

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
MEETING MINUTES
January 16, 2015

Members Present: Don Franklin; Sup. Evan Williams, Ken Dibbell, Shane Butler,
Stan Davis, Terry Ives, Emily Anderson and Rob DeClue.

Mr. Butler called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Reorganization

Mr. Butler asked for nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman. **Mr. Dibbell nominated Don Franklin as Chairman and Terry Ives as Vice-Chairman, Mr. Davis Seconded. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.**

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the November 21, 2014 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell motioned to approve the minutes, second by Sup. Williams. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Inclusions

Mr. Butler stated the 30-day Ag Inclusion period will run from February 2nd to March 4th. Mr. Dibbell asked why it would be those days. Mr. Butler stated February 2nd is the first day of February other than a weekend and it has to run for 30 days.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler stated he has two of the locations scheduled and is waiting on a response from the third. The DEC fish hatchery needs to ask the DEC Commissioner if they can hold the tour. Mr. Butler has called Eastern Travel and they will be sending a contract for the bus.

Ag Plastics

Chairman Franklin spoke with Mr. Smith and Mr. Aarismaa at BOCES has indicated they are willing to build the pole barn for ag plastic storage. Chairman Franklin and Mr. Smith attended the Public Works Committee meeting and it was approved. There are still questions to be answered and it must also go to Code Enforcement. BOCES will need to make sure the students are being supervised at all times. This will be a good learning experience for them.

Sup. Williams stated we still need to make sure we know where it will be located. Mr. Dibbell stated the landfill is too far.

Ms. Anderson stated the North Norwich storage building is full but there isn't enough plastic for a truckload and therefore it cannot be shipped. Madison County is hoping to bring in a system where they can chop the plastic on site and sell the plastic as pellets. This will be easier to ship and is the most profitable. Delaware County sent out an uncompacted truckload and received \$100 per ton. Broome County is planning to dig up and remove the metal in the old cells. They are planning to do a core sample and try to capture more methane. They are finding the garbage has not decomposed as fast as expected.

Bassett PTO Safety

Chairman Franklin would like to do a seminar about on-farm safety. The seminar could be held at either Morrisville, CCE, or the Marshman Farm. Mr. Davis stated he is on the PTO Safety Committee and can find out more information.

Tax Relief

Chairman Franklin stated Mr. Smith hasn't finished his presentation yet. He intends to present it to ADC first to make sure it flows well.

Resource Conservation

Chairman Franklin asked Mr. DeClue to present information on manure spreading, CAFO regulations, and other resource conservation topics.

Mr. DeClue stated it seems the CAFO regulations may be changing during another permitting cycle overseen by NYS DEC. He attended the last of four CAFO Roadshow last fall in Ballston Spa, NY. Mr. DeClue distributed to the members present a written summary outline of main points of this meeting. DEC received a lot of complaints relating to alleged contamination of residential water wells last winter and many initially blamed manure spreading by farmers. The thought process has begun in Albany state offices on considering an outright ban of land application of manure in winter. Large CAFO's are now required to have one staff member certified in manure spreading. New regulations being proposed would require medium CAFO's to do the same. There are currently no large CAFO's in Chenango County but there are eight (8) medium CAFO's.

Mr. DeClue stated Cornell University's Pro-Dairy has expanded their Dairy Acceleration Program (DAP) to include cost-sharing for design of certain conservation practices around the farmstead. DAP still covers requests for new & updated comprehensive nutrient management planning, & business planning. This funding opportunity is presently only available to dairy cattle farmers commercially shipping fluid milk.

Mr. DeClue stated the two ag assessment related bills discussed at the 18July2014 CA&FPB meeting were signed into law by the Governor. One of those new laws allows for including woodland managed as "silvopasture" in the agricultural production land total of Soil Group Worksheets. This is a relatively new conservation practice for intensely managed grazing systems and is starting to catch on in the Northeast. It has become common in the Southeastern US for decades. This is not to be confused with the old approach most farmers used in allowing the cattle & other livestock unrestricted and continual access to the entire thick woodlot. In contrast, silvopasture is a very thin woodlot of low stand density and relatively small area with a significant amount of palatable forage growing at ground level due to sunlight being able to reach the forest floor and reduced competition from tree for soil moisture and nutrients. In addition to feed, shade to keep the livestock cool is another major benefit of silvopasture. Livestock are only kept in the silvopasture for a limited duration and then removed so the area is allowed to rest and regrow forage. The soil worksheet and assessment would both need to be changed for farmers choosing to adopt this conservation practice. Some issues about silvopasture, however, have surfaced. What criteria or standard will be used to determine if a section of woods qualifies for this tax break? Who would verify and acknowledge it met that requirement? What are acceptable species for grazing or browsing in such areas? Mr. DeClue distributed two documents describing silvopasture; one is a practice overview from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the other authored by Brett Chedzoy of Cornell Cooperative Extension in Schuyler County.

Sup. Williams stated this isn't something occurring naturally. Mr. Davis stated they could use goats to clear out existing brush first and then manage the opened site for cattle.

Open Discussion

Mr. Ives stated the Dairy Promotion Board still has yet to be appointed this year. The Commissioner makes the appointments. In Country Folks magazine there is an article talking about the threat of foreign ownership. They are taking the best land in order to control food. With the ban on fracking, the taxes should be lower because it is one less opportunity on the land. Farmers are also losing part of their farm exemption due to crops. Mr. Dibbell stated if they do not work, they should not eat.

Mr. Dibbell handed out a letter regarding the Dean food lawsuit. About 8000 farms could receive money from the settlement. There is a movement to reject the settlement. Mr. Dibbell stated there is going to be a hearing and plans to attend. The milk price is currently \$21.02 which is down about \$2 from last month. Chobani shut down for about 5 days during the holidays. They receive about 40 loads per day. Back in 1940, there were 4.6 million farms in the country. There are less than 1% left.

With no further discussion, Mr. Dibbell motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ives at 11:22 AM.

The next meeting will be held on February 20th at 10:00 AM.

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
MEETING MINUTES
February 20, 2015

Members Present: Don Franklin; Sup. George Seneck, Sup. Lawrence Wilcox, Sup. Evan Williams, Ken Dibbell, Shane Butler, Stan Davis, Steve Harris, Bradd Vickers, Ken Ryan, and Ken Smith.

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the January 16, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell motioned to approve the minutes, second by Sup. Williams. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Inclusions

Mr. Butler placed the Ag Inclusion notice in the two official newspapers. As of right now there are no applications but residents have until March 4th. Mr. Ryan asked how many applications are typically placed per year. Mr. Butler stated there were none last year but there are usually between two and six.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler is waiting on the Otselic Fish Hatchery to decide whether or not the tour can be held at their facility. They wanted until June to decide but Mr. Butler asked if they could decide in March so there would be plenty of time for sending out letters and receiving donations.

Ag Plastics

Mr. Smith stated all parties have agreed on the building. BOCES has agreed to construct the building and there will be teachers to supervise the students constructing the building. Mr. Smith will be following up with all parties to start working on the project.

Bassett PTO Safety

Chairman Franklin has set up a seminar for March 6th from 1:00pm to 3:00 pm at the Morrisville College – Norwich Extension. Topics will include PTO Safety, Roll-Over Protection and OSHA. Farm Bureau has added the flyer to the website and the newsletter. Commerce Chenango and CCE have put it on their website and newsletter. Members should contact Mr. Franklin if they plan to attend.

Tax Relief

Mr. Smith presented a PowerPoint on the tax bias against poorer, rural counties. Rural counties have less money to pay for the unfunded mandates. Ag property tax abatement is less in rural counties because there isn't as much development pressure which is used as part of the abatement equation along with soil quality. Mr. Smith stated residents of non-tourism counties pay more of the sales tax. Mr. Davis stated one problem in Chenango County is about one-third is NY State Land.

Mr. Harris stated the Ag Land Ceiling can help some as well but depends on the quality of the soil. Sup. Wilcox stated it also depends on the land assessment and ag exemption. The Class 1 and Class 2 land exemptions were not worth filing for. An exemption is only a reallocation to the tax base. There is a high percentage of non-farm owners who are receiving the benefit because they are renting their land to a farmer. The exemption is not actually going to the farmer and sometimes the landowner is still expecting a rent payment. The exemption should be in-lieu of the taxes.

