



Cattaraugus County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board

AGRICULTURAL & FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD MEETING

County Center, Little Valley, NY

February 5, 2019

Board Members

David L. Zilker
Chairman

Barbara D. George
Vice Chairman

Crystal J. Abers

David Koch

Charles W. Couture

Brian Davis

James Finch

Daniel T. Martonis

Donald Telaak

Richard Rivers

Brian Andrews

Ag Board Members Present:

David Zilker
Charles Couture
Crystal Abers
Richard Rivers
Barbara George
Brian Andrews
Brian Davis
David Koch

Ag Board Members Absent:

James Finch
Donald Telaak
Daniel Martonis

Planning Staff Present:

Paul R. Bishop, Planner
Pat McGlew, Development Specialist
Tiffany Chiarilli, Keyboard Specialist

Guests:

Rick Miller, Olean Times Herald

Chairman Zilker called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Barbara George moved with a second from Charles Couture to approve the December 18, 2018 minutes as submitted. Motion carried.



Introductions were made by the Board members to Brian Andrews.

2019 8th ANNUAL FARMER NEIGHBOR DINNER

Crystal updated the Board members on the Farmer Neighbor dinner plans. The speaker for the evening has not been confirmed as of yet. The menu is still in the works as a lot of farms cannot commit to what type of food donation they will make until about 2 weeks prior to the event. There has been a pork donation this year that will try to be worked into the menu. Other donations include, bison meatballs, carrot cake, wine, and beer from EBC.

UPDATE TO THE CATTARAUGUS COUNTY AGRICULTURE AND FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

Patrick was out of town so Paul updated the Board as follows. The RFP'S were mailed on January 14 and a press release was published on January 18. Jeff Keough from NYS Ag and Markets called and was impressed with the RFP. Patrick has had many follow-up calls with interest. Many of the candidates for the steering committee have confirmed interest as well. Crystal explained that we are trying to keep the steering committee small and having presenters come in. This will keep the committee current with more of a panel with Q and A's.

AGRICULTURAL TOUR 2019

Crystal reported that we are trying to finalize the time of year and locations for the 2019 Ag Tour in the northwest part of the County. She has had contact with possible Amish farms also.

30-DAY INCLUSIONS FOR 2019

This is the first time in three years that Cattaraugus County has had applications for inclusions.

The first property is owned by Melissa Keller of Riceville Rd. in Machias. She would like to start a CSA. Her property is approximately 50.4 acres.

Barb George motioned with a second from Brian Andrews to approve the inclusion.
Motion carried.

The second property is in Allegany on Morgan Hollow Rd. and is approximately 129.6 acres. The owner would like to produce hens and berries. Brian states that even though most of the parcel is forested, it is prime soil.

Chuck Couture motioned with a second from Dick Rivers to approve the inclusion.
Motion carried.

Rick Miller asked for the total number of acres in Cattaraugus County that are in the Ag District. Paul will follow up.

AGENCY UPDATES

Farm Bureau

Chuck reported that he was not at that last Farm Bureau meeting. Dave reminded the Board that lobby days are approaching. There is no list of who is going to go yet. Chuck stated that Cattaraugus County does not have an adopted legislator to advocate for the County and there are many legislators in Albany that need to be convinced of the importance of agriculture. During discussion on how to get legislators to visit our area farms, Barb recommended possibly organizing a tour for them.

Cooperative Extension

Dick reported that Cornell Cooperative Extension elected new officers. Don Wilde was elected president, Diane Clayson vice president, and Emily Arena was elected treasurer. Cornell allows 3 year terms. The Farmland Trust Grant was received and is to help new farmers find land. CCE also received a grant for a farm to school program taking farm produce to school cafeterias. Hinsdale and Franklinville schools will be part of this 2 year program. There will also be a meeting on February 26th with the County legislature to discuss the Ag Specialist position.

Soil and Water Conservation District

Brian reported that winter is the busiest part of the year what with wrapping up grant payments to farmers and getting ready for the annual tree sale and the Farmer Neighbor Dinner. He noted the state has provided a lot of opportunities with grants. His office is always looking to find the best options to direct people to. Cost match grants are harder for local farmers to participate in. Some grants allow an "in kind" match that makes it a little easier on farmers. Dave asked about the County's matching funds to possibly help in that area. Crystal stated that the County has a matching funds account for municipalities, but not for private farmers at this time.

Southern Tier West

No update available.

OPEN FORUM

Brian Andrews questioned the status of the gas line. Rick Miller stated that according to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission the gas line is back on and that the DEC took too much time. The line is running from Pennsylvania to Allegany County, then thru Hinsdale to Sardinia in Erie County. The gas is coming from McKean County and is Marcellus Shale gas.

Crystal updated on the New York State Association of Counties meeting she attended. Dr. Zucker spoke on marijuana. As of April 1, 2020 it will be legal. Counties have the option to opt out for production and sale. Local municipalities will be receiving 2% and the state will be receiving 20%. Dave Koch noted that if the County does opt out, they will lose all revenue. Crystal also noted that since January there has been approximately 8 calls with applicants who would like to get into the Industrial hemp business. There are already existing farms in the area. THC is highly monitored in order to use for medicinal purposes in CBD and hemp. The biggest cost is the drying facilities.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for March 19, 2019 at 1:00 PM at the County Center in Little Valley.

ADJOURNMENT

Dave Koch motioned with a second from Dick Rivers to adjourn at 1:44 pm. Motion carried.