

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY  
AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD**

48 Court St. Canton, New York 13617-1169  
Tel: (315) 379-2292 • Fax: (315) 379-2252

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**MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, February 1, 2024, 6:00 PM  
Second Floor Conference Room, Human Service Center  
80 State Highway 310, Canton, NY 13617

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum.** Andrews called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

**Members present:** R. Andrews, (*Chair*); L. Denesha, (*BOL Liaison*); M. Finen; B. Green, (*Real Property*); K. Gugin, (*CCE*); S. McKnight; J. Pfothauer, (*Planning Office*); J. TeRiele. **Absent:** D. Fisher, J. Greenwood. A quorum was established.

**Staff present:** S. Joseph; M. Larson; **Others present:** C. Salvino, SWCD;

**B. Adoption of the Agenda.** Agenda was adopted

**C. Approval of the Minutes.** The December 7, 2023 meeting minutes was accepted

**II. New Business**

**A. Proposed comments on Rich Road Solar Facility.** The planning office received a notice of complete application regarding the Rich Road Solar Facility from the New York State Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES). The AFPB and the County Planning Board will prepare comments for the anticipated permit issuance by ORES. A period of 21 days for public comment will be initiated within 60 days of the notice of complete application. Actual feasibility of sheep grazing including thoughts on water source, winter housing, kidding, and who will manage. Additional discussion on the proposed 20 MW battery storage with implications on air, soil, and water contamination in the event of system failure. Motion to approve staff to research and develop comments on the Rich Road Solar Facility was approved (McKnight/Denesha)

**III. Old Business**

**A. Common definition on prime soil.** Discussion on some confusion about the definition of “Prime Farmland” in comparison with the “Soil Classes.” Suggestion about having a common county definition regarding prime soil with future development pressure. Staff from planning office will coordinate with SWCD.

#### **IV. Reports**

- A. L. Denesha, SLC BOL.** Organizing meeting and election of chair (D. Forsythe) and vice chair (R. Perkins) during the January meeting. Resolution to Encourage Local Governments to Protect Agriculture by Using a Solar Development Mapping Tool For Decision Making Regarding Solar Development passed committee and is expected to pass the Board meeting. Resolution on Ag District Review passed committee and is expected to pass Board meeting. Discussion on highway outposts, snow removal costs, and study to move main highway department location. Current location inside the Village of Canton and will move to the Town of Potsdam highway outpost. Progress in the renovation of the Public Safety Complex.
- B. J. TiRele.** Agri-mark Dairy Cooperative is facing financial difficulty, with estimated two years to resolve before financial insolvency. Concerns about repercussions of this if they do fold as half of milk in the county is part of this cooperative. Agri mark dues so high that many farmers are dropping out. Discussion of processing plants. Discussion on price of milk and due costs.
- C. S. McKnight.** Waddington moratorium on solar. Discussion on price solar companies are willing to pay for development access.
- D. C. Salvino, SLC Soil and Water Conservation District.** Ash and hazard tree removal along right of ways almost complete. 2024 tree and shrub sale open. Collaboration with BOCES and CCE on the working on the hightunnel used for education. Cover crop program had 220 acres. Planting of 900+ trees.
- E. B. Green, SLC Real Properties.** Hosting training sessions for local tax assessors. Discussion on new assessors.
- F. K. Gugin,** Received USDA world development grant, hosting program for CDL training, and an Ag Buisness Series training. Switching livestock from wool sheep to hair sheep. NCRAT officially ended, but working on a proposal for a three county regional team.
- G. J. Pfothner, SLC Planning Office.** Moved buildings and in a transitional phase. Actively working to share the solar development mapping tool with solar developers. A biodigester review coming before the County Planning Board, and will require a special use permit.

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

- A. Correspondence.** Notice of Completion of Application from NYS ORES regarding Rich Road Solar Facility.
  - B. Announcements.** Next meeting very important for quorum because of the Agricultural District 8 year-review.
  - C. Next Meeting Date.** The next Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board meeting will be Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:00 pm.
2. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm (TeRiele / Finen).

Respectfully submitted,

*Samuel Joseph*