Mr. Smith stated the 480A program is also not as flexible as it could be. This is a long term program and can hurt farmers if they cut any of the timber prematurely. Mr. Vickers read the Farm Bureau policy which calls for more flexibility of the 480A program. For instance, harvesting prior to a pest or due to disease. Mr. Smith stated the 480A program benefits those landowners who have the ability to sit on a property for the long term. Mr. Harris added how most 480A program recipients are non-farms because there is another program where farmers can receive a benefit for woodlots over 50 acres.

Sup. Wilcox stated there are some opportunities for governments to consolidate but must study the costs. Smaller government entities still in existence today have found ways for cost savings. Sup. Wilcox stated those in Albany do not understand the diversity of quality

of living and income throughout the state. Chenango County is debt free and is in a strong position financially. A lot of this has to do with management at the State level.

Mr. Smith indicated the following ways to help rural counties; less unfunded mandates, greater support for tourism, higher fuel taxes to support infrastructure, reduce Medicaid costs, and have higher hotel taxes.

Chairman Franklin stated the State keeps taking money from one budget line and sticking it in another. The accounts should be limited to what they are spent on, for example, the Environmental Protection Fund.

Amish

Mr. Smith stated an Amish community is beginning to locate in the Town of Guilford. They are New Order Amish and hope to have three families in the Spring. We should do some trainings for both the Town Board/Community members and the Amish so everyone is on the same page. Sup. Senek stated the Amish need to know about the building codes and where to find information.

Mr. Smith stated they have 17 farms in Petersboro and are grazing based. Mr. Butler had been contacted by the group and gave them the names of other farm owners in the area to see if any other land was available.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers was congratulated on the National Awards they have received. They were in San Diego for the National Conference and presented on Disaster Preparedness. Farmers need to prepare for disasters and don't think of some of the problems they may face. Farmers still need to milk the cows even if the power goes out. The EPA has passed more generous legislation regarding their oversight on water. This is seen as a major win for farmers because the EPA will not have the ability to regulate all water including ditches. The Governor has changed the building codes for 2015 and Farm Bureau is hoping to include an exemption for rough cut lumber. Ag Day will be March 18th. The event focuses on recognizing the agriculture industry and is hoping again for a proclamation. The Governor's budget included \$4.7 million towards Soil and Water and another pot of money for Farmland Protection. Lobby Days will be March 2nd and 3rd. Mr. Vickers is now the President of the Farmer Veteran Coalition and have received money along with Cornell to be put into the program. They are looking for farmers to act as mentors for the veterans.

Mr. Smith stated the Farmland Protection Fund is not overly beneficial for Chenango County because we do not have as quality of soils. There was also an announcement for a farming program with a large pot of money dedicated for the Southern Tier. This would benefit farms who agree to stay in farming for 25 years.

Mr. Harris stated Ag Exemption renewals are due on March 2nd. Those in the Town of Preston and Plymouth will have to resubmit Soil Worksheets.

Mr. Dibbell attended the hearing in Vermont to testify on the bank settlement. He was featured on the cover of Country Folks magazine on the issue. Judge Reese is presiding over the case and Mr. Dibbell sent her information which she claims to have read. Some farmers want to accept the settlement and others want to keep fighting and take it to court. The settlement is for 800 farmers who will receive \$50 million. Mr. Dibbell also discussed milk insurance and the pricing of such policies and what the policy covers.

Mr. Smith stated the milk insurance policy minimum is \$4.00 and the maximum is \$8.00 (difference between cost of production and milk price).

Mr. Davis stated it costs \$300 to register a car for two years in Maryland. Delaware County does not pay sales tax but have to pay 6% on property sales.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Dibbell at 11:32 AM.

The next meeting will be held on March 20th at 10:00 AM.

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
MEETING MINUTES
March 20, 2015

Members Present: Don Franklin; Terry Ives; Sup. George Seneck, Sup. Evan Williams, Ken Dibbell, Shane Butler, Stan Davis, Steve Harris, Ken Ryan, and Ken Smith.

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the February 20, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the minutes, second by Sup. Williams. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Inclusions

Mr. Butler stated he received one application of Ag District Inclusion. The property is around 8 acres on County Road 19 and is used for vegetables, livestock, and Christmas trees.

Mr. Smith motioned to approve the application and refer to the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Slaughterhouse

Mr. Smith attended the Public Hearing and was not impressed with the speaker. The meeting started with a lot of residents speaking about their concerns to which the speaker did not answer their concerns very well. The Town Supervisor and other board members were very articulate in their responses and did a good job. There will be no rendering on site and will all be refrigerated; therefore there should be little smell associated with the facility. Basically the livestock will be dropped off and processed directly after. The livestock will not be pastured outside for any major length of time. They are also interested in providing packaged and cooked meat to local stores. The facility will have around 100-150 jobs.

Sup. Williams asked if they were related to the Utica Veal facility. Mr. Butler stated they are the sons of the owner. The facility will have a veterinarian, Imam, Rabbi, and USDA inspector on site. They will be Hillel, Kosher and USDA certified.

Mr. Smith stated there were concerns about the water consumption and sewer utilization but there is plenty of supply available. Some were concerned about the electric but this will actually be beneficial in increasing demand and therefore reducing the cost because the Village of Sherburne operates as an electric utility. One farmer who has experience at large slaughterhouses indicated this would be a positive for the area.

Sup. Williams stated some of the workers would probably not be local because of the nature of the jobs but would assume a lot of locals will be employed there as well. Jobs will range at the facility.

Mr. Davis asked if they will sell to local residents. Mr. Smith was not sure but they might consider it eventually once they are up and running. Sup. Evans stated this could be a big business if they do.

Mr. Butler stated they will be sourcing the livestock from a 50 mile radius as to reduce the amount of stress on the animal. Sup. Williams asked if there would be enough supply. Mr. Smith stated they will be getting some directly from auction. Most of these go to Pennsylvania right now so if we can keep some in the area this would be beneficial.

Mr. Smith motioned to send a letter of support for the facility to the Town of Sherburne, seconded by Mr. Ryan. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler has scheduled two of the three locations but still needs to do the final confirmation with the NYSDEC hatchery in Otselic. He will be contacting them again next week to start the preparations which they asked to start in April. We will be visiting the Angell Alpaca farm and Von Hossel dairy farm as well as eating lunch at the Otselic Grange.

Ag Plastics

Mr. Smith stated there was a minor hiccup in the process. There was some pushback at BOCES regarding which students would be working on the building. They hope to start in the Spring and have it completed by the Fall.

Mr. Smith motioned to send a letter to BOCES in support of the construction of an Ag Plastics storage building, seconded by Sup. Williams. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

PTO Safety Meeting

Mr. Butler attended the meeting but the turnout was not as great as we had hoped. Mr. Davis stated it was more about farm safety in general than specifically about the PTO safety. There were two who came from the Verde View Farm in Harpursville. Mr. Butler stated they have horses and are certified for therapeutic services.

Chairman Franklin stated we should have started advertising sooner. Mr. Smith recommended tying it to another event next time.

NYS Ag and Markets Letter

Chairman Franklin asked Mr. Harris to comment on the letter regarding Sylvopasturing from NYS Ag and Markets.

Mr. Harris stated he is not sure if any have been added in the county. It must encompass 10 acres, must be fenced in, and have ground cover. He hoped there would be a percentage of canopy cover the assessors could utilize for assessment purposes because this will be hard for them to implement.

Mr. Ryan stated this would work well for reforested areas where trees are planted in rows with good space in between. There probably won't be much interest in our area but it does make the woods look nice.

Mr. Harris handed out copies of the Governor's budget as it relates to agriculture with the Senate and Assembly proposed budgets, a copy of an article from the Saugerties Post Star about the Farmland Assessment Cap, and an article from the NYS Comptroller explaining the importance of Agriculture to the NYS economy. The governor is trying to show he saved farmers \$11 million in taxes for the Farm Ceiling Assessment Cap. Mr. Smith stated many of our farmers would not benefit from this because we are under the cap.

Mr. Smith talked about the Southern Tier Agricultural Development proposal. The Commissioner spoke about the fund on Ag Day on Wednesday. He encourage farms in Chenango County to apply.

