

**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, October 3, 2019

2nd Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Complex, 49 ½ Court Street, Canton

I. Call to Order

A. Members present: P. Ames, R. Andrews, L. Denesha, S. McKnight, R. Sapp, J. TeRiele, and J. Pfothenhauer. **Members absent:** D. Fisher, B. Green, J. Greenwood, and A. Tubbs. **Staff present:** M. Larson.

Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum. A quorum was present. Andrews called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

B. Adoption of the Agenda. Larson said she would discuss a memo from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets under Correspondence. The modified meeting agenda was unanimously adopted by consensus.

C. Approval of the Minutes. The April 4, 2019 meeting minutes were unanimously adopted (TeRiele/McKnight).

II. New Business

A. Cultivating Careers in Agriculture Student Field Trip. Ames said 20 students are currently registered to participate in the field trip, and anticipates 30 students will attend. Ames reviewed the brochure and agenda. Larson said Denesha invited to County Legislators to attend, but said they would need to participate using their own transportation as she anticipated a full bus. Andrews expressed disappointment that the brochure didn't recognize the Ag and Farmland Protection Board, and asked Ames if each tour host was aware what to share with the students. Ames affirmed yes; the tour was discussed with each host via email or by phone.

B. 2017 St. Lawrence County Ag Census Data. Larson delivered a powerpoint presentation of county-level 2017 ag census data and trends. TeRiele asked about average volume of milk production per cow in St. Lawrence County. Larson said she ran out of time calculating data,

but knew which resources to access to make the calculation. Pfothenauer wondered about St. Lawrence County's volume of milk production compared to Cayuga and Wyoming counties over time. Andrews asked whether Amish farm operators participate in the census. Larson said she assumed they did, especially if they were members of a dairy cooperative. Larson also noted the County worked hard to encourage the Amish community to participate in the last decennial census to ensure the county would report no net population loss.

III. Old Business

- A. County Ag Spill Response Plan.** Larson said last spring, the preparation of an Ag Spill Response Plan was assigned to Emergency Services while Zimmerman served as Interim Emergency Services Director. Larson explained, however, that Emergency Services staff was consumed this summer by shoreline flooding along the St. Lawrence River. Larson said a search to appoint a new Emergency Service Director is underway and the project will be assigned to the new Director following their appointment. Larson added the County will begin preparing a new Hazard Mitigation Plan, which can include responses to both natural and man-made disasters, and can make funds available for implementation.
- B. Dairy Transition Farmland Protection Initiative.** Andrews said he received a courtesy copy of a memo from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets regarding Dan Huntley's eligibility to participate in the farmland conservation program. Larson said this was the memo she was going to discuss under correspondence.

IV. Reports

- A. Board of Legislators.** Denesha said Real Property Director was recently reappointed to another six-year term. At the County's recent Finance Committee Meeting, the County Treasurer reported the County is no longer on the State Comptroller's fiscal stress list. Denesha said he announced the Cultivating Careers in Agriculture field trip for students at the committee meeting, and said the 2020 preliminary budget will be presented to the Board this coming Monday. Denesha said a resolution was presented at the Finance Committee to provide three extra days off for County Employees who are veterans with combat-related injuries.

Denesha was asked about the County's resolution to exceed the annual 2% tax cap. Denesha explained that while the resolution is approved, it doesn't mean the County intends to exceed the cap. Denesha said funds appropriated over the 2% tax cap without a resolution is held against the 2% cap in the following fiscal year. Denesha was also asked about the County's Election Commissioners going to Court and expending \$65,000 in outside legal fees over a disagreement about candidates registering for office. Denesha said a candidate was interested in running for justice in two towns. The Republican Commissioner felt the person was not eligible to run for the same position in two towns. A judge ruled that simultaneously running for two offices in two different towns was not a conflict of interest. The Republican Commissioner appealed the ruling.

B. Cornell Cooperative Extension. Ames said Cooperative Extension recently hired Casey Havekes as the Regional Dairy Specialist, and staffing for the Regional Ag Team is back at 100%. Ames said an additional 6.5 positions and a number of part-time positions need to be filled at CCE. A Harvest Tour with 12 open houses was held on September 14th to raise awareness about local producers. Ames said they estimate more than 1,100 adults visited these locations. Ames said CCE completed professional photographs of 60 farm operators that will be used to create an interactive marketing map. Ames said CCE received a Northeast SARE grant to host a dairy goal AI workshop that will be videotaped and is capped at 40 registrants from across the state and the northeast; and hazmat training with animal response will be held next Thursday. Extension's Annual Dinner will be held on October 24th at 6:30 pm, and will recognize Farm Credit East as a Friend of Extension for underwriting many of their programs.

Ames said CCE was awarded \$95,000 from the Alcoa Foundation to raise consumer education and enhance culinary skills using local products. Ames also said the State Comptroller's Office recently approved the execution of an Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) grant contract to expand Extension's certified kitchen.

C. Real Property. Larson reviewed a written report prepared by Green.

D. Soil and Water Conservation District. Andrews said Dulanski is on maternity leave and will return to work part-time in January, and resume full-time work in February. Andrews said USDA NRCS will create a new three-year contract with Soil and Water, and said NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets awarded the District \$100,000 for FY 2020 for nutrient management planning. Andrews also said the County Forester assessed the presence of hazard trees along County Road rights of way to determine which Roads require the greatest attention for hazard tree removal.

Andrews shared the District's recent frustration in working with the County Trails Coordinator to access county forestland in Parishville that is locked with a gate. Andrews explained space is needed for a landing area and reclamation purposes, both of which are needed to proceed with the future sale of timber. Denesha said he would follow up on the issue.

E. Industrial Development Agency. None.

VI. Other Items

A. Announcements. Andrews said additional Federal funds would be available for Ft Drum's Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) conservation easement program.

TeRiele asked about Fobare Fruits losing contracts to provide apples to area school districts. Ames explained that he spoke with BOCES staff about consolidated purchases with area school districts and learned the canceling of contracts was a result of trade tariffs between the

US and China. Ames said Washington state apples were purchased by the US Department of Agriculture when Washington apples were no longer being sold to China, and the purchased apples were offered to school districts across the country. The New York State Department of Education agreed to receive the apples and distribute them to districts in the state.

Andrews said the FFA chapter at Gouverneur School is hosting an auction to raise scholarship funds that are awarded to high school graduates.

B. Correspondence. None.

C. Next Meeting Date. The next meeting for the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board is Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 7:30 pm in the 2nd floor conference room of the County Public Safety Complex in Canton.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm (TeRiele/Ames).

Respectfully submitted,

Matilda Larson