

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
January 15, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Ryan; Stan Davis; Bradd Vickers; Sup. Evan Williams;
Sup. Lawrence Wilcox; Sup. John Lawrence; Steve Harris; Donna Jones; and Shane Butler.

Reorganization of Members

Mr. Ives motioned to make Donna Jones temporary chairperson, seconded by Mr. Ryan. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ms. Jones called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Ms. Jones asked for nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Mr. Ryan nominated Mr. Ives as Chairperson, seconded by Sup. Williams. Members voted all ayes, motion carried. Mr. Ives nominated Mr. Davis as Vice-Chairman, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried. Mr. Ives nominated Mr. Ryan as Secretary, seconded by Mr. Dibbell. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Ives motioned to close the reorganization, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Minutes

Chairman Ives asked for any additions or corrections on the December 18, 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 Kutiks and Liz Bunce. Both are willing to be host sites on the tour. At this time we have confirmed donations from NBT Bank but are still short about \$500 in order to hold the tour. Ms. Jones asked what the budget was. Mr. Butler stated it takes about \$1100 due to the bus and food.

Mr. Dibbell will contact Chobani to ask about a donation for the Ag Tour. Members recommended other sources including Community Bank, Mirabito, Lutz Feed, and McDowell & Walker. Chairman Ives suggested talking with Holly Abbott who does catering in the Oxford area. Lunch could be held at the Lodge.

Ag District

Mr. Butler needed a motion to start the annual inclusion period. **Mr. Vickers motioned to have the 30-day inclusion period run from February 1st to March 1st, seconded by Mr. Dibbell. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.**

Mr. Butler also needed a motion to start Ag District #3A. This will need to go to Committee and then the Full Board in April. **Sup. Williams motioned to start the 8-year review of Ag District #3A, seconded by Mr. Vickers. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.**

Chairman Ives asked what Towns this would involve. Mr. Butler stated it would be the remaining towns in the Northeast Corner of Chenango County including the Towns of Columbus, New Berlin, North Norwich, Preston, Plymouth, Sherburne and Smyrna and the Villages of Earlville, New Berlin and Smyrna. This review will finish our reorganization of the districts along town lines.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated they are in the process of finalizing the scholarship in memory of Don Franklin. Mr. Vickers stated they are also working on a "Taste of Chenango" program. Various locations including the Loomis Barn and Fairgrounds are being proposed for locations.

\$15/hour Minimum Wage

Mr. Smith could not attend the meeting but emailed a draft resolution to be passed out and edited by the Board. **Sup. Williams motioned to support the resolution and send it to Ag Buildings & Grounds Committee, seconded by Mr. Vickers. Discussion followed:**

Mr. Dibbell stated Mr. Smith did a lot of research on this resolution and compared the living wage in Chenango County versus other counties across NYS. Mr. Dibbell recommended a living wage versus a minimum wage. Mr. Vickers stated the minimum wage has already been increased for fast food workers based on current legislation.

Mr. Ives recalled the minimum wage in the 70s at \$1.60. After inflation it would be around \$9.00 right now. Sup. Williams stated an increased minimum wage would only push more automation and bring higher prices. Everyone would need to go to college in order to be above the automation. Sup. Lawrence asked about the other benefits of working on a farm. Housing? Chairman Ives stated it depends on if everything is claimed. This needs to be worked into what they are getting paid.

Sup. Williams recommended changing the last line of the resolution to remove “ag farm workers”. We should oppose a \$15 minimum wage for all workers.

Sup. Williams amended his motion to include an edit of removing “ag farm workers,” seconded by Sup. Lawrence. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Vickers motioned to support the resolution as amended and send to the Ag Buildings & Grounds Committee, seconded by Sup. Williams. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

(Note: The resolution did not go to ABG due to there being no meeting. It instead went to the Full Board where it was approved.)

Open Discussion

Mr. Ryan stated a lot of a cattle were lost in Texas and New Mexico due to the weather and lack of shelter and everyone feels bad. When this happens in Chenango County you are arrested. Farm Bureau should advocate for all of the animals to be provided shelter. Rodeos should also be investigated for animal cruelty.

Chairman Ives stated the storm was a fluke and 99% of the time there isn't a problem. Mr. Vickers stated many of the animals were disoriented due to the blinding storm and ranchers couldn't get to them.

Mr. Vickers stated there was good news at the House of Representatives where a resolution was passed to roll back the Waters of the U.S. regulations. Senator Ernst of Iowa led the charge in the Senate even though it followed party lines. President Obama has indicated he will veto the bill should it get to him.

There is a New Farmers Ag Grant being offered. The deadline to apply is January 22nd. We need to support our beginning farmers in Chenango County. The Farmer Veteran Alliance has been getting calls in Chenango County from people wanting to start a farm. They are working on a 3-year grant at Cornell.

The Oregon farmer issue is being spun by the media. The Bureau of Land is out of line, not the farmers. The Bureau of Land is claiming a fire from the farmer's ranch crossed onto federal lands which is how the ordeal started. Farm Bureau in Oregon has been trying to negotiate a settlement.

Mr. Ryan stated there is a new national Farm Bureau president and also the Secretary of Agriculture is leaving.

Mr. Harris gave an update on potential tax changes to the forest exemptions. The NYSDEC does come and give assistance to landowners in the 480A program. The 480A program is best if you thin out your forest before being put in the program or if you have young trees. This allows you to not cut for the 10 years.

STAR and exemption renewals need to be done by March 1st. There are also proposed changes to the enhanced star program. All seniors would have to file a NYS income tax return in order to receive the exemption. Most seniors in Chenango County do not file for income taxes. The Enhanced Star program does not notify assessors if there is a change in income and could affect your exemption.

Another change which may happen in the STAR program is instead of getting a reduced school bill due to the exemption, it will be applied to your income tax. This was proposed last year as well but did not pass the legislature.

Some have started to receive their land tax refund checks from NYS. He explained how someone would qualify for receiving such a refund. Sup. Lawrence stated some residents have gone on social media to complain about not receiving their check yet and are accusing the town of doing something wrong.

Mr. Dibbell asked if you receive a check if you haven't paid your taxes. Mr. Harris stated there is no way for NYS to know if you are delinquent and will still send a check.

Mr. Dibbell passed out a New York Times article from April 3, 1991 where both he and Bernie Sanders submitted an editorial regarding milk prices. There are 304 farms who have not paid their insurance premiums as part of the MPP. This will eventually go to collections. The cost of production ranges from \$38 to \$50 per 100 weight depending on the number of cows on the farm. We need to start pushing for the relabeling of where our foods come from, become independent, and get rid of the global market.

Mr. Ives stated he signed up for the very minimum. Milk would have to go below \$10 per 100 weight in order to kick in. Right now diesel is \$1.64 a gallon.

Chairman Ives has a friend on the ADA board who was talking to a milk processor about prices. When a processor's supply is up they cut down production. Farmers don't use this concept and just keep producing milk. He also gave a comparing of the County, State and School. Mr. Harris stated there is a lot of variables.

With no further discussion, Mr. Dibbell motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan at 11:12 AM.

The next meeting will be held on February 19, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board February 19, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Ryan; Stan Davis; Bradd Vickers; Sup. Evan Williams;
Sup. Lawrence Wilcox; Sup. John Lawrence; Donna Jones; and Shane Butler.

Minutes

Chairman Ives asked for any additions or corrections on the January 15, 2016 meeting minutes. Sup. Williams stated the minimum wage resolution did not go to Ag Buildings & Grounds because there was no meeting and went straight to the Full Board. Sup. Williams motioned to approve the minutes as amended, second by Mr. Vickers. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler has confirmed with Kutiks and Liz Bunce. He will be calling the Hoffman's to see if they are interested as well. Kutik's now has two facilities and would like us to tour both. They are willing to provide lunch as well. They estimate about an hour per facility. We would go to the first facility and then have lunch at the second where we would be able to look around.

Ms. Jones asked about the price to start a hops operation. Mr. Butler stated it is about \$8000 per acre to start. Sup. Lawrence asked why it is so expensive to start and if there is a shortage. Mr. Butler stated you need an irrigation system, the plants, harvesting equipment, etc. NYS passed regulations in 2013 regarding micro-breweries and where they source the hops from. More people have started growing the hops.

Mr. Davis stated McDonalds in other countries sells beer.

Ag District

Mr. Butler is working with Mr. Harris to mail out the letters. A mailing list was created already and will be sent out once the Full Board adopts the resolution to start. There is one application for Ag Inclusion and we will review it and any more at next months meeting.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated they had a meeting last week and primarily discussed more videos and this year's budget.

Chairman Ives asked if there was any more progress on the scholarship. Mr. Butler stated a final version was sent out for final approval. They hope to send it to all of the schools by the end of the month.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler received an email from Mr. DeClue about the Southern Tier Agricultural Enhancement Program. He could not attend the meeting. Applicants would need to work with Soil and Water or Cooperative Extension in order to apply for the grant. The NYS grants are very complicated and there are matching funds required.

Mr. Vickers stated they are trying to work with the Commissioner of Ag and Markets to simplify some of these grant applications because they are so complex.