Amish

Mr. Smith stated there are three farms in the works of being sold in the Town of Guilford to an Amish community from Ohio. They are New Order Amish who will each have a 50 cow organic dairy. The family is more progressive than the Old Order Amish and will be open to tours by organizations. They have cousins who started a community in Petersboro, NY. The community will grow in Guilford slowly. We want to help make this a smooth transition for them. The Amish do pay land taxes and school taxes and therefore are legally allowed to utilize the school buses for the children. Eventually they may build a church or school which would not be required to pay taxes similar to any other church or school.

Mr. Smith asked for a resolution to support the final payment of the Grazing/Economic Development Specialist who, without his help, the Amish would not have located in the Town of Guilford.

Mr. Ryan motioned to send a letter of support to the Planning and Economic Development Committee, seconded by Mr. Dibbell. Members voted all ayes, motion carried. Mr. Smith abstained.

Mr. Ryan asked if the Amish will effect land prices in the area. Mr. Harris stated it will depend on the sale price and how many sales happen. Farm to farm sales are very limited in the area and could have some impact but shouldn't affect the actual farm assessments because there are set rates.

Mr. Smith stated the Amish were not paying as much as some of the farmers wanted and therefore some of the previous negotiations at other farms did not come to fruition. Land with well-drained soil is selling quite high compared to land on a side hill. Mr. Harris stated typical land prices right now are around \$1500-2000 an acre.

Mr. Smith stated the Amish are not used to having a lot of woodland acres. Mr. Ives stated they may ask local farmers to help them with harvesting.

Open Discussion

Mr. Ryan stated the Town of Oxford has more land management than most of the Towns. They have recently had public hearings to split two farms. The lands are zoned agriculture but they can build one house. He asked if the Town of Oxford should think more about trying to preserve the farm land rather than allowing houses.

Mr. Butler stated to be careful about minimum lot sizes. Cluster development and buffer zones with much smaller lots are better because they preserve more of the land. If you have a 100 acre lot and have a 10 acre minimum lot size, it only takes 10 subdivisions to chop it up. With smaller lots you could have preserved more of the larger land.

Mr. Dibbell stated Farm Family is petitioning the Secretary of Agriculture in regards to the pay price schedule. The pay price is \$17.50 per 100 weight but the cost of production is \$37.50. The government is not reading their own numbers. Fuel prices are down but the price of corn and other crops are still up.

Mr. Ives was not reappointed to the Dairy Promotion Advisory Board and did not receive any sort of notification. The Southern Tier is no longer represented on the board. The closest to the Southern Tier is a person in Steuben County.

Mr. Smith motioned to send a letter to the Ag and Markets Commissioner encouraging the appointment of a representative from the Southern Tier Region on the Dairy Promotion Advisory Board, seconded by Mr. Dibbell. Members voted all ayes, motion approved.

Mr. Ives stated the appointments are for three years. The Dairy Princess Banquet will be held on May 2nd. Mr. Ives did not attend the conference in Nashville.

Mr. Smith asked if anyone had a farm wagon they could buy to use as a float during the parade. The CCE and Farm Bureau are celebrating their 100 year Anniversary.

With no further discussion, Mr. Smith motioned to adjourn, second by Sup. Williams at 11:25 AM.

The next meeting will be held on April 17th at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
MEETING MINUTES
April 17, 2015

Members Present: Don Franklin, Terry Ives, Ken Dibbell, Bradd Vickers Shane Butler,
Stan Davis, Steve Harris, Ken Ryan, and Ken Smith.

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the March 20, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell motioned to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Ryan. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler contacted Mr. Daly at the Otselic Fish Hatchery to start the process again of being able to tour the facility. He expects an answer in the next week or two. Mr. Smith stated the hatchery has mainly Tiger Muskellunges.

Ag Plastics

Mr. Smith contacted the CCE insurance agent about the possibility of CCE building the building. The agent did not see any issue with CCE constructing it. Mr. Smith stated he was unsure whether or not they are required to put the construction to bid. With oil prices going down, it is increasingly difficult to market the plastics. There is a full container at the North Norwich facility.

Ag Development Council

Chairman Franklin asked for an update. Mr. Smith stated this year marks the 20th anniversary of ADC. This year a series of videos will be produced relating to skill building. Micro-grants will again be provided. Another project being worked on is an update to the agricultural tourism map.

Mr. Ryan stated the ADC used to have a booth during the fair and would hand out information.

Annual Inclusions

Mr. Butler stated he will be going to the Ag Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting on April 21st. There is only one application this year.

Amish

Mr. Ives stated the Amish are beginning to move in and rumors about them buying other buildings and farms have started to go around. He will be combining farms with Mr. Johnson and will be needing more cow storage for the winter. There are mixed feelings about the Amish but will have to see how it plays out. At least some of the land is going to go back into production.

Mr. Vickers asked how many farms in Chenango County have been dropped by the cooperative. Mr. Ives stated he knew of none. The milk price last month was \$17.89 per 100 weight. Exports are the biggest factor and some farms will start to go out of business. Mr. Davis stated the advance milk check was \$13.58 per 100 weight. Mr. Smith stated cow numbers are still going down but the herd averages are going up. Mr. Dibbell stated we need supply management. The average cost of production is \$27. Mr. Smith stated the number includes paid labor.

Mr. Ives stated there has been a lot of land grabbing by large farms. Mr. Franklin stated he has seen some advertising in the paper of land for rent. One wanted \$150 per acre.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers stated the budget was passed with no increase in minimum wage. The Upstate Revitalization Fund was announced recently which includes \$50 million for the Southern Tier Farm Initiative. Mr. Vickers attended the National Agribility Conference which focuses on farmers with disabilities. The speaker at the conference is a quadriplegic who loves to tell people he is a farmer.

There is specialized equipment to help get in the vehicle/equipment. Mr. Vickers stated teachers still cannot earn a degree in being an FFA teacher which is something we should push at Cornell University.

Mr. Harris stated the tentative assessments will be released May 1st and everyone should double check their assessment to make sure it appears correct. Grievance day is at the end of the month. In the State of Maine there is a program originating from the Governor's office where if a person is single and receives SNAP, they must be part of a work program or else they do not receive the assistance.

Mr. Smith spoke to NYS Ag and Markets regarding the Southern Tier Farm Initiative. He hopes to work with Commerce Chenango to get some pre-applications ready. The Amish will start to move in around the May/June time frame. About three or four families will relocate each year. Some will use tractors and may generate their own electricity to power the electric fences using a generator. Due to current supply, nobody will take their regular milk but have had no issues with organic milk.

Mr. Ives stated the Dairy Princess Banquet will be May 2nd. We will not have a representative from the Southern Tier on the Dairy Advisory Board for three years. Mr. Smith suggested we send a letter.

Mr. Davis stated the Grange will provide a BBQ and potato salad lunch for the Ag Tour. He did not tap the maple trees this year because of the amount of snow. Other farmers who did tap did better last year as far as production numbers.

Mr. Dibbell received a call from the NYS Ag and Markets Commissioners Office. They would like to have a meeting with various Congress-members and hope to have it in our area. Mr. Jim Bays is no longer Deputy Commissioner. Mr. Dibbell would like to talk with them about fixing the milk price. Extra milk should not be dumped and instead should be processed and given to the food bank. With schools not open in the summer and Chobani giving employees a day off last year, a lot of milk was dumped. We need to have supply management of milk production.

With no further discussion, Mr. Smith motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Dibbell at 11:20 AM.

The next meeting will be held on May 15th at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board MEETING MINUTES

June 19, 2015

Members Present: Don Franklin, Terry Ives, Ken Dibbell, Bradd Vickers, Shane Butler, Sup. Lawrence Wilcox, Sup. George Seneck, Sup. Evan Williams, Stan Davis, and Ken Ryan.

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the April 17, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Davis asked to take out the statement about the certified kitchen. Sup. Williams motioned to approve the minutes as amended, second by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler has 25 people signed up so far including two from the NYS Assembly and six Town Supervisors. He will be sending out more information next week.

Ag Plastics

Chairman Franklin stated the building is about 90% completed. The price of plastic is down because of the drop in oil prices. Mr. Vickers attended a conference at the Delaware County Solid Waste Facility and they are doing sorting and bailing of the plastic. Madison County is still moving forward with the plastic-to-oil conversion company.

