

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD
Public Safety Complex, 2nd Floor, 48 Court Street
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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 2, 2020
<https://zoom.us/j/120936730>
Meeting ID: 120 936 730

I. Call to Order

A. Members present: P. Ames, R. Andrews, B. Green, L. Denesha, D. Fisher, J. Greenwood, S. McKnight, J. TeRiele, and J. Pfothauer. **Members absent:** R. Sapp. **Staff present:** M. Larson. **Others present:** Adam Cook, Soil and Water Conservation District Board member.

Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum. Andrews called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Larson did a roll call for attendance; a quorum was present. Larson also asked who the call-in user was at 212-2569; Adam Cook identified himself.

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

C. Approval of the Minutes. The February 27, 2020 meeting minutes were unanimously adopted (Pfothauer/Fisher).

II. New Business

A. 2020 Annual Ag District Review. Larson presented this year's requests to add land to Agricultural District 2 (no requests were received to add land to Ag District 1). Greenwood asked what the advantages were to adding residences to an ag district. Larson explained the only way for property owners to combine parcels together to receive fewer tax bills is for both parcels to be in, or out of an ag district. Larson said removals only occur during the eight-year review process, so the fastest way to combine parcels is through the annual review. Larson confirmed for Ames that requests to add residences to an ag district was typical. The Board unanimously adopted a recommendation to the Board of Legislators to add six parcels totaling 583.3 acres to Ag District 2 (Ames/Pfothauer).

B. County Resolution and Statement Encouraging Land Owners to Lease Marginal Lands for Solar Arrays. Larson presented an overview of the draft resolution and memorandum to the Board of Legislators. Denesha recommended the phrase "low property" in the draft resolution be changed to "affordable land." Greenwood concurred with Denesha's recommendation. A recommendation was also made to revise a phrase in the draft resolution

encouraging developers to design arrays so that compatible agricultural activities could occur in the leased area, and for the County Planning Board and municipal planning boards to recommend such design. Andrews complimented staff for their work on the draft documents. The Board unanimously recommended the memorandum and draft resolution be forwarded to the Board of Legislators for their consideration (Green/Denesha).

III. Old Business

A. None.

IV. Reports

A. Board of Legislators. Denesha said at Finance Committee on March 30th, there were 29 confirmed cases of COVID19 in the county. As of April 2nd, the number of total cases grew to 42. Denesha also said the County Legislator from District 10 resigned. Denesha said he would introduced the Farmland Protection Board's resolution at an Operation's pre-committee meeting on April 15th.

B. Cornell Cooperative Extension. Ames said Cooperative Extension went through a series of steps to comply with staffing requirements as issued under Executive Order. Ames said education and school enrichment programing is suspended, and part time after school staff were laid off. The remaining staff are working remotely with daily check-ins, and the office is recreating itself to deliver remote learning and distance education. Ames said the Regional Ag Team created a blog to share safety information and how to access Federal assistance with area producers. Ames also said the Harvest Kitchen continues to process produce, but has scaled back to carrot coins and sticks, which are being served in 80,000 bagged school lunches.

C. Industrial Development Agency. Larson reviewed highlights from a written summary provided by P. Kelly (a copy of his summary is included in the meeting record).

D. Real Property. Green said their office is complying with the Executive Order on staffing, which consists of 2-3 employees out of 11. Their office is proceeding with their tasks, though remotely from home via Zoom meetings and by logging into work computers via VPN. Green said three towns, Fine, Hermon and Rossie will conduct revaluations this year, and are completing notices for the process. The Board of Assessment will review their training initiative scheduled for early May; they are unsure if they will proceed with the training in person. Green said tax maps are being created, and the County's foreclosure process is beginning. Green added that the foreclosure auction is tentatively scheduled for September 12th at the Golden Dome in Ogdensburg. Green also said real property sales will be posted on the department's web page by month and by town.

E. Soil and Water Conservation District. Dulanski said their offices are closed; only one person from each agency at the Canton USDA service center is allowed in the building through April 30th, and they are responding to voicemail messages. The District will proceed with its annual tree sales with social distancing measures in place. Dulanski said items must be pre-purchased for pick up only; no on site sales will be allowed. Field work will continue so long as it does

not involve person to person interactions. Dulanski said this year's Envirothon was cancelled, and the deadline to apply for non-point source pollution prevention funding was extended.

VI. Other Items

- A. Correspondence.** Larson said the only recent correspondence consisted of petitions to add land to Ag District 2. Pfothenauer said the Office received correspondence from the County Board Office announcing Reggie Sapp's reappointment to the Farmland Protection Board.
- B. Announcements.** Denesha said everyone in County government is coming together, and he is proud to be associated with St. Lawrence County employees.
- C. Next Meeting Date.** The next Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board meeting will be held online on Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm (Pfothenauer/Fisher). Green complimented staff for a job well done in coordinating tonight's online meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Matilda Larson