Open Discussion

Chairman Ives stated the current blend price is \$17.60 and the pay price with components is \$16.82. There is no longer a premium for being rBST free. There is a company called Fair Oaks pulling ingredients out of milk and then putting some of them back in. It is creating a product higher in protein and are charging more for it. The founder had an article about the infighting among the agriculture industry. Fluid milk sales have increased in January. The Great American Milk Drive could be one reason. The program encourages people to buy vouchers for food banks. The voucher allows people to get a gallon of milk for free. Currently, those utilizing food banks only drink about a gallon of milk per year. This program hopes to increase that and is also a "pay it forward" program.

There was a National Milk meeting in October where they were talking about a new requirement going into effect January 2017 where docking tails will be banned. There is an industry uproar about it. PETA has endorsed the idea and the National Veterinary Association has withdrawn support for docking cow tails. Mr. Ryan suggested farmers do more to control flies. Chairman Ives stated if the cow tails are docked the cows aren't nearly as dirty. This means cleaner milk and less flies. Chobani wants to set the standard for how milk is produced.

Chairman Ives stated the new dairy princesses were announced. The Dairy Princess is from Columbia County, the second alternate is from Orange County and the third alternate is from Franklin County. There is also a new program in regards to student athletes. They are opening "nutrition stations" where athletes can swipe a card during the day and pick up some food. They are finding athletes don't have time between classes to grab food and are eating more at night. People need to eat more during the day and less at night when they aren't going to be as active.

The American Dairy Association in our area will be merging with the Atlantic association. They will combine CEO's and merge accounting systems. The ADA contract expires March 1st which means they won't have any money. NYS wants the contract to come out of Economic Development instead of NYS Ag and Markets due to the 2% tax cap regulations.

Mr. Ryan watched a movie from years ago about farming. Frank Hoffman was in the video and it was about the kids in a farm family moving away and going to NYC only to become home sick and come back to the farm.

Mr. Davis read an article which talked about butter prices going up by seven percent and margarine prices going down.

Mr. Dibbell attended a meeting in PA yesterday. There were 45 in attendance. Producers in northeast PA have been locked out of the lawsuit. Cost of production in the US is \$27.66, NY is \$30.24, and Vermont is \$36. Barns are falling down in Pennsylvania and Oneida County NY which is un-American. Cornell spread the big-farm virus where you need over 1,000 cows to cut the cost of production. Lancaster PA has adopted the California standards and their protein content is higher. People are still buying milk at over \$5 per gallon. Other stores are still selling it for around \$2.69 to \$2.99.

Mr. Vickers attended the NYFB regular meeting in Chemung County. They are preparing for lobby days in February and March. They will be doing a Taste of NY event again this year. The Governor's budget includes \$20 million for Farmland Protection, \$9 million for Soil and Water, and cut Pro-Dairy. The Waters of the United States resolution to reject passed the House and Senate but the President vetoed it and will now go to the courts.

Farm Bureau met with Senator Akshar and talked about various topics. He is hopeful the Safe Act can be whittled away. Questions from others included water pollution in the streams of Chenango County. He also wants to see all of the resolutions from each county opposing a hike in the minimum wage. Mr. Vickers will send him the one passed by Chenango County.

The solar leasing workshop went very well. Solar panel leasing is more complex than natural gas leasing. In some cases there could be penalties for the amount of dust and snow on the panel. In Ithaca, a person's assessment went up due to the installation of solar panels and they ended up losing money.

Sup. Lawrence suggested utilizing the skills of retired farmers and fallow land to raise wild pheasants for sportsmen. We could turn NYS into a hunting destination similar to what is done in the Dakotas. Sportsmen would spend more money in NYS including meals, lodging, licenses, etc.

Sup. Lawrence also talked about the growing interest in horse ownership in Chenango County. These owners would love the ability to ride on more than just their own land. We should find a way to use the snowmobile trails.

Mr. Vickers suggested NYS open up more of the state lands for these purposes and stop buying more. Mr. Butler suggested a club similar to how the snowmobile clubs do it. They would be responsible for maintaining the trails. Ms. Jones suggested talking with Steve Palmatier and Sup. Wayne Outwater about the issue. Mr. Palmatier has knowledge about horseback riding and Sup. Outwater is involved with the snowmobile clubs.

Chairman Ives stated the Spreutels used to hold a two-day horseback riding event in the area. They would cater a meal and people from all over would attend.

Ms. Jones read an article from Vermont about producers being upset with food manufacturers who have maple and brown sugar products. Many of the products don't actually contain any maple syrup yet are still being labeled with a maple leaf. Chairman Ives stated this issue is the same with almond milk.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Dibbell at 11:12 AM.

The next meeting will be held on March 18, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

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Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board March 18, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Smith; Ken Ryan; Stan Davis; Steve Harris; Sup. Evan Williams; Sup. John Lawrence; Donna Jones; and Shane Butler. **Guests Present:** Steve Palmatier

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:04 and asked for any additions or corrections on the February 19, 2016 meeting minutes. Mr. Davis stated he read an article about butter sales, not prices, going up and margarine going down for the first time in years. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Horse Trails

Mr. Butler spoke with Mr. Palmatier about the meeting last month and asked him to talk on the topic of horse trails this month.

Mr. Palmatier stated there used to be a trail in the Michigan State Forest of Pharsalia at one time. It was an extensive system maintained into the 1970s or 80s. The state abandoned the trails because the soils were not healing fast enough and would become wet and muddy. A multi-use trail was proposed for Brookfield at one time but not much was done. Sup. Williams worked at a site in McDonough on Chestnut Road in the 80s where they may have tried to start a horse trail.

Mr. Palmatier stated there is a NYS precedent for starting horse trails. One started being cleared near Greek Peak. NYS will not provide funding for the trails but will provide the tags to mark them. There are numerous snowmobile trails which could be ideal for horseback riding. Horseback riders like to have an 8 to 12 mile interconnecting loop to ride. These are easy to travel in one day and the horses don't get tired. One would start at Five Streams, go into the former Tarbell Farm in Smithville, up Collyer Road, down Stone Quarry and Townline Roads, and then back to Five Streams. Another would be near Jackson Pond in Pharsalia and would go towards the South Otselic area and back to Jackson Pond. Most of these would be NYS Land with some private landowners in between. Others may start at the Outpost in McDonough and ride through NYS land. The horseback riders would have to stay off of the Finger Lakes Trail in the area but would be able to cross it.

Mr. Ryan asked if there would be measureable economic benefits of the horse trails. Mr. Smith suggested looking at the Ag Census to compare the numbers. We could also call the store owners in Brookfield to find out if they see a noticeable impact.

Mr. Palmatier provided an example in Brookfield where during nice weather you may see upwards of 100 or more people attending a horse related event around Columbus Day weekend. They don't spend a lot of money in the community. Sup. Williams stated more people are interested in boarding the horses. There is one person who had a Bed and Breakfast near the trail. Mr. Palmatier stated people could rent a horse at one time but they no longer do this. A lady in Port Crane would bring a bunch of kids and horses and would ride the trails.

Mr. Smith suggested writing a horseback riding guidebook similar to the fishing guide. Youtube videos could also be produced about the opportunities in Chenango County. We could also produce a map and plot different types of B+B's or restaurants where they could stop on the way.

Mr. Palmatier suggested Camp Pharsalia as another location where people could start. Two or three loops could be started there including the new portion of snowmobile trail that drops into the Brackel. Sup. Williams also suggested the new land purchased by NYS for Bowman Lake.

Mr. Palmatier talked about a horse trail near Lake Luzerne near 4th Lake. They have a horse trail which includes corrals and stalls for the horses. This drives the economic activity in the area. Sup. Lawrence asked if people would travel along a trail from Chenango County to Lake Luzerne if the trail was available. Mr. Palmatier did not think they would because of the distance and because horses can be skittish. Restaurants and bars should run poker runs out of their establishments to engage them. Many of the horseback riders also like the cowboy action shoots and would like somewhere to do this. The rider shoots at balloons and gets points for how quick and accurate they are.

Chairman Ives asked if a map and economic numbers could be produced for next meeting. Mr. Palmatier stated he would work with Mr. Butler to come up with a map based on the snowmobile trails.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler brought the bus contract to the Board of Supervisors and it was signed. He is waiting for the donation from NBT Bank before he returns the contract. John Hoffman has been contacted about visiting their farm but he had to discuss it with his brother first before a decision was made.

Ag District

Mr. Butler brought the resolution to start the Agricultural District to the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee where it was passed and sent to the full board. The Full Board meets on April 11th where it is expected to pass, initiating the 180-day review process. The resolution also establishes the public hearing date of September 12th where the district will be approved. About 2100 letters will be sent out to landowners.

Sup. Williams asked about how many would be returned. Mr. Butler estimated about 20%.

Mr. Butler received one application for inclusion into an agricultural district. The applicant raises livestock and also has a sugar bush. Chairman Ives asked if there was any reason not to pass this. Mr. Butler stated there were no reasons not to.

Mr. Davis motioned to approve the ag district inclusion and forward it to the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated the scholarship in memory of Don Franklin was passed and sent along to the schools. The deadline is May 2nd.