Ag Development Council

Chairman Franklin asked for an update. Mr. Butler stated they approved one micro-grant and the producers map is still in the works and hopes to be completed soon.

Conservation Reserve Program

Chairman Franklin spoke with Rob Declue about the program. Mr. Declue suggested those who are in the program should reapply soon before it runs out because there will be changes coming soon.

Chairman Franklin also spoke to Mr. Declue about the land prices in the area. In the Sidney area, a farmer was looking to rent some land and the owner wanted \$1,000 per acre.

Dairy Day

Mr. Davis stated they are working to finalize the plans for the weekend. Mr. Vickers stated the Chenango County Farm Bureau will be doing a presentation about Rural Road Safety. There have been a lot of lawsuits due to farm machinery vs. vehicle accidents. The slow-moving vehicle signs should not be used for driveways.

Mr. Davis stated the Grange passed a resolution to have a marker light on the edge of snowplows so you know where the blade is when driving by.

Mr. Ives stated a horse and buggy was recently hit in the Edmeston area. Chenango County has been putting up signs in the Guilford area to warn motorists about the horse and buggies.

Dairy Meeting

Chairman Franklin asked if there had been anything done about a meeting between Ag and Markets and Congress to talk about farming. Mr. Vickers stated there was a workshop in Oneonta recently. Pete Fredericks was there and spoke about the dairy industry. He also spoke about dairy processing. Mr. Dibbell stated few active farmers attended.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers stated the EPA is still moving forward to seize all of the waterways under their control. A House bill is pushing back against this. Mr. Vickers also attended a meeting with Donna Lupardo about hemp in NY. Congressman Hanna is also supporting this.

Mr. Vickers also attended the National Agribility Conference which focuses on farmers with disabilities. The speaker at the conference is a quadriplegic who loves to tell people he is a farmer. There is specialized equipment to help get in the vehicle/equipment.

Mr. Dibbell also attended the conference in Oneonta where Peter Fredericks spoke. He talked about how the price of milk is calculated. The average cost of production is \$27.66 per 100 weight. In NY it is \$33.74 per 100 weight. The price of milk is around \$16.00 per 100 weight. We continue to lose dairy farmers in the county and are now down to about 140.

Mr. Ives stated there is another manufacturer of yogurt in the area and it is located in Cortland County. Sup. Wilcox stated farmers start buying when things are looking good and get into large amounts of debt. As soon as the prices start going down they get themselves in trouble. Instead of buying when things are looking good they should pay down their debts instead of buying new equipment. It is a vicious cycle.

Mr. Ives stated the international surplus is hurting farmers. Europe is doing away with quotas which will make it worse. He also attended the Northeast Fluid Milk Forum which had a variety of presentations. The consumption of whole milk has increased. Milk needs fat to grow the brains of kids.

Mr. Ryan stated we should work more on farm preservation. What should we do? Sup. Wilcox stated if you come up with any ideas they can be sent to the NYSAC Ag Taskforce which has been operating now for 6 years.

With no further discussion, Mr. Smith motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Dibbell at 11:00 AM.

The next meeting will be held on July 24th at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board July 24, 2015 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Don Franklin, Terry Ives, Shane Butler, Steve Harris, Rob DeClue, Sup. Lawrence Wilcox, and Ken Ryan.

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the June 19, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the minutes as amended, second by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler has 43 people signed up so far including two representatives from Congressman Hanna's office, two from the NYS Assembly along with three staffers, and six Town Supervisors, among others.

Ag Development Council

Chairman Franklin asked for an update. Mr. Butler stated they approved three micro-grants. A draft of the producers map was passed out and is hoped to be completed soon.

Ag Inclusions

Chairman Franklin received a letter from NYS Ag and Markets stating the 30-Day Inclusion property had been approved.

Conservation Reserve Program

Chairman Franklin asked Mr. DeClue to come in and talk about a variety of programs. Early contracts for the Farm Service Agency Conservation Reserve Program are near expiration. The contracts ranged from 10 to 15 years. Those who signed the contracts received a letter in the mail advising them to contact their local FSA office to renew. Many did not see the letter or don't understand it and think it renews automatically. The letter was sent from an address in Kansas instead of the local offices and some disregarded it. If the person does not renew, the contact will relapse and causes a big delay. The rates are also changing.

EPA Clean Water Act

Mr. DeClue passed out "The Clean Water Rule for: Agriculture," a fact sheet from the EPA. It lists exceptions and inclusions regarding soil conservation. NYS notified the EPA about some conservation practices they felt should be exempt and is hoping they will be changed.

Yakima Case

Mr. DeClue passed out an article from Hoard's Dairyman called "Yakima case a bellwether of future challenges ahead". NRCS standards are not high enough for earthen storage of manure. One of the questions is whether or not manure constitutes a hazardous material. Chairman Franklin stated it depends on where the manure goes. If it goes into drinking water it could be hazardous. If it stays on the field it is not.

Upper Susquehanna Coalition

Mr. DeClue stated the Upper Susquehanna Coalition in New York wants to show how good we are doing on reducing nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment in the river. NYS is pushing to reduce the requirements in NYS. Mr. DeClue stated water can clean itself to a point. Maryland has the greatest impact on the numbers because they are near the end of the line.

Mr. Ryan asked how we are doing locally. Mr. DeClue stated there isn't specific local data. NYS is doing better than the other states and is also where the source lies. Chairman Wilcox stated NYS is mostly agricultural. Once the water gets to Pennsylvania where more industry is, it becomes more polluted. Chairman Franklin stated PA has 40,000 farms feeding into the Susquehanna and they aren't doing their jobs to keep the substances out of the water.

NYSDEC CAFO Permitting

Mr. DeClue stated the deadline for CAFO's to submit nutrient management plans was pushed back three times. The most recent deadline, June 30th, 2014, was not pushed back. Some CAFO's are getting their hand slapped because they did not submit the required

documents. Chairman Wilcox asked what the penalty is. Mr. DeClue stated it depends on the nature of the problem. It also depends on how long it had been an issue.

NYS Invasive Species

Mr. DeClue passed around the NYSDEC booklet on invasive species. Some of the plants found on the list are what people would use for conservation practices. Black Locust, a popular tree for use as fence posts, is considered invasive.

Mr. Ryan advised all to stay away from the wild parsnip. It can cause blisters and rashes when touched. Mr. Ryan asked why the plants change from year to year. Mr. DeClue stated it depends on what they refer to as the “seed bank”. Seeds gather in the ground and stay there until the climate is perfect for them to grow.

Pasture Walk on Plant Competition and Sustenance

Mr. DeClue invited all to attend the Pasture Walk to be held on July 30th. The pasture walk will have two locations, the first in New Berlin and the second in Sherburne.

Dairy Margin Program

Chairman Wilcox asked if people were still signing up for the Dairy Margin Program. Mr. DeClue stated initial sign-ups were high last year. He was not sure how it was going this year. Chairman Wilcox stated it would have been beneficial to very few people in Chenango County and wasn't worth what you get back.

Open Discussion

Mr. Ryan stated it was nice to see the Amish around the area. He would also like to see someone produce a brochure on how to put your farm into the Forever Agriculture program.

Chairman Franklin would like to send a letter to NYS about milk prices. Mr. Ives stated farmers need to tighten up the supply. Chairman Wilcox stated people were asking for more milk and money was spent to increase the number of farmers. Now we have too much supply and the price of milk has gone down. We need to promote more uses for milk.

Mr. Ives stated we need to change the labeling requirements at the Federal level. Milk comes from mammary glands, soy and almond do not and should not be considered milk.

Mr. Harris stated the final assessment roles were completed July 1st. School tax bills will go out in August. The tax cap this year is at 0.73%. Tax cap checks will be coming out in October or November. The School, County and Town had to stay under the tax cap for people to receive the check.

Chairman Wilcox stated the amount of County contribution to the pension reimbursement will go up 2-3% this year. NYSAC is our best resource to push NYS. There is a 60% downstate attitude that does not care about upstate NY.

