



# Cattaraugus County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board

## AGRICULTURAL & FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD MEETING

County Center, Little Valley, NY

February 9, 2016

### **Board Members**

David L. Zilker  
**Chairman**

Barbara D. George  
**Vice Chairman**

Crystal J. Abers

David Koch

Daniel Brown

Charles W. Couture

Brian Davis

James Finch

Daniel T. Martonis

Donald Telaak

### **Ag Board Members Present:**

David Zilker, Chairman  
Barbara D. George, Vice Chairman  
Crystal Abers  
David Koch  
Charles Couture  
Brian Davis  
Donald Telaak

### **Ag Board Members Absent:**

James Finch  
Daniel T. Martonis

### **County Planning Board Ag Committee Present:**

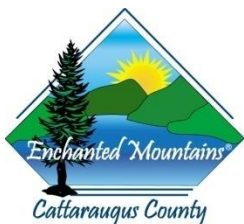
**Planning Staff Present:** Paul R. Bishop, Senior Planner  
Jean K. Davis, Development Specialist

**Guests:** Richard Zink, Executive Director, Southern Tier West RP&DB  
Robert Neal, Legislator District 4, Development and Agriculture  
Committee

Chairman Zilker called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Barbara George moved with a second from Charles Couture to approve the December 15, 2015 minutes as submitted. Motion carried.*



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## **AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION PROCESS**

Paul Bishop reported that completing the Comprehensive Plan is the 1<sup>st</sup> priority and once this is finalized he will concentrate on completing the Agricultural District Consolidation. Due to new members joining the Board, Mr. Bishop explained the reason for the consolidation of the existing six Agricultural Districts with over 5000 parcels into one Agricultural District.

## **2016 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FARMER-NEIGHBOR DINNER**

Crystal Abers reported that the Farmer-Neighbor Committee met prior to the Board meeting to discuss the event and food. The meat to be served will be beef and turkey; and the colors selected for the glasses are yellow, grey and white. Mrs. Abers also stated that the date is Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and the location the West Valley Fire Hall. That evening awards and a scholarship from the Farm Bureau will be presented. The guest speaker will be Richard Ball, Commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. He has previously served on a number of Agriculture Committees at the local, state and national level.

## **SOUTHERN TIER AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

Paul Bishop reported that the Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program is being run through the Cattaraugus County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD). Mr. Bishop asked Brian Davis from the CCSWCD to give an update on the program.

Mr. Davis reported that 25 million dollars was awarded to be divided between the following Counties: Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Steuben, Schuyler, Tompkins, and Tioga. 2.5 million dollars has been granted to Cattaraugus County to assist operators in increasing farm production, enhance profitability and/or increase environmental sustainability of the farm operation; examples are high tunnel green houses and barn construction. Mr. Davis reviewed the requirements of the program. He stated that there will be four signup periods over the next two years and that the program is a farmer's cash match – reimbursable program. The screening and funding will be handled by CCSWCD and the NYS Department of Ag and Markets would be approving the applications.

## **REQUEST FOR RULING ON GENERALLY ACCEPTED AGRICULTURE PRACTICE**

Paul Bishop reported that Cathy Andera, Wing Hollow Road in the Town of Allegany, does not feel that the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board gave her enough support on her issue that she had previously filed between her and her neighbor. Her issue concerned a fence that runs along the property line and prevents them from using a driveway that accesses their back pasture and a storage building containing sawdust.

The Board revisited the issue and made the same determination as was made at the December 15, 2015, Board Meeting. The Board concurred that this is a legal issue and would not be reviewable under the Board's "Request for Ruling on Generally Accepted Agricultural Practice".

## **AGENCY UPDATES**

### **Farm Bureau**

Charles Couture reported that at the last meeting they recognized the following who serve on the different committees: Richard Kimball, District 1 Director; Phyllis Couture, Promotion & Education Chair; and Darin Hill, Young Farmer and Ranchers Committee.

Mr. Couture reported that the proposed \$15.00 minimum wage has been established as the priority issue for 2016 by the New York Farm Bureau Board of Directors – this is a big issue for farmers. Different entities have stated that if the minimum wage increases to \$15.00/hour they will be out of business. Crystal Abers added that this will affect a lot of employers; it is an issue wherever you go.