Mr. Smith stated the ADC is also working to do a Taste of Chenango event on the first Tuesday of the County Fair in the Exhibition Hall. There will be displays and tastings. Local producers will be bringing their foods and it will be cooked by a local chef. Interested producers so far are Chobani and Kutiks and we shouldn't have a problem getting others.

Chairman Ives suggested to include the Farmers Markets.

Ag Plastics

Mr. Smith stated some farmers have been criticized by the landfill employees about the quality of the ag plastic they have been bringing. The frustration comes from the dirtiness of the plastic. Meanwhile, the farmers are frustrated because they are being criticized and are trying to do something good for the environment. Both sides have different ideas of what "clean" means.

Mr. Ryan stated he had received criticism and it might help if there were a pamphlet with pictures and descriptions on what the plastic should look like when it is brought. Mr. Smith will develop a pamphlet for this with pictures on what it should and shouldn't look like.

Mr. Smith stated oil prices are low right now which doesn't make it easy to sell the plastic. There is little value for it at this time. The contract through Cornell to promote the program has been renewed which is a good sign. Ms. Jones stated Delaware County is selling their plastic but has to do calculations to see at what price they break even versus staffing costs.

Sup. Lawrence asked what happened to the company making the pavers out of the plastic. Mr. Smith stated the interest in the product went away. Mr. Palmatier asked if the plastic was injection molded or if they poured the plastic into a mold.

Open Discussion

Mr. Ryan asked who might come to a Town of Oxford Planning Board meeting to put on a presentation about preserving agricultural land. The Chairman is originally from Long Island and traveling through he can tell which towns have strong preservation techniques in place.

Mr. Smith recommended the Finger Lakes Land Trust, American Farmland Trust and the NYS Ag Land Trust. It is easier down near Long Island because they have higher development pressures but you don't need the pressure to preserve agriculture. You can also use deed restrictions. A lot of people in PA were putting their land into preservation areas after receiving royalty checks from natural gas drilling.

Mr. Harris stated the value of land used for agriculture is actually higher than the value for development in Chenango County.

Mr. Ryan stated it is unfortunate how many new homes are being built in the middle of good agricultural land, making it useless. We need to do more for protecting agriculture and farmland.

Mr. Davis has rubber ducks available for the duck derby. The ducks are \$5 each which supports the scholarship fund. The winner will be announced at dairy day. A Holstein show will also be going on in the cattle barn on the fairgrounds the same day. They hope it will bring more people to the event. Mr. Smith suggested asking Dave Evans to bring his Belgian cows and a wagon to offer rides.

Mr. Butler received an email from Mr. Vickers inviting people to a press conference in Cortland in regards to appealing the \$15 minimum wage. Mr. Butler read the email and passed the flier around.

Mr. Harris asked if everyone submitted their ag exemptions. The ag land assessment ceilings went up a little which shrinks the amount of the exemption. It is capped at a 2% increase.

Ms. Jones stated the IDA intends to start work on the railroad soon. Chairman Ives asked what companies intend on using it. Ms. Jones listed a few.

Chairman Ives attended the ADA meeting in Georgia. Fluid milk consumption is up. There was also a Chesapeake Bay meeting yesterday. EPA is still concerned about the runoff going into the streams. Phosphorous is under control but nitrogen and sediment are still high. Mr. Ryan stated the biggest sediment problem is Public Works because they never seed back after clearing ditches.

Mr. Smith asked what the break-even point is for farmers with fuel and feed being so low. Chairman Ives stated they would need to have around \$19 to \$20 per 100 weight which would allow them to upgrade and refurbish some of the equipment.

Mr. Ryan spoke to an auctioneer after farmers received their milk check of around \$13 per 100 weight. The auctioneer received over 30 calls but only a few ended up scheduling to sell their cows. He asked if farmers should go organic. Chairman Ives stated the value of a cow is down about \$200. Mr. Smith stated organic is not for everyone. It depends on the land they are farming on.

Mr. Smith recommended dairy farmers start producing more maple to supplement. Many of the dairy farmers have a lot of forest. Some farmers are tapping the trees and selling the sap itself for 20 cents per gallon. Chairman Ives stated Bakers Maple did not tap in the Village of Bainbridge because they didn't have enough workers. It's hard to tap because its during the time period where farmers are fixing fences and starting to prepare equipment for planting. The timing isn't right.

Mr. Dibbell passed around a letter he wrote to Mr. Thomas Vilsack - US Secretary of Agriculture regarding the cost of milk production, the number of farmers, and solutions on how to fix the problem. He has set up a meeting on March 29th at 1:00pm at the Northeast Classic Car Museum. Arden Tewskbury will be the speaker and hopes to have people from surrounding counties in attendance.

With no further discussion, Mr. Davis motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan at 11:30 AM.

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

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
April 15, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

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

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:04 and asked for any additions or corrections on the March 18, 2016 meeting minutes. Sup. Lawrence motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Horse Trails

Mr. Butler and Mr. Palmatier have begun mapping some horse trails along with locations they may be interested in (tack shops, restaurants, etc.). A map of the Bowman Lake State Park area was passed around as an example along with additional information on the horse trail concept. NYSDEC and the Office of Parks were both contacted to see what they allow on their lands. NYSDEC allows horseback riding on State lands but they must have a permit on a State park and is not usually allowed.

Sup. Lawrence asked if potential loops are being mapped now and then connecting it to the snowmobile trail will happen next. Mr. Butler stated they wanted to come up with ideas of where loops would be located first before they started asking the snowmobile groups and others about allowing horse riders on private property. Right now they are on mostly dirt roads through State land.

Mr. Harris believes private owners are receptive to snowmobilers because of the winter season. They may not want a trail on their property during good weather. Chairman Ives stated it is fine as long as they are on the outside of the field.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler was contacted by NBT Bank and the sponsorship should be in the mail. Mr. Butler contacted John Hoffman and he was going to ask his brother about being a stop on the Ag Tour. Additional contact was attempted but has not been successful. Chairman Ives stated he would try to contact him.

Mr. Dibbell asked if the sponsorship was received from Chobani. Mr. Butler stated it had.

Ag District

Mr. Butler will be starting to print out the letters and forms soon so they can be folded and stuffed into envelopes. The 30-Day Inclusions will be brought to Ag Buildings and Grounds at their meeting on Tuesday.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler and Mr. Vickers provided an update. Two applications have been received for the Don Franklin Memorial Scholarship to date. The Franklin's have been invited to attend the next meeting where those applications and any new ones will be reviewed. The ADC is also working on the "Farm to Fork – A Taste of Chenango" event to be held on the first day of the fair. Producers will be giving out samples for people to try and may be cooked with other local products as a meal.

State Land

Mr. Vickers stated there is local concern about a large piece of land being purchased on the border of the Town of McDonough and Preston by the Open Space Institute who will turn around and sell it for more to New York State. Farm Bureau and local towns are drafting a letter to oppose these purchases. We are losing more and more viable farmland to NYS. Mr. Harris stated this may only be the beginning of more purchases. This is the same process they used to purchase the Adirondack Park.

Mr. Vickers made a motion to write a letter from the Ag and Farmland Protection Board, objecting to the taking of private land by New York State, seconded by Mr. Harris. Discussion:

Mr. Dibbell asked if the land goes off of the tax rolls. Mr. Harris stated it would be exempt from all of the districts. Mr. Ryan suggested making sure all of the potential downsides of such a purchase are included in the letter. Mr. Smith suggested having verbiage to allow the lands to be utilized by a farmer.

Mr. Dibbell stated it would be more beneficial if they were required to have a PILOT agreement. Mr. Harris stated the State is required to pay comparable taxes and generally pays more property taxes on comparable lands. Assessors use a formula to calculate the amount. This purchase would be part of park land and therefore exempt. It is paid through a separate roll section and is paid to the County and the County then reimburses the towns and other districts.

Mr. Vickers suggested following Town of Preston Supervisor Pete Flanagan's lead on this. Chairman Ives asked Mr. Smith, Mr. Vickers and Mr. Butler to work on the resolution/letter so it is similar to other letters.

With no further discussion, members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Smith asked who owns the former canal lock in the Town of Oxford Mr. Butler stated it was purchased a couple of years ago by the Chenango Land Trust. It is only about a ½ acre parcel. Mr. Smith asked if it would be bought by NYS. Mr. Butler stated it is a separate entity and is unlikely to be sold to the state.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers gave an update on the minimum wage hike. It will be phased into Upstate NY at \$12.50 an hour by 2020. There are some exemption tax credits for farms employing people. The legislators also gave themselves a raise. Mr. Smith stated the tax cap will be 0.01% this year and the raise should be comparable. Sup. Lawrence stated NYS will look at the economic impact of the minimum wage hike to see how it is affecting NYS.

Mr. Vickers gave an update on the NYS budget as it relates to agriculture. FFA was increased from \$392,000 to \$492,000; there was an increase for berry research; the Cornell Vet to Farm program received \$115,000 as a new program; Pro-Dairy was reduced; and wine and grape funding was reduced. The North Country saw some new programs.

Mr. Smith stated every year hundreds of thousands of dollars goes to the North Country in the NYS Budget because one of their legislators is the chair of the Senate Ag Committee. The amount of money coming from NYS for farmland protection in Chenango County is basically zero.