Mr. Ives stated the cost of milk is at \$16.23 per 100 weight and is very depressing. We need about \$18.00 to break even. Haulers are dumping milk again this year and is costing the farmers \$.40 due to the market adjustment. Farmers are still paying the fuel surcharge yet it doesn't go down when fuel does. Chairman Wilcox stated you have a guaranteed market but don't have a guaranteed price. With a cooperative you don't necessarily have a guaranteed market.

Mr. Butler spent the last two weeks at the Greater Chenango Cares event. The service members provided approximately \$1.4 million worth of medical services during the event. They also contributed to the local economy by buying supplies at our stores. Chairman Wilcox stated the figures are usually for every one dollar spent locally, it multiplies three or four times.

With no further discussion, Mr. Ives motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan at 11:20 AM.

The next meeting will be held on July 24th at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
August 21, 2015 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Don Franklin; Shane Butler; Steve Harris; Ken Ryan; Bradd Vickers; Sup. George Seneck
Guests: FFA Instructors Vicky Gregory and Betty Ann Robinson

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Chairman Franklin asked for any additions or corrections on the July 24, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Vickers motioned to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

Chairman Franklin introduced FFA Instructors Vicky Gregory and Betty Ann Robinson who were asked to come to the meeting to talk about the FFA.

Ms. Robinson received a letter from Crystal Aukema, FFA instructor from the Oxford School District. Ms. Aukema stated the FFA program in Oxford is growing but would benefit from more community input. It would be helpful to have more press releases and knowledge about FFA given to the public. There are no FFA programs in Broome County and only one program in the Broome-Tioga BOCES district. Ms. Robinson stated she has excellent support in Otselic but there are some questions about the future of the program and concerns about whether or not it would be cut. She will be meeting with the school board next week in executive session.

Mr. Harris recommended holding a meeting with BOCES, CCE, and Farm Bureau about the FFA program. It would be a way to get all of the Superintendents in the same room at once. Mr. Harris was on the school board and the board will do whatever the Superintendent wants half of the time.

Ms. Gregory states she teaches FFA in Chenango County on an 11 month contract. The FFA works with the Afton Food Bank, provides community service, and also works with the Clothing Closet. Ms. Gregory is the Vice-President of the Afton Fairgrounds and tries to promote the FFA program as much as possible. The Afton Fair now has a website and Facebook page for promotion as well. Ms. Gregory is also on the Unadilla-Valley School Board and pushes to keep the FFA program at the school. Students are currently within three (3) credits of receiving an Associate's Degree by the time they leave High School. Agriculture is both math and science. We need to show the value of the program.

Ms. Robinson stated Otselic is a small school and it is hard to get the credits available. The school urges students to take other classes because they would receive more credits. Officers in her program are the valedictorian and salutatorian of their classes. We need to show the benefit of FFA and what is being learned. About 28% of jobs in NYS are related to agriculture.

Ms. Robinson asked if it would be possible to have Commissioner of Ag and Markets Richard Ball at a BOCES meeting to talk about the FFA. Mr. Butler stated he would work on setting something up. Sup. Seneck stated he would like to have a presentation at the Ag Building & Grounds Committee meeting and to invite Shawn Magrath to it.

Mr. Davis stated the FFA teaches leadership, Roberts Rules of Order, public speaking and more. Ms. Robinson stated they are teaching life skills. FFA students don't necessarily go into commercial operation of a farm but may still have a farm related job.

Mr. Vickers made a motion to write a letter of support for FFA classes around the county and to send the letter to all School Superintendents and Boards of Education, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Chairman Franklin suggested showing what the economic impact of farming is in Chenango County as part of the support letter.

Mr. Vickers stated education is very important and is hard to get into the schools to talk about it. It is easier to get into a school in Brooklyn to talk about agriculture than it is here in Chenango County. He also wanted to recognize Ms. Robinson as a veteran. Cornell has reinstated the program to educate FFA teachers.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler stated there were 36 people in attendance which isn't as many as years in the past but thought the tour was one of the better ones held. Sup. Senek stated it was the best Ag Tour he had been on. Not a lot of people know what is going on in farming.

Mr. Vickers stated it was a good networking process and had a lot of positive feedback from Assemblymembers Lupardo and Crouch. Ms. Robinson suggested inviting school superintendents on future tours.

Pennsylvania Milk Pricing

Chairman Franklin asked Ken Smith to send information about Pennsylvania milk prices. Mr. Smith could not attend the meeting but stated in an email that PA has a law passed in the 1930s that lets them add on some to the milk order price. Right now it is \$1.85 which includes \$0.25 cents for fuel costs and \$1.60 for production cost. It only applies to fluid milk produced, bottled and sold in PA. Mr. Smith also sent a document about how Maine is priced.

Goals

Chairman Franklin asked members to bring ideas on what goals to work on.

Sup. Senek stated the Amish will spend about \$1.3 million per year which has a huge economic impact. Mr. Davis stated the Amish have moved into vacant land and built all new near Madison County. Mr. Ryan stated they are self-educated and it is a high level of education.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers stated Farm Bureau supports the federal water protection act. He went to the Empire Farm Days where letters were being signed to support ditching the EPA water rules. Farm Bureau is also helping to support a Rural Roads Program in conjunction with Nationwide Insurance. He passed out a flier regarding safety on ATV's.

Mr. Vickers attended a leadership luncheon at Empire Farm Days and talked about the Agribility program. The program has to be run through a land grant college and would like to get Cornell involved. Lupardo would like to start funding disability programs at the state level in a few years.

Mr. Vickers was invited to do a booth at the NYS fair regarding veterans. A K9 program is being started to help veterans cope with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The program costs \$20,000 and provides a dog to a soldier with PSD.

Mr. Vickers is also collecting information for policy development including fines for poaching. Farm Bureau would like to see higher finds for people looking for trophies. Quality deer management is something of need. There is currently a program in McGraw which talks about how to better manage deer to improve size.

Mr. Harris stated they have started to run tax bills. Residents should be receiving discount checks sometime in October. The STAR rebate check may come either this year or next year but is also subject to change.

With no further discussion, Mr. Ives motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan at 11:05 AM.

The next meeting will be held on September 18 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board September 18, 2015 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Sup. Evan Williams; Ken Smith; Stan Davis; Ken Dibbell; Shane Butler; Bradd Vickers; Sup. George Seneck

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Chairman Ives asked for a moment of silence to recognize the passing of Chairman Don Franklin and his dedication to agriculture and farmland protection. A memorial of remembrance will be held on October 4th from Noon until 4:00pm at the VFW in Norwich.

Chairman Ives asked for any additions or corrections on the August 21, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell motioned to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Vickers. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated the Ag Development Council would like to start a scholarship for FFA students and would like to name the scholarship in honor of Don Franklin. ADC members asked Mrs. Franklin and their children for some guidelines on how to award the scholarship.

Mr. Butler stated a Producers Map was completed by the Ag Development Council with additional support from Commerce Chenango. Copies were passed around to members. Mr. Smith asked for any changes or recommendations because there is a tentative reprint of the map in early Spring.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

Mr. Butler stated this was one of the last things Chairman Franklin was working on. Mr. Butler spoke to BOCES Interim Superintendent Gray Stevens about the possibility of meeting and speaking at the school Superintendents meeting. Mr. Stevens thought it would be more appropriate to speak to the Guidance Counselors and school board members. Sup. Seneck stated the Superintendents would be the better route.

Mr. Butler spoke with Christina Layne, Special Council for the NYS Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to find out if the Commissioner would be willing to speak about FFA in front of the school Superintendents. Ms. Layne was going to forward the request to his secretary.

Mr. Butler drafted a resolution in support of FFA based on other resolutions in other jurisdictions and information from the FFA website which could be sent to the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee and then to the Full Board.