Richard Zink stated that they may want to check with the Department of Labor since the \$15.00 Minimum wage may not affect agriculture.

### **Cooperative Extension**

Paul Bishop read a report submitted by Diane Held, Interim Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cattaraugus County (CCE).

The executive director search committee of the CCE Board is in the process of scheduling interviews with 3 candidates. Part of the interview process includes a 15 minute presentation by each candidate. Interested staff, volunteers, and the public are invited to attend these presentations. Since the candidates are just being contacted now there aren't exact times to share yet, but these presentations should be in the next few weeks. She will keep us informed of the times and it will also be posted on the website.

The Board has established a 4-H Program Committee and an Agriculture Program Committee. These committees are charged with helping CCE staff to assess County needs and identify programming in those respective areas that will meet the needs.

The 4-H program has been very active enrolling members for the year, holding clinics, fundraising, and planning for the 2016 Cattaraugus County Fair.

**Southern Tier West**

Richard Zink reported on the following:

The Meat Summit will be held at Holiday Valley. Local producers and processors will be invited and the discussion will pertain to labeling and marketing.

ARC Area Development Grant Information Workshops will be held in 3 locations; February 26<sup>th</sup> in Olean, February 23<sup>rd</sup> in Belmont and February 25<sup>th</sup> in Jamestown.

A handout was presented to the members of the Committee for a "Grant Writing Essentials" course that will be held 2 days, April 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> with a cost of \$215.00.

Southern Tier West is advertising in the Olean Times Herald this Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup> for an Economic Development Associate. The person must be self-motivated and the salary will be in the mid \$30,000 range. There will be a two stage interview process.

**Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism**

Crystal Abers reported on the following:

A loan to a farmer business has been granted.

March 10<sup>th</sup>, a *Grants.gov Registration* training will be held. We are in the process of setting up other county monthly meetings/trainings. A list will be out soon.

**OPEN FORUM**

**David Zilker** reported that the New York Farm Show will be held in Syracuse February 25<sup>th</sup> through the 27<sup>th</sup>. A Farm Bureau meeting will be held February 18<sup>th</sup> at the Ellicottville St. Paul's Lutheran Church from 11:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m. Farm Bureau members will be attending Lobby Days in Albany in the near future.

Mr. Zilker reported that the real estate business is very strong. The Amish are selling their farms and a lot of property is being sold for hunting and recreational purposes.

**Robert Neal** thanked everyone for allowing him to attend the meeting.

**Charles Couture** reported that there was a nice article in the Buffalo News on John Gibbs and his 4,050 honey bee hives.

**Jean Davis** gave a report on information obtained from the Dairy Ag News.

Tickets are available for the New York Farm Show from your Northeast Equipment Dealers or by writing to the New York Farm Show.

The New York Farm Bureau was recognized with five Awards of Excellence. The awards signify outstanding achievements in the following program areas: Education and Outreach, Leadership Development, Membership Initiative, Policy Development and Implementation, and Public Relations and Communications.

Jean discussed reconvening the Agriculture Economic Development Team within a few months.

Jean also reported that, even with the CCE currently short of staff and money, that she would like to see "Ag in the Classroom" brought back in to the schools. Discussion continued on how we could we go about this. Also, Agri-Businesses need to be present at the local job fairs. There are many diverse job opportunities under agriculture that students are unaware of.

**Crystal Abers** mentioned that Four Mile Brewing needs welders.

**Dave Zilker** mentioned the possibility of a school sponsored event such as "Ag Days". Future Farmers of America and the Ag Department at Pioneer School could assist.

**Brian Davis** mentioned that an Agricultural and Environmental Conservation Day could be coordinated together. Schools would need to be canvased about this and to see if transportation would be available.

**Barbara George** suggested that we open up the Farm Tour to more than just the Ag and Farmland Protection Board and the County Legislators.

It was suggested that Jamestown Community College and St Bonaventure students be invited to the Farm Tour.

**Charles Couture** mentioned that Jamestown Community College, Olean Campus, is opening a Manufacturing Technology Institute.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, 2016 at 1:00 pm. It was agreed that the Farmer-Neighbor Dinner Committee would meet at 12:30 pm, prior to the Board meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

David Zilker moved to adjourn with a second by Donald Telaak at 2:10 p.m. Motion carried.