Mr. Smith made a motion to send a letter to Chenango County Farm Bureau to advocate for a more equitable distribution of farmland protection money in the Southern Tier and to come up with other qualifications for how the money is dispersed rather than solely on the amount of prime soils, seconded by Sup. Lawrence. Discussion:

Mr. Smith suggested other qualifications such as nutrient protection, water, etc. The North Country received money to start a Farm to School program and an Agriculture Academy. Why can't we have these in the Southern Tier too?

With no further discussion, members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Vickers attended a recent solar meeting and there are a lot of tax implications. Farm Bureau is not opposed to solar but the leases need to be reviewed by an attorney who is knowledgeable. Even if the company leaves, they still own the panel. There is no state guidance on how to tax the panels.

Mr. Harris recommended any town to have PILOT agreements with the companies. The interconnection cost is also very high. It cost about \$800,000 in Madison County but he wasn't certain who is responsible for the cost.

Mr. Vickers gave some dates to market on everyone's calendar. April 23rd at Apple Hills for berry picking, Veterans will have priority; May 1st is Earth Fest where Farm Bureau will try to make people realize farmers celebrate Earth Day every day; May 15th the Dairy Princess will be announced; and June 18th is Dairy Day.

Sup. Lawrence asked if the landowners pick up the taxes on solar properties. Towns aren't notified ahead of time of leases and we need to notify our constituents of these leases. Mr. Harris stated it depends on the lease. The company will try and make the landowner pay all of the taxes. Solar exemptions are not automatic and you have to apply.

Mr. Davis attended a legislative meeting and one of the topics were Right to Farm laws. Many of the Towns in Chenango County do not have them. Chairman Ives tried to get the law through in the Town of Guilford but they wanted parts of it changed and it never went through. One part of the law created a negotiation committee to keep the problem/solution process local. The Right to Farm laws don't have the amount of bite that they should.

Mr. Ryan asked if someone could send samples of what laws have worked in other areas. Chairman Ives stated the County has a Right to Farm law. Mr. Butler stated copies are in the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan and would send them out.

Mr. Smith reported on the fluctuation of milk supplies. There are reports about trucks dumping milk but this may be a strategy by DFA to scare farmers. When there was extra milk, the Federal Government would buy it and turn it into cheese for the food banks. He would like to see something like this done again. Mr. Dibbell stated DFA should have to pay for it, not the government.

Mr. Smith made a motion to send a letter to our federal officials recommending any surplus milk be turned into useful products for use by food banks, seconded by Mr. Dibbell. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Smith stated there is a worldwide consolidation of small dairy farms. In Chenango County the dairy farms aren't getting bigger but are migrating to other areas. Production has remained the same. It is hard to look at the numbers and understand how 40-60 cow dairies can be profitable unless they are organic. Chairman Ives stated we need all kinds of dairy farms. Farmers should include other cow breeds due to the other milk components.

Mr. Ryan commented on seeing large equipment working on the railroad.

Mr. Harris stated the tentative rolls are printing. Final payments are due by May 1st. The STAR program has changed for new home buyers. New home owners won't see the STAR exemption on their tax bill anymore. It will be reimbursed by the State as a tax credit. It costs the State about \$30 to write a check.

Mr. Dibbell stated all farms were organic in 1940 and now there are only 1% of farms left. He sent a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture about milk pricing. The price should be \$40 per 100 weight for the first million pounds of quality milk, \$30 for the next million and \$10 for the rest. The big farm virus has spread because of Cornell and is now in Wisconsin. Don't encourage veterans into dairy unless they are going to be organic. Chairman Ives stated it depends on your level of debt when you start.

Mr. DeClue gave an update on Soil and Water programs. The first is the Southern Tier Ag Enhancement Program. There are four signup periods and only certain counties are eligible. Thirteen producers in Chenango County applied and were accepted by the SWCD. They must now be reviewed by the state. There were two approaches, traditional conservation and business type enhancement with criteria including increasing profits, production, or environmental stewardship. All but one of the applications focused on business type enhancement (adding livestock, etc.) Each project asked for up to \$100,000, a total of \$1.3 million of the total \$2.6 million allowed. The next round will be from July 11th to September 17th. Each applicant has to have a business plan and must fill out all of their own paperwork. Mr. DeClue stated he would email the program details.

The second program is the Dairy Acceleration Program which has changed some to allow applications for adding livestock.

The third program is the 22nd round of the NYS Ag Nonpoint Source Abatement & Control Program. Five counties have applied as a joint project. Five producers from Chenango County have been included in the program. In the program, farmers receive money back for planting certain cover crops. Depending on what they plant, the reimbursement ranges from \$55 to \$110 per acre. It could take over a year to get the grant money and the program will last three years.

NRCS has also changed their policy on farmstead type projects. For projects you have to have a nutrient management plan and the Federal government now requires all of the pieces of the plan to be implemented.

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

The next meeting will be held on May 20, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
May 20, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Ryan; Stan Davis; Steve Harris;
Sup. John Lawrence; Donna Jones; and Shane Butler.

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:02 and asked for any additions or corrections on the April 15, 2016 meeting minutes. Mr. Dibbell motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler was contacted by the Hoffman's who decided not to participate in the tour. Kuhn's Equipment Repair was contacted and they have agreed to be the third location. The bus contract and payment have been sent. The draft flyer was passed around and some recommendations were made.

Ag District

Mr. Butler will be bringing the letters to the Tax Map office to have them stuffed into the envelopes. The one inclusion this year will have a public hearing at the next board meeting. Ms. Jones stated the notice will be in the two official newspapers. Chairman Ives asked how many would receive the ag district letter. Mr. Butler stated there are 2167.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated the recipient of the Don Franklin Scholarship was decided on at the last meeting. They also worked on the Taste of Chenango Event which will be held on the first day of the Chenango County Fair. There have been advertisements for the event using a variety of sources.

NYS Land Support Letter

Mr. Butler was sent the support letter from Ken Smith who could not attend. Ms. Jones stated the land has already been purchased by the State.

Sup. Lawrence asked if Bowman Lake was a kettle lake or a man-made lake and wondered where the outflow ended up. NYS is being blamed for the nitrogen increases in the Chesapeake Bay. They want farmers to cover crop after the harvest but sometimes corn is on the property longer each year and cover cropping won't work. With fewer and fewer farms it seems unlikely we are dumping more nitrogen into the river. At the SWCD meeting yesterday they indicated the nutrient levels are increasing. There is a new program to introduce riparian buffers to stop the erosion due to rivers and streams.

Chairman Ives stated CCE had a grant to study nutrient loss on farms and found most of the farms have kept more of the nutrients on their farms. Mr. Ryan stated the biggest contributor to sediment is the highway departments cutting open ditches.

Mr. Harris suggested including future land takings in the letter and notification of the municipalities before the land is purchased. There have been indications of other purchases to come. Sup. Lawrence referenced talk of buying land to connect the state lands near Long Pond.

Sup. Lawrence motioned to allow Chairman Ives to sign and send the letter to NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Harvey once the final draft has been completed, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Ryan asked if there was any way to force a response. Mr. Butler stated it will probably be a form letter saying it was received.

Excess Milk Support Letter

Mr. Butler passed around the support letter written by Mr. Smith.

Mr. Dibbell discussed his concerns about whether or not processors could handle the extra milk in order to support this. Mr. Ryan

suggested the government give the producers money to expand the processing capability.

Sup. Lawrence stated the farmers are still getting paid if they dump the milk and asked if this would decrease the price of milk even more. WIC provides money towards milk products and schools too. Mr. Dibbell stated the small farms have to pay 54 cents per 100 weight for the milk being dumped because the large farm virus is oversupplying. Chairman Ives stated food stamps can now be used to buy Soy and Almond milk (“juice”) and takes away from the milk market. The WHO (World Health Organization) has taken milk off of the list of what children need.

Mr. Harris stated there used to be more restrictions on what could be bought using food stamps. You couldn’t use them for soda, paper products or anything “unhealthy” but a lot has changed since then. Ms. Jones stated the Planning Department can find out from DSS what restrictions there are.

Mr. Dibbell recommended including verbiage from the Casey-Spector 1640 bill and make the over-producers pay for the surplus milk.

Chairman Ives recommended tabling the letter until more information can be found.

Open Discussion

Mr. Davis stated the Fairgrounds will see new offices and electric due to the IRT. A grant was received to cover the cost.

Mr. Dibbell reported he will be attending the hearing in Tunkhannock, PA and some House members should be there to discuss the Casey-Spector 1640 Bill which is still a proposal. He also wants to see Senators Schumer and Gillibrand at the event.

Chairman Ives received a call from the American Dairy Association because they wanted to tour a farm for a future promotion by Price Chopper called “Cow to Cup”. They wanted to go to a farm and then to Chobani to take a tour. He suggested they also go to Husted’s to talk to the haulers which are a step between the farm and processor. The milk inspector wanted him to bring up tail docking as a topic.

Mr. Harris stated the tentative rolls have been filed. If there is a change in the assessment you should have been notified. Grievance days begin next week.

