

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, October 2nd, 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 6:15 pm.

Members present: R. Andrews, (*Chair, SWCD*); M. Bowdish; L. Denesha, (*BOL Liaison*); C. Hostetter, (*CCE*); J. Pfothenauer, (*Planning Office*); J. TeRiele. **Absent:** D. Fisher; S. McKnight; J. Greenwood; Real Properties Director (vacant). A quorum was established.

Staff present: S. Joseph *Planner II*; **Others present:** B. Ahfeld, *IDA*. Alex French

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

C. Approval of the Minutes. Motion to approve April 3rd, 2025 meeting minutes (Denesha / TeRiele) Meeting minutes approved.

II. New Business

A. Carbon Markets: A guest speaker who worked in carbon markets gave an overview of programs that are available to farmers and landowners in the area. Indigo Ag for a farmer sign up for soil carbon. Verra Carbon registry for forest programs.

B. Drought Conditions: St. Lawrence County is in a drought. Staff reviewed precipitation data for the past year. This summer is a record for least amount of precipitation and least number of days with a precipitation event since systematic weather data recording began in 1922. St. Lawrence County in general lacks data collection, with anecdotal that other parts of the County received more rain than the weather station at CCE. Farmers anecdotally at this point in the season suggested corn yields have been better than expected despite lack of rain. Too early to know for soy crop yields.

C. North Country Dairy and SPDES permit violation: Staff discussed some of the issues in the Deer River with sewage fungus growth which indicates a high level of nutrients. The Department of Environmental Conservation determined the source of the pollution is from the North Country Dairy (NCD). The DEC and NCD are working to address the issue with engineered solutions to optimize waste lagoons processing and NCD has removed whey from their waste. Because sewage fungus is a cool weather species, it appears in the spring and we will not know if the changes implemented are working until next spring.

D. Northeast Dairy Farm Summary 2024: Staff reviewed Farm Credit East 2024 Northeast Dairy Farm Summary & 2025 Mid-year Outlook. (See document).

III. Old Business

- A. Ag Tour Debrief:** Staff reviewed the Ag Tour from August. Tour was a success with attendance by four Legislators, Assemblyman Gray, representatives from Congresswoman Stefanik and Governor Hochul, and a variety of local officials working with agriculture.

IV. Reports

A. Community 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. River Solar 80 MW in Waddington and Madrid estimated 550 acres; <https://www.grassriver-solar.com/>
4. Not in ORES system: Gateway Solar 180 MW in Massena, Brasher and Norfolk
5. Moss Ridge in Dekalb withdrew application

C. IDA: Leadership Institute beginning, BOCES tours for local businesses. New project manager

D. TeRiele: Successful crop year in spite of drought. 410 Agrimark members.

E. BOL: New Emergency Service Director hired. Real Properties Director vacant and currently searching for replacement. All 92 parcels that were up for auction this year successfully bid out worth \$1.6 million dollars paid to the County. The Derelict property fund remediated 100 parcels.

F. CCE: Fresh Cut Farm to School program had a cost analysis to determine economic viability without grant funding. It is economically viable. A FAMACHA workshop planned. Grain bin rescue safety training for local emergency rescue planned.

G. SWCD: New district technician Allycia Foote started. She has experience as a district tech ARM program manager, and experience from FSA and NRCS. Hazardous tree removal continuing from Route 11 to St. Lawrence River. Cover crop program 350 acres, and waste water programs. FFA Nov 7 auction.

H. Planning: see work reports

<https://www.stlawco.gov/Departments/Planning/PlanningStaffWorkReports>

A. Correspondence. None

2. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm (Pfotenhauer / Hostetter).

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel Joseph