

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD
Public Safety Complex, 2nd Floor, 49 ½ Court Street
Canton, New York 13617-1169
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DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 7, 2019
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 7:30 pm. **Members present:** P. Ames, R. Andrews, L. Denesha, B. Green, J. Greenwood, J. TeRiele, and K. Zimmerman. **Members absent:** D. Fisher, S. McKnight, R. Sapp, and A. Tubbs. **Staff present:** M. Larson.

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

C. Approval of the Minutes. The December 6, 2018 meeting minutes were unanimously adopted.

II. Old Business

A. Farmer Tax Relief Info Session. Ames said the event was attended by 16 producers which included dairy, orchard and greenhouse operators. Ames said that as the information session progressed, it became clear that there were two tracts evolving out of the event: one for persons seeking financial relief, and the second for persons seeking investment resources for expansion purposes. Ames said the event lasted for three hours and said he would consider repeating it but focus on a single tract rather than two. Ames said one of the most informative presentations in the session highlighted recent changes for tax filings. A comment was made that local assessors are now asking for copies of 1040 forms before granting ag exemptions. Ames said even though the event was scheduled early in the year to accommodate USDA Farm Service Agency, they were not present due to the Federal furlough. A comment was made that Agrimark is encouraging its members to sign up for the milk margin program.

III. New Business

- A. County Ag Spill Response.** Zimmerman said once a County ag spill response plan is adopted, a funding request to acquire spill response equipment would need to be prepared and submitted, and training for emergency response personnel on how to use the equipment would be required. The equipment and response team would need to be centrally located in the county and housed at a local fire station.
- B. Farm Credit East Ag Enhancement Funding Application.** Larson said she and Ames were working together to prepare and submit a funding application to Farm Credit East to sponsor the third installment of “Cultivating Careers in Agriculture.” Larson and Ames explained the event would be held for 9th and 10th grade students who have not identified plans after graduation, and would be open exploring a career in agriculture. TeRiele said the direct employment in the county’s dairy industry is 1 person for every 45 cows.

IV. Reports

- A. Board of Legislators.** Denesha said he was recently appointed by the Board of Legislators to serve on the farmland protection board, and intends to relay information to the County Board of Legislators. Denesha said he also the Chair of the County’s Operations Committee, and the County has begun the new calendar year with a positive fund balance.
- B. Cornell Cooperative Extension.** Ames said Cooperative Extension is busy with its winter programming. Ames said Mary Lou McKnight is the President of Extension’s Board of Directors, and Dan Kent is the Vice President. Ames also said Canton Central School Superintendent was newly appointed as a board member. Ames said Extension will be delivering a Mental Health First Aid workshop later this winter. Greenwood complimented the Crop Congress recently held at the Miner Institute. A comment was made about CDL training for agricultural operators and farm employees.
- C. Industrial Development Agency.** Copies of the IDA’s 2018 Annual Report was distributed to members of the board, which detailed assistance given to agricultural businesses.
- D. Real Property.** Green said the office is gearing up for the next deadline for exemptions which is March 1st, and said training will be held on May 1st to prepare for grievance boards. Green said tax bills are also being reformatted so that they can be delivered electronically to property owners rather than by mail. A suggestion was made to list tax parcels by town.
- E. Soil and Water Conservation District.** Andrews said County Legislators Burke and Acres will serve on the SWCD’s Board of Directors, and Pat Smith from Morley is a new member to the board as Ben Stauffer didn’t renew his term. Andrews said a bottle bill under consideration in the State legislature would provide the District with revenue to repair municipal roads with traffic of fewer than 400 cars per day. Andrews said an Agricultural Environmental Manager position is needed to capture additional program funding, and they District will look to create the position.

V. Other Items

- A. Announcements.** Larson said the annual ag district review will occur from March 1st to the 30th.
- B. Correspondence.** Ames said recent requests to State elected officials for continued support for the North New York Agricultural Development Program were well received.
- C. Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting for the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board is Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 7:30 pm in the 2nd floor conference room of the County Public Safety Complex in Canton.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matilda Larson