With no further discussion, Mr. Ryan motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Davis at 10:50 AM.

The next meeting will be held on June 17, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board June 17, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

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

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:07 and asked for any additions or corrections on the May 20, 2016 meeting minutes. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Sup. Lawrence. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler gave an update on the officials who have signed up to attend so far.

Ag District

Mr. Butler took the one inclusion to the Board of Supervisors and it was approved and will be sent to NYS Ag and Markets. We have received around 500 response letters so far for Ag District #3A.

Sup. Lawrence asked what happens if someone doesn't respond. Mr. Butler stated we have the option of removing them but isn't common unless there are special circumstances. The previous review we removed Lowes and Walmart. Mr. Harris advised that small parcels may not be wanted in the district anyways.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Butler stated the Farm to Fork event is still being planned and are looking for more local products for chefs to use in their tastings. Sup. Lawrence asked if they are looking for people to prepare the products. Mr. Butler stated those positions had been filled.

Open Discussion

Chairman Ives recommended members read the article "One of America's Most Successful Industries is Also One of Its Most Misunderstood" by Sid Gorham. Chairman Ives was interviewed by Price Chopper nutritionists for the Cow to Wow program. There will be blog articles which include the farm, Coventry Hauling and Chobani.

Sup. Lawrence passed out a copy of the NYS Conservationist Magazine for June 2016 which included an article about the Brookfield Horse Trail. Also, in the NYS Association of Counties issue, on page 31, the St. Lawrence horse trail is included in an article. The trail in St. Lawrence County is operated by the County and State as a multi-use trail. If tourism increased by 1% it would mean an additional \$1.5 million; by 5% would equal \$5.7 million.

Mr. Vickers gave an updated on Waters of the US. Farms and ranchers can sue the federal government about these regulations. American Farm Bureau has won the case. NY Farm Bureau is progressing on stating their concerns for unionizing migrant workers. Senate Bill 7501 and Assembly Bill 10077 would provide for funding for Rogers Conservation Center. The Bring Back America festival is next weekend in the park. There will be a lot of legislators at the event and is a good opportunity to talk with them.

Mr. Smith is working with the Newton family on getting their farm rebuilt after the fire. They want to go more towards robotics which aren't as profitable. NYS milk production is up 5%, California is down 3%, Texas, New Mexico and Wisconsin are all up but will probably start going down again. Mr. Smith talked to Ed Coates from NBT who stated he works with two farms who are currently profitable.

Sup. Wilcox stated the Supervisors are working on keeping taxes low and staying within the tax cap. NYS is not helping local governments meet the cap.

Mr. Ryan watched the National Ag Program on television and they were talking about the Nobelhurst farm in Linwood, NY. The farm continued to grow and decided to build a milk plant, and then a methane digester which produces extra energy for them to sell on the grid and also sell the dry manure. They are now considering expanding into making cheese.

Mr. Smith stated the methane digesters work well with cheese plants. Other farms don't do this because of the number of regulations. You have to be good at a lot of things in order to do this. Mr. Vickers stated it also depends on the region due to weather and the need for barns, coolers, etc.

Mr. Harris gave an update on the new NYS STAR program. Sup. Lawrence asked if the county would have to pay more back to the towns if someone doesn't pay their taxes. Mr. Harris stated the State may be the one who has to go after them.

Mr. Davis read the Country Folks magazine and NYS may adopt legislation to streamline the Ag District program. The South Otselic Church is holding a benefit tomorrow night to assist the Newton farm.

Mr. Dibbell called Washington DC and will be faxing a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture. Doing your own manufacturing is the way to succeed and is the way it was done in the 1940s. Cost of production is \$25.00 per 100 weight and pay price is \$14.36 per 100 weight. Organic and grass-only is the way to go but most cannot afford the transition. Farms utilizing grass-only are getting paid \$46.00 per 100 weight with no feed costs. Production is half but they are making more. We need to convince the government to ban bst and go back to the basics because it is causing cancer.

With no further discussion, Mr. Ryan motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Smith at 10:53 AM.

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

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
July 15, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Steve Harris; Bradd Vickers; Sup. John Lawrence; Stan Davis; and Shane Butler.
Guests Present: Rainy Vickers

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:11 and asked for any additions or corrections on the June 12, 2016 meeting minutes. Supervisor Lawrence made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler gave an update on the officials who have signed up to attend the Ag Tour so far and provided a map of the destinations. SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus will provide a welcoming prior to departing with cookies and drinks.

Ag District

Mr. Butler passed out the Ag District #3A report and gave a summary on the number of acres included, removed, and percentage viable. Sup. Lawrence asked what would happen to the property being purchased for Bowman Lake. Mr. Butler stated it would be removed because it would now be owned by NYS. Supervisor Lawrence asked why there were so many parcels removed. Mr. Butler stated they were requested by the landowners or were deemed too small to be viable. Most were under a half acre with a house.

Mr. Vickers made a motion to approve the report and refer it to the Ag, Buildings & Grounds Committee, seconded by Mr. Davis. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Open Discussion

Mr. Vickers reported on the farm vehicle endorsement changes taking effect on the 11th. If you have vehicles covered under the farm vehicle designation, you may want to talk to DMV because there were some changes on the agricultural plates. The CDL Hazmat endorsement doesn't apply to farm vehicles now. There will be a training on the changes in the fall.

The comment period for bunk tire regulations are open and you have until September 13th to comment. You would only be allowed 1000 tires per bunk. Additional requirements were also discussed. NYS Farm Bureau has applied to address the courts regarding the civil liberties union and for the farm worker collective bargaining.

The Farm to Fork event sponsored by the Ag Development Council will be held on the first day of the Chenango County Fair. Channel 12 news was at a dairy farm in Sherburne and Afton. It was in regards to a story about ag production in the county.

Mr. Harris stated tax bills will be coming next month. 100,000 have signed up for the new STAR program so far.

Chairman Ives stated there are a lot of reports on agricultural values. Commodity futures keep going up and down. Corn isn't going up the way it was expected to.

Sup. Lawrence is concerned that NBT Bank doesn't have many who are knowledgeable on agricultural issues.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Harris at 10:53 AM.

The next meeting will be held on July 15, 2016 at 10:37 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board

August 19, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Ryan; Bradd Vickers; Sup. John Lawrence; Rob DeClue; Alice Andrews; and Shane Butler.
Guests Present: Rainy Vickers

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:09 and asked for any additions or corrections on the July 15, 2016 meeting minutes. Sup. Lawrence made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Vickers. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler thought the tour went well and heard positive feedback from those who attended. Chairman Ives stated there was a lot of good discussion and learned a lot at the stops. A letter of thanks was sent to all of the destinations. Mr. Ryan stated Kuhn's is a lot larger than it looks from the road. Ms. Andrews stated they have seven (7) full-time mechanics.

Ag District

Mr. Butler took the Ag District #3A report to the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee where it was approved and send on to the full board. A public hearing will be held on September 12th. NYS Ag and Markets sent a letter approving the one inclusion into Agricultural District #1A.

Ag Development Council

Ms. Andrews reported on the Farm to Fork event held at the County Fair. There were 15 farms who participated, there were nine (9) chefs, and 20 sponsors. FOJO Beans had to resupply twice. Norwich Meadows would like to be more involved last year and other vendors have indicated they would like the event to go on all week with less vendors each day. Many ADC members were at the event to help out.

Ms. Andrews spoke to Nancy Morey during the event about an Ag Asset Inventory done many years ago. It may be useful to have something updated again to show current number of farms and land.

Elmhurst Processing Plant

Ms. Andrews reported on the closing of the Elmhurst Processing plant. Mr. Vickers stated the plant is located in Jamaica/Queens. The owners are selling the property and shutting down. Many legislators have been notified and are aware of the issue. Approximately 50 dairies will be impacted including five in Chenango County. Chobani has been asked if they could pick up the losses but Chobani received class II milk and Elmhurst received class I.

Chairman Ives stated Southtown Farm is an Elmhurst supplier who keeps adding more cows. They had planned to add an additional 500 but the bank turned them down because the supplier could not give them a two year commitment. DFA is going to take their milk. Sup. Wilcox asked if DFA taking their milk will impact the smaller farms in Chenango.

Mr. Vickers stated Farm Bureau is currently in policy development mode. Some sort of supply management is needed. Sup. Wilcox added business management is the most important part of being profitable. Farmers should put pressure on adding policies. The Dairy of Distinction program was beneficial.

Mr. Ryan asked if Cornell is doing enough product research. We need to find additional uses for milk. Consumers don't realize the Chenango County Fair is related to agriculture. They are more worried about the rides. Chairman Ives stated they do a lot of research but only so much money is going towards the research.

Sup. Wilcox stated NYC and Boston are key to the dairy market because of the demand. Sup. Lawrence asked why we see the advertisements about happy California cows. Chairman Ives stated they have additional marketing money because of the "Got Milk?" campaign. The slogan was copyrighted in California and therefore get the proceeds from the copyright. Sup. Wilcox asked if NYC received California milk. Chairman Ives thought they would but the quality wouldn't be as high because of the transportation.