Sup. Williams motioned to support the resolution with revisions made by Mr. Butler and Mr. Smith and bring it to Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee for their support, seconded by Mr. Dibbell. Discussion continued; Mr. Smith stated he would work with Mr. Butler to reword some of the resolves. Sup. Seneck suggested forwarding the finalized resolution to BOCES, the School Superintendents and School Board members. Sup. Williams suggested FFA merging with the Technology Department because there are a lot of similarities. Administrators at the area school districts clearly don't understand the program. Mr. Smith stated there needs to be better promotion of the program. Mr. Smith suggested inviting Interim Superintendent Stevens to the Ag and Farmland Protection Board meeting next month. Mr. Davis stated the State Grange supports FFA and wants to coordinate more with them. Mr. Vickers stated NYS Farm Bureau also supports FFA. There is an Agriculture Fair at Oxford Academy on September 25th. Chairman Ives stated something should also be done for National FFA week. **Members voted all ayes, motion carried.**

FarmShine Magazine

Chairman Ives passed around copies of an article found in the FarmShine Magazine from Friday, September 4, 2015 called "My View on Federal Milk Marketing Orders: Current rules, centralized models have troubling impact." The writer picks apart the Federal Order Program which is a complicated monster.

Mr. Dibbell stated cost of production is higher than the milk price being paid. The fix is with a re-blend. Milk from South New Berlin is not going to Chobani. Mr. Smith stated Pennsylvania and Maine have the ability to set a better price due to other considerations. Pennsylvania get a fuel stipend of \$1.79 for fluid milk produced and sold within Pennsylvania. The stipend is basically passed onto the consumer. Chairman Ives stated Maine has some insulation from imports due to the mountains.

Ideas to Work On

Chairman Ives asked if there were other ideas we should work on.

Mr. Smith stated we should send another letter to US Senator Charles Schumer recommending a change in the USDA standards for milk fat. A resolution was passed last year but we should send another letter. Mr. Smith will work with Mr. Butler on writing the letter. Mr. Ives stated Senator Schumer was in Cortland recently.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers listed three dates to keep on the calendar; September 25th is the Oxford Academy Agriculture Fair; October 21st is the 100 year celebration for CCE; October 27th is the Farm Bureau annual meeting; and on October 29th, Temple Grandin will be in Syracuse. Farm Bureau is working on policy development for the annual meeting. EPA's new water regulations make it so they would control about 94% of the water in Iowa. Some states have had judges block it.

Mr. Dibbell was going to go to the hearing in Burlington, Vermont on September 29th but it was cancelled. He sent a packet of information to the DMS/DFA attorney (packet passed around and is on file) and to all of our legislators in Washington DC. This hearing needs to go to court. Farm kids are the only kids in Chenango County who know how to work. There were 4,000 farms in NYS in 2014 and is still going down.

Sup. Williams stated we should continue to honor Don Franklin by pushing to support the FFA.

Chairman Ives informed every one of the ADADC meeting to be held on November 7th. He talked to the Commissioner of Ag and Markets about his displeasure on how the Dairy Promotion Board was seated without telling the previous board members.

With no further discussion, Mr. Ives motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan at 10:55 AM.

The next meeting will be held on October 16th at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
October 16, 2015 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Sup. Evan Williams; Ken Smith; Stan Davis; Ken Dibbell; Shane Butler;
Ken Ryan; Sup. George Seneck; Sup. Lawrence Wilcox; and Rob DeClue.

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chairman Ives asked for any additions or corrections on the September 18, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell made a correction to the second paragraph under FarmShine relating to Pennsylvania and Maine not being part of the Northeast order. Mr. Smith motioned to approve the minutes as corrected, second by Mr. Ryan. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Smith stated a \$500 microgrant was awarded to Josh Conover for flower seeds. The business has taken off very well. A microgrant was also awarded to an Amish farmer for experimental seeding to rejuvenate a hay field. The experiment is to see how effective no-till seeding is versus tilling with oats. Mr. Smith stated the ADC is also working on more videos relating to grass fed dairies including von Hassels. Organic grain currently costs about two times as much as regular grain. Farmers are getting \$40 per 100 weight for certified grass fed milk.

Chairman Ives asked about the scholarship. Mr. Smith stated the meeting did not have quorum so it will be brought up again next month. There are some questions about how restrictive to be. Mr. Butler stated he would talk to Ms. Franklin about it. Chairman Ives stated it is a nice way to promote the preservation of the FFA. Awardees could be put in the newspaper. Sup. Seneck suggested adding "or qualified entity" to the FFA requirement because some students may not be part of the FFA but still are pursuing agricultural careers. Mr. Smith suggested having the candidate talk about what projects they have undertaken relating to farming.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

Chairman Ives suggested showing the economic impact of farming by school district to show where the communities would be without agriculture. He asked Mr. Smith if this was possible.

Mr. Smith stated the total amount of agricultural sales is \$66 million in Chenango County. This does not include the purchases at grocery stores which could escalate the number to over \$200 million. Breaking down the number by school district would be difficult but we could find out how many farms are in each area and multiply by the average number of cows and average production by cow. Mr. Davis stated there are 8 farms in Otselic.

Chairman Ives talked with Ms. Robinson again and she has 70 students in her program but that also includes her technology class. She had a meeting with the Superintendent and the school is no longer considering dropping the program. There was pushback from the community as well. The school is considering bringing kids from Sherburne-Earlville because they do not have an FFA program. Mr. Smith stated technology is very relatable to agriculture. Sup. Seneck stated Oxford and Afton have a lot of administrative and community support for their program.

Chairman Ives suggested inviting school Superintendents on the Ag Tour and also getting on the BOCES agenda early next year. We should also talk with members of the BOCES board. Donald Henner is the Superintendent for Otselic. Sup. Seneck stated Annette Hammond is the new Superintendent at GMU. Mr. Davis suggested inviting Grange Master Steve Coye from Smyrna. Mr. Smith suggested inviting BOCES Interim Superintendent to our next Ag and Farmland Protection Board meeting.

Chairman Ives stated agriculture is more than dairy and beef. Mr. Smith stated farm families have more skill sets to fill jobs than the general public. We could create a list of all of the skills needed by employers in the county and show how many of these skills are taught at the FFA program.

Mr. Butler passed around a draft resolution supporting FFA. Mr. Smith read over the resolution and made minor corrections. Mr. Davis would like to send it to the State Grange for support as well. **Sup. Williams motioned to approve the resolution and send it to the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee, seconded by Mr. Smith. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.**

Chesapeake Bay

Mr. Declue provided updates and passed out the EPA Evaluation of New York's progress on reducing nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment. The SWCD documents the good work being undertaken in our community to better the water. The information gets fed to the EPA who does computer monitoring. The EPA wants to do quality control and make sure the SWCD's are reporting accurate information. The SWCD now will have to do field visits to make sure the crops are planted rather than phone calls. This is another unfunded mandate.

Mr. Smith stated we are mainly state forest which makes it hard to improve any more than we have. Mr. Declue stated NY's water is very good. Water has a natural ability to repair some damage in the water. Riparian buffers have worked very well in our area.

Mr. Declue stated many of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program contracts are beginning to renew in Chenango County which is basically what is setting up these riparian areas. Some farmers are not enrolling which could do significant damage to the progress being made in the watershed. The USDA will not be continuing their incentive program but the Upper Susquehanna Coalition has considered it. Chairman Ives stated the payment is \$100 per acre but many don't use it to upgrade their fencing and pay other expenses instead.

Rogers Conservation Center

Mr. Declue stated not all of the center is used for environmental education. Some is prime farmland and is leased for farmers to use. The leases used to be for six years but have been cut down to three. It is hard to justify improving the land for a farmer with only a three year lease. Chairman Ives stated the Ag Assessment requires a five year lease and the State of New York should use the same.

Mr. Smith suggested sending a letter if Mr. Declue would draft one. Sup. Wilcox suggested sending it to the Assembly and Senate members as well.

Sup. Wilcox asked if there is a management plan. Mr. Declue stated it is a formal contract to take care of the property. There is some oversight and guidance within it. Mr. Ives suggested getting more information and sending a letter.

Open Discussion

Mr. Smith is working on a grant for the Ag Economic Development position held by Mr. Taber. He is working on how to upgrade the land without plowing.

Mr. Dibbell stated the average cost of production is wrong and the Attorney General should go after the USDA publication. He has called the Attorney General but he won't do anything because it is not a NY issue. A reblend of milk would allow a 50 cow dairy to be paid up to \$40 per 100 weight. The fuel surcharge is still being deducted even though the fuel price has dropped. Farms are transporting their forage 30 to 40 miles to the farm.

Mr. Butler stated he is starting to come up with possibilities for the Ag Tour. He thought we could travel around the Norwich/Oxford area and go to the Bunce hops farm and maybe Kutiks.

