

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY  
AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, 6:00 PM  
Second Floor Conference Room, Human Service Center  
80 State Highway 310, Canton, NY 13617

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum.** Chair called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

**Members present:** R. Andrews, (*Chair*); L. Denesha, (*BOL Liaison*); B. Green, (*Real Property*); K. Gugin, (*CCE*); S. McKnight; J. Pfothenauer, (*Planning Office*); J. TeRiele.  
**Absent:** M. Bowdish; D. Fisher; J. Greenwood;. A quorum was established.

**Staff present:** S. Joseph *Planner II*; **Others present:** C. Hostetter, *CCE Tri-County Regional Ag Team*; B. Ahfeld, *IDA*.

**B. Adoption of the Agenda.** Motion to adopt agenda (TeRiele / McKnight) Agenda was adopted.

**C. Approval of the Minutes.** Motion to approve February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting minutes (TeRiele / Green) Meeting minutes approved.

**II. New Business**

**A. Agricultural District Annual Review Requested Additions:** Two parcels in Hammond and Massena requested to be added to the Agricultural District. (See Attached Ag District Report) Motion for the Board to recommend to the Board of Legislators to accept this year's requested additions to Ag District 1 which comprises of 2 parcels totaling 97.6 acres. (McKnight / Denesha) passed unanimously.

**B. 2024 Crop Data Layer / National Agriculture Imagery Program 2024:** Staff reviewed Crop Data Layer measuring crop acreage for year 2024 derived from NAIP 2024 Imagery. (See attached table for crop acreages year 2020-2024)

**III. Old Business**

**A. Ag Tour:** Discussion on Ag Tour Planning with three locations selected Greenwood Dairy, Canton Apples, and Bordeaux Brothers 9-1 Lunch catered at CCE. Tour High Tunnel and CCE after lunch. Multiple possible dates were discussed, Aug 15 is most likely candidate. Discussion on what communications to include during the tour.

**A. Solar Development:**

- (1) Rumors of two projects on the Community Scale. Canton south of Jingleville Road in close proximity with Rich Road Project. No permits or plans just rumor. A solar project in hamlet of Madrid that was submitted to the County Planning Board years ago that was denied because not permitted in the zone. There is threat of invoking a Utility Variance, which is a specialized use variance for utilities companies. There are two tests rather than four test for the use variance. The developer is arguing for the utility variance applies in this case.
- (2) Benson Mines 12 MW NYS Brownfield Shovel Ready found developer

**B. Large Scale Solar Development:**

- (1) 22-02969 Permitted: Rich Road, Canton 240 MW on 3,842 acres 20 MW battery storage.  
<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=85374&MNO=22-02969>
- (2) 23-02991 Application Pending Completeness Determination: Two Rivers, Brasher and Massena 200 MW on 3,296 acres  
<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=85397&MNO=23-02991>
- (3) 24-03042 Incomplete Application Moss Ridge Solar in DeKalb 60 MW  
<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=85415&MNO=24-03042>
- (4) Not in ORES system: Grasse River Solar 80 MW in Waddington and Madrid estimated 550 acres; <https://www.grassriver-solar.com/>
- (5) Not in ORES system: Gateway Solar 180 MW in Massena, Brasher and Norfolk  
<https://gateway solarenergycenter.com/>

- C. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Current Status:** NYS detected HPAI in 10 backyard flocks and 0 commercial flock 2,160 affected birds in the last 30 days. No dairies in NYS have been affected. Report on second known case of transmission from wild birds to dairy cattle in Nevada. It was detected and contained by the National Milk Testing Strategy. (See attached report)

**VI. Reports**

- A. IDA:** Annual Report (See Attached). Purchased Kraft Plant and are looking to lease it out to a business. Discussion on Air Products Plant withdraw in Massena. Discussion on Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) arranged by IDA with solar developers
- B. Real Properties:** Working on tentative assessment for May with final assessment June. School taxes collected in September and County in January. An employee of twenty years retired and they hired internally for replacement. Canton is expected to do a reassessment next year.
- C. S. McKnight:** Louisville doing a reassessment. Hauling manure to Maplevue biodigester and taking spent manure back to farm.
- D. J. TiRele:** Waiting for it to dry up a bit to get into fields.
- E. SWCD:** Manure training school 1 May. Grant to control invasive species buckthorn and honey suckle with hack and spray. Tree and shrub sale April 10-11. 5 AEM Forestry management plans for private landowners. Intern starts April 14<sup>th</sup>. Next SWCD Board meeting April 17.

- F. BOL:** Benson Mines sited where it should be where it won't negatively affect anything. Reviewed a recent trip to North Carolina and seeing the extent of poorly placed Solar Development. Gouverneur Transfer Station undergoing upgrades and will be closed April 14- 28. The BOL continues to investigate why gas prices are much higher in St. Lawrence County compared to other neighboring areas. A recent drive along highway showed many downed Ash trees, and BOL is appreciative of the proactive respond SLC and SWCD in removing these dead trees.
- G. CCE:** New Regional Ag Team members are fully staffed. NYS 400 plus loads of milk per day more demand and better price. Collaborating with IDA on a net income for Fresh Cut BOCES grant to determine feasibility without grant funding. Hosted school children on farm and food businesses to highlight possible jobs in the local food system and emphasize you do not have to come from an agricultural background. Manure pit rescue training Lisbon fire departments.
- H. Planning:** FEMA released updated GIS based flood maps. The office is reviewing recent storm damage and comparing to FEMA maps. Septic Program has been running since 2018, \$1.6 million grant to repair septic systems along specific water bodies. There is about 2 years left to spend down funds. New staff member, Ellen Mathews, a fiscal officer, joined the office in February.

**V. Other Items**

- A. Correspondence.** None
- B. Announcements.**

2. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm (Denesha / TiRiele).

Respectfully submitted,

*Samuel Joseph*