Upper Susquehanna Coalition

Mr. DeClue alerted of a new grant opportunity through the Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC) for drafting nutrient management plans (NMPs). He explained the difference between a simple basic Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) and the more involved

comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP). The comprehensive management plan encompasses both the NMP plus agricultural wastes associated with livestock production at the farmstead and associated facilities. The nutrient management plan only addresses “resource concerns” on crop fields, hayfields, orchards, vineyards, pastures, & other fields where a commodity crop is grown. This particular USC grant targets underserved farmers such as non-dairy cattle and small to medium scale operations. Six farmers have been identified for this program in Chenango County and the plans have to be certified by an NYS AEM planner. There are also opportunities to establish cover cropping and riparian buffers with this program.

Annual BMP Installation Survey

Mr. DeClue will be contacting Chenango County farmers in the near future to identify and tabulate key Best Management Practices (BMPs) completed in the last 12 months so they can be reported through the USC to EPA. This data will help document forward progress the agricultural community is making towards the Chesapeake Bay restoration goals.

EPA Milestones

Mr. DeClue passed around two handouts entitled “EPA Evaluation of Chesapeake Bay 2014-2015 Milestone Progress and 2016-2017 Milestone Commitments to Reduce Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment” and “EPA Evaluation of New York’s 2014-2015 and 2016-2017 Milestones”. NYS is doing well in the agricultural sector other than nitrogen levels.

Ag Non-Point Source Abatement Program

Mr. DeClue said the SWCD is finishing up on existing open grants and preparing to administratively close them out as work is completed and contract end date is reached. We have just been approved for funding a proposal in Round 22 which will focus on cover crops. The grant will reimburse on a 75/25% match with a flat rate per acre reimbursement based on the NYS average costs from recent past. For a single species cover crop the state payment to farmers is \$55.65 per acre and \$79.80 per acre for a “cocktail” mixture of cover crop seeds. Farmers are allowed to use their own home grown seed but have to submit representative samples to a testing lab to assure minimum purity and germination. Based on the results of the testing, a calculation will tell the farmer how much actual seed they are required to plant. Most of the cover crops for fall establishment period have to be in the ground by October 1st. Winter rye is by far the most commonly selected species in Chenango County for post-harvest cover crop on silage corn ground.

Southern Tier Ag Industry Enhancement Program

Mr. DeClue stated the applications are now available for the next round of the STAIEP. Allocation of funds is on a per county basis. Chenango County had 14 applicants in the 1st Round. 13 were approved and 1 denied. The unsuccessful farmer has reapplied after enhancing their previously weak business plan. There have been six applicants so far for the 2nd Round. Each applicant can request a max of \$100,000 of state funds towards their project. Applications are time sensitive because the program is truly on a 1st come 1st serve basis, so each application is both dated and timestamped.

Mr. DeClue stated Dr. Mike Baker from Cornell has applied through STAIEP for and obtained a \$627,055 grant for a Stocker Cattle Initiative. There have been a couple initial outreach meetings in area counties. Mr. DeClue assisted with presentations at the meetings in Walton, NY on July 25th.

Open Discussion

Ms. Andrews reported the CCE building will tentatively be completed next month with an open house and tour in the fall.

Mr. Vickers spoke with Senator Seward and Assemblyman Crouch at the Farm to Fork event. There was a policy development meeting in Oneonta recently. A big discussion on milk management ensued at the meeting. NYSDEC is also pushing for a timber harvest notification law. They want to know how much and where timber is being cut. This may end up being similar to the EPA monitoring water. The annual Farm Bureau meeting will be held on October 25th at The Silo in Coventry.

Mr. Ryan reported on Ken Von Mechow who will be coming to the Oxford Planning Board meeting in September to discuss land trusts. He also recommended listening to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack talk about “Why I’m not a farmer”.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Harris at 11:36 AM.

The next meeting will be held on September 16, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board

September 16, 2016

Members Present: Terry Ives, Ken Ryan, Bradd Vickers, Sup. John Lawrence, Ken Dibbell, Stan Davis, Steve Harris, and Rena Doing

Minutes:

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Members were asked if any corrections or changes to the August 19, 2016 minutes. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the minutes as presented; second by Sup. Lawrence. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag District #3A:

Ms. Doing commented the Ag. District #3A was accepted and approved by the County Board of Supervisors, September 12, 2016. Mr. Butler is preparing the required documentation, maps, etc. for submission to NYS Ag & Markets for their final approval.

Ag Development Council:

Mr. Vickers commented on the success of the "Farm to Fork" program at the Chenango County Fair. The program will return to the 2017 Chenango County Fair. There has been requests to offer the program for the entire week of the Fair, but this may not be feasible. Mr. Vickers stated there may be a possibility of securing a mini grant to subsidize the program.

Solar Installations:

Mr. Harris provided the members with the following Fact Sheet handouts relating to Solar projects:

"Landowner Considerations for Solar Land Leases"; "Understanding Solar Installations in Agricultural Districts"; and "Understanding New York State's Real Property Tax Law Article 487"

Mr. Harris gave a presentation on Solar Installations relating to NYS Real Property tax guidelines at the County Board of Supervisors meeting, September 12, 2016. The precursor to Solar energy in central NYS was the Madison County Commercial Windpower project in 2000. At that time a "PILOT" (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program was not an option but Madison County gave a 15 year tax exemption with an agreement funds would be donated to various non-profits and school districts. In 2001 the "PILOT" was established for commercial projects.

Counties may request a "PILOT" for most commercial Solar projects as there has been primarily no benefit to local areas. Agreements for Net Metering of the power generated is often directed to businesses out of the area.

Chenango County has been targeted as a desirable location for Solar Farms due primarily to the lack of land use regulations and availability of a 30 % government subsidy.

Sup. Lawrence questioned if the landowner is a participant or benefits in the lease advantage? Mr. Harris stated generally the landowner receives a flat lease amount for the use of the land.

Discussion continued relating to:

- Incidents in areas of country where a neighbor has had to accommodate a neighbor with solar panels by removing their trees to remove shade on their neighbor's solar panels.
- Concern about a decommission plan insuring panels will be removed when no longer functioning or a company is out of business. Important to have a knowledgeable Attorney. Mr. Ryan commented that Communities can include requirements to provide funds into an account for decommissioning.
- Mr. Ives stated the solar panels on his barn were being changed out. The Installer had stated the solar hot water system he has only raises the water temperature approximately 20 deg. F. Possibly the new panels are an improvement. NYSERDA may have a list of the "hot water solar systems" installed at farms in Chenango County.

Future of School Ag Programs:

Mr. Ives reported on a recent meeting at the Otselic Valley School District regarding the future of their Ag Program. There has been considerable discussion on discontinuing the program and replacing with a Robotics/Drone program. At this time a decision has been postponed for 1 year. It may be beneficial to advise the District Superintendent on how the two programs, Ag and Robotics/Drone, complement each other. Sup. Lawrence questioned why Drones are not promoted for farms use to check crops, grazing, lost cattle, etc. This could be an entrepreneur opportunity for Agriculture.

Discussion continued: Statistics from Cornell indicate there will 58,000 Ag related job positions available with only the prospect of 60% being filled by qualified Ag background staff.

Newark Valley and Spencer- Van Etten started an Ag program in 2015 due to prospect of available Ag positions. Unadilla Valley School District has increased their Ag Program. There is some concern the Afton School District may be considering changes in their Ag program.

DCMO BOCES, Perry Dewey, has a strong Ag background. Mr. Ives suggested meeting with Mr. Dewey and extending an invitation to a future Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board meeting. Mr. Vickers made the motion to send a formal letter to Mr. Perry inviting him to attend a future meeting, second by Sup. Lawrence, motion carried. Copies of the letter to be sent to: Vicky Gregory, Afton Ag. Program Coordinator and Betty Robinson, Otselic Valley Ag. Program Coordinator.

Mr. Harris commented that Jason Zbock, Executive Director, SUNY Morrisville- Norwich Campus, is looking for potential projects. There was some discussion relating to partnering with the SUNY Morrisville Equestrian program to develop/upgrade, etc. horse trails in Chenango County. SUNY Morrisville, as part of the New York State system, may be a key component to accessing NY State land. Sup. Lawrence commented on a recent County Soil/Water meeting where the discussion lead to what is missing and how to improve access to horse trails due to increase popularity of horses in the County. Sup. Lawrence will suggest Soil/Water also contact Mr. Zbock.

Mr. Vickers suggested contacting Shannon Budnik, NYS Horse Council, and Steve Palmatier for additional information on horse trails in the area. A map of the horse trails in Chenango County can be found at www.nyshc.org

Mr. Ryan added the influx of Amish families in the County has added to the horse and mule population.

Mr. Ives commented on an article he had read relating to a Vermont Farm Land Protection program.

<http://www.vhcb.org/pdfs/conspolicy/agriculture.pdf> . The article refers to the Conservatory Board policy to keep properties in agriculture when a landowner is ready to sell. The Board advertises to young farmers and accepts applications to purchase the properties. The Board would select the potential buyers for the consideration by seller.

Open Discussion:

Mr. Harris: School tax bills have been sent out for all Chenango County School Districts, with the exception of Norwich City School District. He commented on a remark from the Assessor in the Town of Madison. A couple had purchased a ~300 acre farm at a cost ~ \$ 1 million. The couple came from Missouri to purchase this farm primarily because of the tie stall barn.

