

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD
48 Court St. Canton, New York 13617-1169
Tel: (315) 379-2292 • Fax: (315) 379-2252

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 4th, 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 moved agenda to reports because lacking a quorum.

II Reports

A. Solar Developments:

1. Large Scale:

- a. 22-02969 Permitted: Rich Road, Canton 240 MW on 3,842 acres 20 MW battery storage. Construction delayed and planned to begin in 2028.

<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=85374&MNO=22-02969>

- b. 23-02991 Complete Application Under Review: Two Rivers, Brasher and Massena 200 MW on 3,296 acres. The Planning Office attended public hearing gave comments on the value of agricultural land. Large number of Amish that opposed the project.

<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=85397&MNO=23-02991>

c. Community Scale:

- (a) Colton project 5 MW corner of Gulf Rd and Hason Rd. County Planning Board review offered some conditions. No agricultural land there.
- (b) Project in Madrid that was denied by County Planning Board two years ago on prime ag land in the hamlet of Madrid. The developer is threatening litigation and continued to be pursued. 5 MW on 20 acres

III Call to Order

A. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum. Chair called the meeting to order 6:17 p.m.

1. **Members present:** R. Andrews, (*Chair, SWCD*); M. Bowdish; C. Hostetter, (*CCE*); S. McKnight; J. Pfothenauer, (*Planning Office*); J. TeRiele.
2. **Absent:** L. Denesha, (*BOL Liaison*); D. Fisher; J. Greenwood; Real Properties Director (vacant). **A quorum was established.**
3. **Staff present:** none (family emergency), Planning Director served staff functions.

B. Others present: B. Ahfeld, (*IDA*); M. Filippi, (*CCE*)

C. Adoption of the Agenda. Motion to adopt agenda (Hostetter / TeRiele) Agenda was adopted.

D. Approval of the Minutes. Motion to approve October 2nd, 2025 meeting minutes (Hostetter / TeRiele) Meeting minutes approved.

IV New Business

A. Meeting Dates: Motion to approve dates for the 2026 year (McKnight / TeRiele). Dates approved.

B. Fresh-cut Farm to School Program: CCE's Maria Filippi Local Food Coordinator gave an overview of the Farm to School program to utilize fresh local produce into the local school system.

C. NYISO overview NYS electricity production: presentation postponed due to family emergency. Discussion on energy consumption and potential new energy consumption in St. Lawrence County. The presentation moved to February meeting.

D. 2016 Ag Plan Review:

- a. Director of Planning reviewed possible actions with the 2016 Ag Plan update. Option one to take the current document and update statistics; goals and actions; add a section on solar development, and

generally take the existing document with some minor updates performed by Planning Office staff. The second option is to do a more thorough update by applying for Ag and Market grant funds which would require fundraising and cost sharing.

- b. Chair listed off changes to SLC agricultural system in the last ten years including loss of small scale farms, increase in megafarms, land use change, increase acreage of soy, Amish population increasing, beef production, aging farmer population, and changes to infrastructure. Important to review and update this plan.
- c. Suggestion to have members read through the plan and give comments and thoughts to be compiled by Planning Office staff. Suggestion to have listening sessions for the community input. Discussion on access to capital and difficulty for new or beginning farmers to get started.
- d. Proposal for staff to send out the Ag Plan and have the Board submit feedback. The staff will then review feedback and assess whether to pursue funds for a more substantial update.

V **Old Buisness:**

A. None

VI **Reports Continued Member Updates:**

- A. **McKnight:** Hoping 2026 crop year will be better. Manure goes into biodigester at Maple view dairy, and get digestate back, The arrangement has been working very well. Installed solar on barn roof this summer 400 by 60 feet.
- B. **TeRiele:** Empty manure pit and spread without any complaints (McKnight commented that spread manure on land from the digester has significant reduction in smell. TiRiele treats his manure because of proximity to the Village.) Working in shop on machinery.
- C. **SWCD:** Finished getting check out for the part c cover crop program 400 acres of cover crop planted this year winter rye on corn stubble for erosion control. Paid \$75 per acre to the farmer to cover cost of seed and time. Applied for two farms for round 9 climate resiliency farm grant for cover crops. Applying for stream restoration grant support county owned culverts encountering problems and educate highway department on stream smart culvert sizing. Applying for grant for management of invasive species on County land. Putney tree service award contract for hazardous tree removal along county right of ways started in 12 townships in southern part of the county for \$387,000. Work continues for the area between Route 11 and the St. Lawrence River for an additional \$187,000. New board members in works to fill vacancy. SWCD technician has connection with some of the Amish Bishops to engage in communication with their community.
- D. **CCE:** Hostetter will be serving as the CCE representative to AFPB moving forward. Programs coming up Dec 17th Dairy Specialist having a cattle hoof health workshop. Crop Specialist Crop Congress Dec 28th 2 NYS DEC and 3.5 CCA credits for pesticide application. Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant in collaboration with Jefferson County to bring a 7 theme with multiple programs between January thru March. If a farm participates in the workshops / webinars, it will unlock access promotional development. Regional Ag Team have been applying to multiple grants to bring more research and programing to the area.
- E. **Bowdish:** Prepped with seeds and materials for a planned start first week of February for Greenhouse nursery operation. Plans to attend Seaway Valley Produce Auction organizational meeting in Rensselaer Falls. They had their first season in 2025.
- F. **IDA:** Kraft plant still available for sale. Benson Mines in Star Lake is moving aggregate to a company Astro Aggregates, five car loads on initial trip with activity expected to grow in the spring and summer months.
- G. **Planning:** Vacancy for full membership for the AFPB. A new Real Property Director has been appointed, Emily Wilson, and is a member of this Board. Energy Dome energy storage not battery storage have agreement Woodcrest to build large energy storage structure. Planned communication with IDA. Talk about methane gas from biodigesters a process to turn into Hydrogen. CO2 battery from the energy dome website. Discussion on vacancy and potential aim for younger demographic. See work reports <https://www.stlawco.gov/Departments/Planning/PlanningStaffWorkReports>
- H. **Correspondence.** None

VII **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm (TeRiele / McKnight).

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel Joseph