

SENECA COUNTY ACRICULTURE ENHANCEMENT BOARD
MINUTES
August 1, 2007

Present were: Jeff Cassim, Greg Wadhams, Kevin Swartley, Shawn Bossard, Duane Regal, Keith Tidball, Patsy Amidon, Doug Freier, Dave Kaiser, and Judy Wright

Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm.

Keith moved to approve April minutes, Kevin seconded – approved

Reports were given –

- County Planning – Dave reported in stead – town of Lodi looking into ways to retain land from Finger Lakes Forest system, and Indian land claims.
- Real Properties – none
- Farm Bureau – reported that the Indian land claim was front and center.
- Environmental rep – no new reports – did express need to be aware of the need for AEM.
- BOS rep – echoed Indian land claim issues.
- Agri-business rep – crop report indicated higher than expected plantings of corn – expecting more for '08. Will be potash shortages – it's going to China.
- Farmer rep – Spotty weather – spotty crops. Hay and straw will be in short supply.
- CCE rep – reported that the ag district renewal process was well under way, and Albany should have information packages by the new year.
- SWCD rep – did purchase a weed harvester. The old one is being retired.

Old Business:

Discussed getting tax maps to further district renewal. Keith made motion to write a letter to Jim Bastion to obtain digital tax maps. Kevin seconded. Approved.

Keith will write a letter in regards to the town of Lodi and the Finger Lakes Forest System.

New Business:

Judy reported on Town of Fayette PDR process. Has been approved for round 11 for Ag & Mkts PDR grants. This grant is going in through the town. Doug has an application together, and is putting 365 acres on River Rd. into the process due to development pressures. The board requested that Doug leave the room in order to discuss his application. It was noted that the board supported PDR's as indicated in April's minutes. Doug has had an appraisal done on the land. NYALT (New York Ag Land Trust) has agreed to hold the rights if accepted. Greg motioned that board writes a letter in support of Doug's application to David Bane . Keith seconded. Approved.

It was noted that there should be a tie-in with PDR's and overall ag enhancement plan. Funding has been passed, but still needs a distribution mechanism. Ag & Markets will be releasing an RFP at the end of August.

Reviewed American Farmland Trust information on a farm tax credit bill that they are trying to get passed in Albany. They are looking for a letter of support. Keith motioned that the board write a letter, Patsy seconded. Shawn will look into deadlines and where it goes. Passed.

Dave reported on a potential hay processing facility at the Seneca Army Depot. 30 jobs can be created per line. Looking at high quality dry hay, health drinks from the moisture collected, and gerbil food from the dust and leaves from the baling process. Board asked Dave to see if they would be willing to present their project at the Sept meeting.

Discussed Indian land claim in regards to a resolution related to the present settlement that is under discussion at the BOS level. Kevin motioned to draft a letter that it is against the current settlement proposal that would be sent to the BOS. Keith suggested a friendly amendment – tone the letter to indicate that the Ag Enhancement Board does not support any settlement – not mentioning this current proposal. Motion currently reads: “AEB does not support settlements between local municipalities where the farmers of Seneca County live, and so-called sovereign nations.” Motion passed.

Kevin motioned to adjourn – Keith seconded – adjourned at 9:15 pm.