Mr. Ryan: Commented on an article relating to the methane management program initiated in California. General concern is how a change in the cow's diet will affect milk production.

Mr. Dibbell: Provided a handout "Update on the On-going Dairy Crisis in New York and the Nation" addressing the milk pricing issue.

- In 2017 Wisconsin will no longer allow BST in milk.
- Vermont passed a labeling law July 1, 2016 relating to GMO products. Canada eliminated Country of Origin labelling.
- Elmhurst plant provided milk to schools. Question if Connecticut plant will have capacity to meet the demand.

Mr. Vickers: Discussed guidelines for the annual Ag exemption.

The "Farm to Fork" at the Chenango County Fair was excellent.

Elmhurst Plant closure resulted in dropping 65 farms.

NYSDEC has been contacted about initiating a "Clean Sweep" program in this area for farms to discard pesticides, antifreeze, etc.

The recent passing of William Smith, Clarence Rappleyea, and William Nojay is a loss of Agriculture advocates. It is important to have Agriculture advocates in our Legislator.

Sup. Lawrence: The invasive species "Japanese Knot Weed" is becoming a major problem in the area. Contact Chenango County Soil and Water for potential grant to control and eliminate the plants. To be effective the herbicide must be applied when the plant is flowering.

Mr. Davis commented a family member had recently purchased seeds labeled "Chinese Sunflowers" when actually it is "Velvet Leaf" plant.

Mr. Ives commented on a map indicating areas in NYS where milk production increased and decreased in relation to the drought conditions.

Mr. Ryan motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Vickers. Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board October 21, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Ryan; Ken Smith; Steve Harris; Bradd Vickers
Sup. Lawrence Wilcox, Sup. John Lawrence; Donna Jones; Rob DeClue and Shane Butler.

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:06 and asked for any additions or corrections on the September 16, 2016 meeting minutes. Sup. Lawrence motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Harris. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Smith stated the ADC was formed 20 years ago to help agribusiness. There has been a lot of turnover in membership and have been trying to reinvigorate the group. A Supervisor is no longer on the ADC but will be requested for next year. One thought was to change the date and time to after the AFPB meeting. The Farm to Fork event was a great success.

Alternative Energy

Ms. Jones has invited Wells Horton to talk to the County Planning Board about a training he attended in Bath, NY. The meeting will be held on November 8th and all are welcome. Members discussed their knowledge of trainings held in the surrounding counties. Mr. Harris provided a presentation to Town Supervisors at the Full Board meeting.

Sup. Lawrence stated there has been interest in wind turbines near the Windsor/Sanford area. They will require tax breaks. Phase 1 usually entails talking with the landowners and obtaining wind speed data. The speed will depend on the size of the windmill. Later phases will include bat and bird studies. All of the phases take about five year's total. Mr. Harris stated they will usually talk with the IDA about tax incentives.

Mr. DeClue has been tracking solar applications around the county on farms. Solar companies worry about the damage animals can cause to their systems (cows rub, goats jump, etc.). He also handed out the following: "Solar Arrays & Taxation" by Mike Sabansky, Delaware County RPTS Director; "Can Solar Farms and livestock co-exist?" from Innovative Solar Systems; and screenshots regarding the compatibility of sheep and solar systems from Sun Raised Farm (<http://sunraisedfarms.com/farms>).

Mr. Vickers stated the solar panels can take a farm classification and turn it into a commercial classification depending on what they are using the solar systems for. Solar leases are worse than those for gas drilling. Depending on the lease, maintenance of snow, trees and dust could all be your responsibility.

Mr. Harris stated in Orange County where the ag exemption is worth more, farmers have put sheep in with the panels so they can keep the ag exemption.

Future Farmers of America

Chairman Ives had no update from Betty Robinson. There was an FFA National Convention in Indianapolis which was phenomenal. Most of the leaders were female although the secretary was a male. Secretary Vilsack spoke yesterday. There will be 65000 new jobs in agriculture next year. FFA membership continues to grow. Newark Valley and Spencer-Van Etten are both starting programs.

Mr. Vickers asked about a program in Sherburne. They may work with Otselic Valley. Oxford FFA has a new teacher and is doing very well. Mr. Dibbell stated the FFA in Unadilla Valley is also expanding.

Sup. Lawrence asked if FFA and 4H compete. Chairman Ives stated they shouldn't because you can do both. He is worried about Afton losing their FFA. Mr. Smith stated the schools typically close down these programs due to money concerns, not because they don't value the program. Mr. Vickers stated the Farm Bureau annual meeting is next week and they have a couple of policies relating to FFA which should pass.

Future Farmers of America

Chairman Ives stated there is a two to three month wait time for butchering a pig. He asked for an update on the slaughterhouse in

Sherburne. Mr. Butler gave an overview of what he knew. He stated the Planning Department has not received the site plan for the project. The AFPB Protection Plan has a goal of having a USDA certified slaughterhouse in the county. Chairman Ives asked if Ms. Jones could provide an overview next month.

Open Discussion

Mr. Dibbell stated members of the US Dairy Industry will have to pay a \$52 million settlement for animal cruelty. Animal rights groups started the lawsuit and farmers will have to pay for it. This stems from the need for farmers to reduce cow numbers. Our country is allowing beef imports from countries with hoof and mouth disease.

Chairman Ives stated the Windsor Farm had to be picked up by the cooperative because they were a member after being dropped by Elmhurst. The South New Berlin cooperative failed a USDA inspection. When an inspection is failed, their milk can no longer be classified as Class 1 Grade A and would lose \$5 per hundred weight. They were subsequently re-inspected and passed.

Mr. Vickers stated not all of the farms have been picked up after being dropped by Elmhurst. Those farms will have to come up to standards in order to have their milk picked up. Legislators are on board and will be at the Farm Bureau annual meeting. He is still promoting the Farmer Veteran Coalition.

Mr. Smith spoke with a Farm Credit representative about the future of the milk market. Farmers have to plan based on what the market looks like right now. New York production is going up and California is going down because of the drought. Depending on this year's election, the NYS Senate and House majority may go to the Democrats. If this happens, we may have to come up with a new plan to support agriculture. Usually the Governor and Democrat controlled Senate includes no agricultural support and then the Republic Controlled House adds it in later.

Mr. Harris stated the tax freeze checks are coming out. You should receive one as long as your town were under the cap. There is a new four year STAR credit program. The percentage changes based on income.

Mr. DeClue stated the Southern Tier Ag Enhancement Program deadline was October 17th. There were 17 applicants asking for \$1.6 million which is over the allotment. Since it is first come first served, some may not receive as much as they hoped. CCE helped with the business planning side of the program

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Smith at 11:17 AM.

The next meeting will be held on November 18, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board November 18, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Ryan; Ken Smith; Steve Harris; Bradd Vickers
Sup. Lawrence Wilcox, Sup. John Lawrence; Stan Davis; and Shane Butler.
Guests Present: Perry Dewey, DCMO BOCES; and Rainy Vickers

Minutes

Chairman Ives called the meeting to order at 10:03 and asked for any additions or corrections on the October 21, 2016 meeting minutes. Mr. Harris motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Vickers. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Future Farmers of America

Chairman Ives introduced Perry Dewey, DCMO BOCES District Superintendent, and asked for introductions around the table.

Mr. Dewey introduced himself; he was an Agriculture Teacher for 24 years until leaving to work as a Director of Outreach in Agriculture at Cornell, among other jobs, and has been the District Superintendent at BOCES since October 3rd. Mr. Dewey would like to sustain and grow the Agricultural Programs at BOCES and add a small animal husbandry program in order to diversify. There are currently two programs related to agriculture at BOCES and would like to see them connected to the FFA programs; natural resources conservation and career and technical education.

Mr. Dewey stated agricultural programs are not mandated by NYS and are easy to cut. There is a 60 teacher shortage in NYS despite Ag Teachers being the perfect STEM teacher. Ag Teachers can provide experimental learning and have the freedom in their curriculum to provide support. The economy is helping by showing the need for STEM learning.

Ms. Gregory in Afton is ready to retire and is worried she won't be replaced. Mr. Dewey explained the next two years of school budgeting won't be good due to rising health costs, wages, etc. Many times the Ag Teachers are the highest paid and don't live within the district. It is hard to expand the programs due to the expenses. About 64% of the educational programming budget in BOCES region comes from NYS.

Sup. Wilcox stated we need to not look at FFA as a dumping ground for the students who don't want to be at school. This destroys the program over time. Mr. Davis read a resolution to be sent to the NYS Board of Regents from the Pomona Grange which recommended requiring one credit of agriculture classes for a Regents Diploma and recommended including one agriculture topic each year in elementary school. Mr. Vickers stated they passed resolutions supporting FFA programming at their Farm Bureau meeting which have been sent to NYS Farm Bureau.

