

- A. Correspondence.** Zimmerman reported that the federal 2017 ag census data collection effort had been completed with NYS participation rate (71.2%) slightly below the national average. Data should be reported out in about a year.

**B. Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting for the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board is Thursday, December 6, 2018 at 7:30 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room of the County Public Safety Complex in Canton.

**VI. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 9:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Keith J. Zim", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.