Chairman Ives passed around cheese order forms. In the FarmShine magazine, Sherry Bunting has an article about the cheese plants complaining they don't have enough milk. The solution is for them to pay more for it. Mr. Smith stated more milk is going to Chobani because the demand is up now that school is back in session. Mr. Dibbell saw on the news USDA is considering changing to allow 2% butterfat in schools.

The next ADA meeting is on November 7th at Noon at the Oxford Methodist Church.

With no further discussion, Sup. Williams motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Smith at 11:15 AM.

The next meeting will be held on November 20th at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
November 20, 2015 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Smith; Stan Davis; Ken Dibbell; Steve Harris; Bradd Vickers; Shane Butler;
Ken Ryan; Sup. Lawrence Wilcox; and Rob DeClue.

Guests Present: Marge Davis; Gray Stevens, Interim-Superintendent of BOCES; and Tim Crumb, BOCES.

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Ives asked for any additions or corrections on the October 16, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell motioned to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Smith. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

DCMO BOCES

Chairman Ives introduced Gray Stevens, Interim-Superintendent of BOCES and Tim Crumb, Conservation Instructor at BOCES. There have been concerns about agricultural education around the County and Mr. Stevens and Mr. Crumb were asked to attend the meeting to discuss some possible solutions.

Mr. Crumb stated there are four National FFA programs at schools in Chenango County; Afton, Otselic Valley, Oxford and Unadilla Valley. BOCES also has an FFA program which supports the schools. National FFA students go to the State Conference with their home schools and go to the Forestry Contest with BOCES. All of the English and writing programs are done at the students home schools.

Mr. Davis took the National FFA resolution to the Grange meeting where it was passed. Mr. Davis read the resolution. Mr. Butler stated the resolution drafted by the AFPB was taken to the Board of Supervisors where it was passed. Copies were sent to every school district in Chenango County and BOCES.

Mr. Harris stated there had been some discussion on adding a program to Sherburne-Earlville. The tax cap makes funding very tight. Mr. Ryan asked how the program was funded and if there was a way to find grants to supplement the cost. Mr. Stevens stated there are ways to share the program between neighboring schools and allow it to grow. For example, Greene could partner with Afton or Oxford. BOCES used to have an agriculture program but enrollment/interest dropped and it is no longer offered. Mr. Crumb stated a lot of it fell upon the Conservation program.

Mr. Stevens stated one problem is you have to have kids who are hooked on the program. The programs offer kids a lot to do after school. Mr. Crumb added that some kids are skeptical to leave the farm for college. They could go to Morrisville or Cobleskill for two years and come back with a better understanding. The students aren't getting good support at home.

Mr. Ryan asked if the FFA program has to go through a school. Mr. Smith stated he isn't sure if any other model would work. The advisors get paid by the school district.

Chairman Ives stated the State curriculum makes it hard to include agriculture. Mr. Crumb stated the statewide testing for the conservation program is very general and is not specific to agriculture. Each program differs at each BOCES so the test must be generic. The Norwich Campus could offer more of a variety but they do not have the tools or facility needed. Mr. Smith suggested creating a list of what tools and equipment they are lacking because with some major businesses in the County or farmers going out of business, they may be willing to donate equipment towards education.

Chairman Ives asked what sort of support we can offer. Mr. Stevens suggested meeting with the area Guidance Counselors to discuss the National FFA and Conservation programs. Parents need to be educated on the programs because they can push their school boards to support the program. The school districts push BOCES to add programs if a collection of the school don't have the resources to do their own. The expenses can be combined with each school providing funding towards a BOCES program. Many farm families were scared after the subsidies fell in the 1980's and interest in farming went down. Shared services are the way to go. Deposit and Hancock are both similarly small to Chenango County schools and they have been meeting to discuss the possibilities. We need to get away from the perceived competition between schools.

Mr. Vickers stated Farm Bureau held an Agricultural Career Day at Morrisville. They talked about how agricultural jobs could range from communication to research. They don't have to just get their hands dirty.

Mr. Crumb stated math and science is integrated into the Conservation program. Teachers need to focus on the interest of their students. One English project they utilize is to talk about their favorite hunting story which draws a lot of interest from the students. About one-third of BOCES students go to college. Others go into a business for a year or more and then go back to college. Mr. Smith stated how employers are begging for people with problem-solving skills. Working on a farm is always problem-solving.

Mr. Crumb stated the open houses/family nights are great but many parents don't come. The ones who don't come are generally the ones who you had wished to see. Mr. Harris stated the interest in open houses is usually very good in primary school and as the years go by the interest drops dramatically.

Mr. Vickers suggested having distance learning capabilities using teleconferencing software. Mr. Stevens stated the idea would allow for shared services. The school would be able to use an aide to be in the classroom rather than having a teacher. We need to do more where students can work in actual shops or businesses. Mr. Crumb tries to get his students into a business for two weeks during their junior and senior years.

Mr. Vickers stated there is often a stigma related to BOCES. Mr. Stevens stated the New Visions program has started to take down the stigma. Mr. Crumb has started using Chrome Books for students. They can do a lot of their school work on the bus home or at home from the chrome book so the hands-on work can be done during class. He uses it as an incentive.

Mr. Stevens stated another issue is the lack of long-range planning at schools. Part of the problem is the question on how much you are going to be allowed to budget on a yearly basis. Schools need to get back to having planned replacements of equipment and staff. If something breaks down, or someone retires, you need to have a plan for replacement. Equipment also needs to be updated so you aren't teaching students on outdated equipment.

Mr. Smith suggested coming up with a grant proposal for the Regional Economic Development Council for updating of BOCES programs and equipment. We could work with Assemblyman Cliff Crouch and Senator Fred Akshar on the proposals.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler stated the account is down to about \$250 which means we will need to ask for donations. He will talk with Kutiks about what sort of production they will be doing during July. Chairman Ives suggested going to the Cornell Cooperative Extension for a presentation about their programming and then go to Hoffman's in Oxford, Kutiks, or Coventry Hauling.

Mr. Smith suggested talking with the Amish, not necessarily this year, but in future years.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Smith stated they are producing some videos about Grass-Fed milk. Originally the plan was to showcase farms solely from Chenango County but none of them wanted to be videotaped. Conventional organic dairy prices continue to go up. A video is needed for the different careers in farming including fixing, selling, operating machinery, etc. Also, a successful microgrant was awarded to Josh Conover's Flowers. People seem willing to pay more for ornamental products.

Mr. Ryan suggested talking more about technology on farms. Cazenovia Equipment operates drones. Mr. Smith stated the Hoffman's have satellite controlled equipment on their farm.

Mr. Smith discussed a legal issue at a local farm. We need legislation to protect farmers from lawsuits. The legal fees alone, whether the reason they are suing is true or unfounded, can put a farm out of business. Attorneys are always making the best out of it.

Mr. Smith motioned to write a support letter for Farm Bureau policy to protect farmers from frivolous lawsuits, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag District

Mr. Butler stated the final Ag District review (District 3A) will be started next year. He will bring a tentative schedule to the next meeting.

Open Discussion

Mr. Dibbell read various sections of the article “Dairy Producers’ 2015 DMPP ‘Cost-Benefit Ratio’ About 100:1” from the November issue of The Milkweed out loud and suggested all members read it in its entirety.

Mr. Harris stated the tax rebate checks go out next week and will be for the residential portion. It will include the amount received last year plus any changes from this year. You will only receive the check if the municipality and school district are compliant with the tax cap.

Mr. Vickers asked if Oxford is the only school district to offer a veterans exemption. Mr. Harris stated they are and Gilbertsville-Mount Upton may adopt it as well.

Mr. Vickers announced it has been 100 years since Farm Bureau was started. The annual event went well and a lot of students attended. The current dairy princess is also the FFA president at Oxford. He met with Chobani executives along with legislators to discuss Chobani’s future plans. They currently use about 2.5 million pounds of milk per day. If you look at their containers, it now states they use only Non-GMO ingredients. Visitors were able to ask questions and receive answers from Chobani.

Mr. Vickers attended a Waters of the US (WOTUS) meeting. There are 31 million acres of water in NYS. There could be additional permitting requirements involved with the waters which will be detrimental to farmers and landowners. Mr. Vickers also talked about the Venison Donation Program in Chenango County. There is no cost to you and it is disbursed only in Chenango County.