Mr. Ryan asked why the cost per student in NYS is so much higher than the Midwest. Mr. Dewey stated there is a tremendous student loss in NYS which drives up the number. He attended a meeting where the speaker brought up five topics which have caused this rise. They are; unfunded mandates, special interest groups, liberal attitudes towards providing public service, cost of healthcare, and the teacher certification process. Teachers should be certified across more grade levels and programs than they currently are. This is a big problem in rural schools and wouldn't cost taxpayers any money for it to be changed. A letter should be sent to the Board of Regents recommending it. Chairman Ives suggested talking with Assemblyman Cliff Crouch.

Mr. Dewey suggested having the Ag and Farmland Protection Board take a tour of the BOCES campus. Contact Dory to schedule.

Sup. Lawrence asked if BOCES has a work study program for farming. Mr. Dewey stated they did not although many of their programs could relate to farming. Work-based placements go through the CTE program. Many people don't understand the crossover. The auto mechanic and welding programs can transfer to farming because of the skill sets needed.

Mr. Ryan stated we have great agriculture schools in the area with Morrisville, Cornell, etc. Chairman Ives stated not everyone wants to go to college. Sup. Wilcox stated the difference is do we need farm operators or farm owners. A farm owner needs business management and communication skills. Farmers need to start working together to make farming look good.

Chairman Ives asked how we get more certified educators. Mr. Dewey was previously the president of the NYS Ag Teacher Association. In 2004, there was a push to revitalize the program and new hires were added at Cornell. Cornell and Ithaca College have an agreement where students take their agriculture classes at Cornell and their teaching methods at Ithaca towards their certification. Most don't know it is a pathway since Cornell dropped their certification program. SUNY Oswego has a program but is only geared towards BOCES teachers. The certification is directed at one program rather than being more broad. Ag Teachers should be certified as STEM teachers because they are such a resource.

Ag Development Council

Mr. Smith attended the Ag Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting to ask for another Supervisor to sit on the ADC. Sup. Ireland will now be on the ADC along with new member Jennifer Cook of Cooks Maple. Farm to Fork was successful and the Fair Board would like to see it expanded for next year.

Ag Tour

Mr. Butler asked if the Board wants to hold another Ag Tour, where we should go and how we will fund it. Mr. Smith suggested ADC support. Mr. Butler stated NBT Bank and Chobani have been consistent funders. **Mr. Smith motioned to hold an Ag Tour for Legislators event in 2017, seconded by Mr. Vickers. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.**

Potential stops included Cooks Maple, Baillie Lumber, Egg-Low, Kross', Mastro, Van Althuis, Rogers Conservation (and/or for lunch), Walling's, and Bill Betts.

Ag District

Mr. Butler received a letter from NYS Ag and Markets certifying Ag District #3A with anniversary date in January 2025.

CNY Meats

Mr. Butler brought a support letter for the newly named proposed slaughterhouse and asked if the board would like to send it. **Mr. Vickers made a motion to sign and send the support letter for the CNY Meats project, seconded by Mr. Smith. Members voted all ayes, motion carried. Discussion prior to vote:**

Mr. Vickers stated this would be a plus for the community. Mr. Dibbell stated it is too close to town at the current site. Mr. Butler stated the site was pushed more south. Mr. Harris lives in Sherburne and any smells cannot compete with the dog food. Property taxes are already affected by the smell. Mr. Ryan stated if the project is properly planned and designed he would support it. Mr. Smith stated NYS is not short on regulations.

Open Discussion

Mr. Davis asked about The Farmers Place in Columbus. It appears they are still open and running despite legal problems.

Mr. Ryan read about 4H and FFA groups in the Midwest and how 200 FFA students invited all of the children with special needs to a showmanship event to show the children different animals. It was a nice program and wondered why they have so much success in numbers. Mr. Harris stated a lot has to do with how the school districts are formed. Many schools in the Midwest are County schools.

Mr. Dibbell contacted US Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and faxed them a copy of his letter to the Secretary of Agriculture. The public is paying \$11 per gallon for grass fed milk and would be willing to pay more for conventional milk. He advocated for the Kacey-Specter Bill.

Mr. Smith suggested taking a tour of the newly reconstructed Newton farm and their robotic milking system in Pharsalia.

Mr. Vickers and Farm Bureau held their 61st annual meeting. Two FFA groups were present along with Senator Akshar, Assemblyman Crouch and others. Don't forget about the venison donation program where all of the meat stays in Chenango County. He also attended a reception at Chobani where they revealed some of their new products.

Sup. Lawrence passed around some brochures about Hydrilla and how to stop it. NRCS wants to increase the amount of riparian buffers and are willing to pay \$1000 per acre. If you lose trees due to a natural disaster while in this program they can be replaced by

NRCS. Contact Soil and Water if you are interested in the program.

Mr. Harris stated the tax bills are coming out soon. Many have already received their tax credit checks. If the town submitted an efficiency plan and kept under the tax cap you will receive a check.

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

The next meeting will be held on December 16, 2016 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner

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**Chenango County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
December 16, 2016 - MEETING MINUTES**

Note: Meeting held at DCMO BOCES

Members Present: Terry Ives; Ken Dibbell; Ken Ryan; Ken Smith; Bradd Vickers
Sup. John Lawrence; Stan Davis; and Shane Butler.

Guests Present: Perry Dewey, DCMO BOCES; Rainy Vickers; and Joyce Lawrence

Minutes

Meeting minutes for November 18 will be adopted at the January meeting.

Future Farmers of America

Mr. Dewey welcomed everyone to the BOCES campus. Unfortunately, due to inclement weather, a tour of the Natural Resources Center could not be held. This can be rescheduled for Spring or Summer. The Natural Resources students and staff are installing a new sewer line.

Mr. Dewey had the idea to create an ad-hoc committee to study Agriculture Education programs. Two of the main factors to study are; 1. There are not enough teachers; and 2. Financially the school budgets are very tight and the ag education programs are an easy cut. He would like to bring the Ag Teachers to BOCES to see where we should go from there.

Chairman Ives stated Bainbridge-Guilford is researching the possibility of an FFA program. Mr. Vickers encouraged inviting as many ag teachers and schools who currently have or are looking into FFA programs to the meetings. Mr. Dewey asked who on this board would be interested in serving on the committee. Mr. Smith, Mr. Davis, Mr. Vickers, Mr. Ives and Sup. Lawrence all volunteered. A meeting would be started in January around 4 or 5pm.

Mr. Vickers motioned to form an Ag Education Sub-Committee to Farm Bureau, seconded by Sup. Lawrence. Members voted all ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Dewey stated NYS has No Child Left Behind which requires a highly qualified teacher for the subject matter being taught. A teacher can teach one course outside of their certification. National FFA requires an Ag Teacher which is hard to achieve. Certification changes would help. "Highly Qualified" has made certifications too strict. Teachers should be able to take additional classes in order to gain additional certifications. Good programs are because of good teachers. We need to show how education relates to the real world. Mr. Dewey suggested inviting Terry Hughes from Cobleskill to the sub-committee meeting.

Sup. Lawrence suggested focusing the FFA education on what is applicable for the area being covered. Dairy needs a lot more than how to raise animals. Mr. Dewey suggested basing the certification on the area served. There are multiple pathways to be taught. The NYS Board of Education would have to make the changes.

Member Appointments

Sup. Lawrence stated Sup. Williams will no longer be on the board of supervisors or AFPB next year and someone will be appointed to replace him. Mr. Butler stated an appointed Supervisor would have different voting rights and wasn't sure how it would work on boards such as AFPB. Chairman Wilcox will have to appoint a replacement based on the requirements.

Open Discussion

Mr. Ryan read an article in "Grassroots" about farms being challenged for transferring property to forever farm conservancies. He suggested reading it.

Sup. Lawrence attended the Soil and Water meeting. They are still looking for applicants for the riparian buffer program. The property would have to contain prime soils. They are also looking for a replacement for Lauren Johnson.

Mr. Vickers attended the annual Farm Bureau meeting where they won 8 silver keys and 1 gold key along with a membership recruitment trophy. All policies adopted by Chenango County passed at the state level. There is a new appointee to head EPA which

should resolve the concerns over EPA's regulation of water. Mr. Vickers will be attending the national FB meeting in Phoenix, AZ.

Mr. Dibbell passed out three handouts; "Dairy History"; a packet of information relating to dairy prices; and "The Milkweed". The US has approved beef imports from three countries with hoof and mouth disease. The article can be found on the last page of "The Milkweed". The country of origin should be placed on the label of all meat. The average cost of production is \$27 while the pay price is around \$14.

Mr. Davis stated Smithfield foods passed out of North Carolina is owned by the Chinese. The resolution pertaining to Ag Education passed the grange and was sent to the state grange. A lot of talk occurred at the meeting related to genetically modified organisms (GMO's).

Mr. Smith stated the milk price is expected to go up. China and potentially Russia coming back to the milk market. Estimates have the pay price coming up to \$18 or \$19 per hundred weight. Chenango County farmers can produce milk at around \$16 or \$17 per hundred weight. CCE has a new grant to encourage landowners to utilize their woodlots for maple, timber, etc. More Amish may be coming to Chenango County around the McDonough area.

With no further discussion, Mr. Vickers motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Ryan at 11:24 AM.

The next meeting will be held on January 20, 2017 at 10:00 AM.

Minutes prepared by Shane H. Butler, Sr. Planner