Mr. Ives stated the documentary “Harvest” was on television last night. He attended the American Dairy Association meeting. There has been talk about consolidating with the Mid Atlantic Promotion Board to reduce the administration costs.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Smith at 11:15 AM.

The next meeting will be held on December 18, 2015 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board December 18, 2015 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Smith; Stan Davis; Ken Dibbell; Steve Harris; Bradd Vickers; Shane Butler; Ken Ryan; Sup. Lawrence Wilcox; and Rob DeClue.

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Ives asked for any additions or corrections on the November 20, 2015 meeting minutes. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Dibbell. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler spoke to the Kutik's. They would be interested in having us for the tour. It would be during their slow period but that may be better to show everyone. We will be receiving a \$500 sponsorship from NBT Bank but we will need to find around \$300 in order to hold the tour.

Mr. Ives stated other options are Hoffman's, Bunce, Coventry Transport, and CCE. We also need to figure out options for where we would have lunch. The Grange or Church may be able to do a lunch. Mr. Vickers suggested the Silo and then could go to Fantasy Fruit Farm in Afton. Mr. Butler asked about the FFA as well.

Ag District

Mr. Butler will be receiving a list of all owners within the district. We will set the 30-day inclusion period at our January meeting. Mr. Ives asked what district this will be. Mr. Butler stated it will be #3A encompassing the Towns of Columbus, New Berlin, North Norwich, Plymouth, Preston, Sherburne and Smyrna along with the villages.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated they did not meet in December. Mr. Vickers stated the FFA scholarship is still moving forward but more will be discussed in January. Mr. Ives asked if they could see a list of the qualifications once it is finalized so they can start promoting it.

Agenda Items for 2016

Mr. Ives asked members what topics we should focus on for 2016. Mr. Vickers suggested water resources and land stewardship.

Mr. Davis suggested the FFA programs. Mr. Ives asked what the status of the FFA video from Otselic Valley was. Mr. Butler stated they could not get the video finished due to other circumstances. Mr. Ives asked if CCE would be able to take the information and finalize it. Mr. Ives asked if there had been any communication with Gray Stevens since the meeting. Mr. Butler stated there had not. The Bainbridge-Guilford School Board supported our resolution at their meeting.

Mr. Ives stated there has been a lot done regarding Agricultural Education recently. Schools in other states are growing food on school property and using it locally along with teaching about nutrition. Maybe the FFA could do this locally. Mr. Vickers suggested working with the Head Start programs across the county. The food would still need to meet USDA guidelines. Mr. Ryan suggested asking local grocery stores to get involved. People don't know where their food comes from.

Retirement

Mr. DeClue advised the board of the impending retirement of Lauren Johnson on January 1, 2017. Lauren came to Chenango County in 1982 and intends to stay in the area. Mr. DeClue invited everyone to stop in and wish him their best.

Riparian Buffers

Mr. DeClue passed out an informational sheet titled "Riparian Forest Buffers for Municipalities and Private Landowners" from the Upper Susquehanna Coalition and explained the program.

Southern Tier Ag Grant

Mr. DeClue passed out information about the “Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program” from the NYS Agriculture and Markets. Only eleven counties are eligible to apply and Chenango County is one of them. There is \$25 million being offered. Applications will start to be accepted on January 19. The applicant must have applied for the Farmers School Tax Credit for three out of the last five years. Information on how to apply for the Tax Credit was also passed around. Mr. DeClue is unsure how many farmers have applied for this tax credit as some of his own board members had not heard of it.

Mr. DeClue stated the grant must be used for permanent structures. Grant money cannot be used on things such as tractors. There is also a 10% cash match for the grant. Usually grants allow you to have in-kind services but this does not.

Land Reserve Programs

Mr. DeClue stated there are two ways to be in the Grassland Reserve Program. The first is the rental approach but then there is an endpoint for when the rental ends. The second approach is for a permanent easement on an area of the farm. Mr. DeClue handed out the document “CRP Grasslands: Grazing and Haying Management Job Sheet”. Nobody has expressed interest in Chenango County once they read the guidelines for the program.

Mr. DeClue also handed out information on another similar program called the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE) and provided the ranking sheet. Most likely nobody in Chenango County would rank high enough to receive anything from this program.

NYS DEC – Wild Boars

Mr. DeClue stated the Fish and Wildlife Board has been meeting and talking about hunting preserves who offer shooting privileges. These preserves can no longer import Eurasian Boars because they are becoming a problem. In order to get around this, they have started bringing in Black Domestic Boars. The Black Boars will eventually escape and add to the feral pig problem.

Mr. Vickers stated the NYSDEC asks residents not to shoot them because it can spread out the group and cause a bigger problem. As soon as pigs put their noses down they can tear up a field rather quickly.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers has been dealing with the EPA issue on regulating waters. Farm Bureau has filed as a Friend of the Courts. Currently there is a hold in the courts. This regulation of water would not just affect farmers but would affect everyone. Mr. Vickers passed around a handout titled “Waters of the U.S.’ Zones in New York” which talks about how many acres will be affected depending on the buffer zone used.

The annual farm bureau meeting was held recently. All of the policies were passed plus a few others. One of the policies passed was in regards to the migrant worker issue. A second farm in Chenango County has been sued. If you have migrant workers on your farm you need to document everything.

There has also been talk about changes to the 480-A program. All harvesting of lumber would need to be permitted. Mr. Harris stated this is interesting because they recently stated they were going to redo the program because they did not have enough people to enforce current policies.

Mr. Ryan asked if we had a forest on the board. Mr. Betts used to attend meetings but hasn't in a while.

Mr. Harris stated the tax bills have started to be mailed out. Some may have already received their bill.

Mr. Dibbell read parts of the November 2015 and December 2015 issues of The Milkweed. The Insurance program has only paid out about \$704,000 this year but has taken in millions. Mr. Ives stated the low fuel prices have helped. Mr. Dibbell stated farmers are hauling forage up to 45 miles and then bringing slurry back on the return trip. Diesel consumption is unbelievable. In order to receive the tax credit you must be the owner which does not work if you operate as part of a trust.

In the December article it talks about how McDonalds is now offering mozzarella sticks. The mozzarella is 47% starch and 50% mozzarella which doesn't make sense how they can still call it cheese. Mr. Ives stated the FDA hasn't enforced other labeling such as Coconut and Soy milk. This issue was shot down already in the courts. Mr. Smith stated Dean Foods owns the companies selling the alternative milks and is making more money on it.

Mr. Dibbell encouraged members to listen to the National Dairy Producers Organization phone calls and to call in and participate. They have a weekly phone call at (712) 775-7035 with pin# 330090. Mr. Dibbell will be proposing the South New Berlin cooperative to become a member which only costs a half cent per 100 weight.

Mr. Smith stated there was a meeting yesterday of the NY Ag Workforce Council. The group is made up of cooperatives, Cornell representatives, etc., coming together due to the migrant worker lawsuits. It's hard to talk about the issues publically without hurting farmers. Farmers can't pay higher wages and offer better housing. Farmers may win the case but end up losing the farm because of the legal expenses.

Governor Cuomo has announced he wants all workers to make at least \$15 per hour. This will be the death of small operations. The milk price will not sustain it.

Mr. Smith motioned to draft a resolution opposing a mandatory minimum wage hike due to the detrimental affect it would have on rural economies, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried. Discussion followed below.

Mr. Vickers stated Farm Bureau and Commerce Chenango should have data on this. Chairman Wilcox stated Chenango County would no longer be under the tax cap if the \$15 minimum wage were enacted. Capitalism used to pay people what the product was worth. Mr. Ives stated Don Franklin's father used to say it isn't the minimum wage we should be worried about, it is the maximum wage of CEO's and other high executives.

Mr. Ives stated he has put out bids for logging on his property. Different loggers mark trees differently so his logger is going to do the marking and put out the bids as well. Mr. Vickers stated to be careful signing anything. Log prices keep fluctuating right now but Ash seems to be stable. Maple is up.

Mr. Ives stated the corn he combined ended up in Cayuga County.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Smith at 11:15 AM.

The next meeting will be held on January 15, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner