



# Seneca County Agriculture Enhancement Board

## SENECA COUNTY AGRICULTURE ENHANCEMENT BOARD

### MINUTES

11/7/07

Farm Members:

Julie Thompson  
Dairy

Kevin Swartley  
Field Crop, Livestock

Greg Wadhams  
Livestock

Doug Freier  
Farm Bureau  
Field Crop, Livestock

Keith Tidball  
Environment,  
Livestock

Chairman:

Jeff Cassim  
Ag Business

County Planning:

Harriet Haynes

Real Properties:

Jim Bastion

SWCD:

David Kaiser

Board of Supervisors:

Patricia Amidon

CCE:

Shawn Bossard  
Mike Dennis

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- **Call To Order:** Jeff called the meeting to order at 19:05; **Members Present:** Jeff Cassim, Greg Wadhams, Harriet Haynes, Keith Tidball, Doug Freier, Shawn Bossard, Mike Dennis, Kevin Swartley, Dave Kaiser
- **Previous Meeting Minutes:** Harriet moved to approve minutes as distributed, second by Doug, discussion, all in favor to accept minutes as distributed.
- **Ex Officio Reports**
  - County Planning Rep: Harriet, Two farmland protection grant applications sent in for Lodi and Junius during October, no word on these as of yet. It is looking like local governments will need some sort of farmland protection plan in place in order to apply for purchase of development rights (PDR's) in the future. This may be with a stand alone plan or via a comprehensive plan.
  - Real Properties Rep:
  - Farm Bureau Rep: Keith, The annual meeting was held last month and currently Farm Bureau is in the midst of the annual policy development cycle. Kevin Swartley has been elected president for 2008 and there are three new directors on the board.
  - Environmental Rep: Keith, gave an update on the Lake Friendly Farmer Program. All of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts that surround Cayuga Lake participate and together have awarded seven farms throughout the region. One of these farms is in Seneca County which is a 100% improvement over last year. Keith also gave a brief overview of the program requirements. A farm needs to be at the Tier 4 AEM level or have a CNMP if the farm is CAFO classified. Also, there is a new round of EQIP dollars available to area farmers via USDA NRCS. It appears that this round of money is geared toward the smaller non CAFO farm and that it will be less competitive than in the past.

- Board of Supervisors Rep: Dave reported that there are some things happening at depot and will keep the board up to date as things develop further.
- Agri-buisness Rep: Jeff reports record highs for all commodities, cost for inputs are rising swiftly, potash jumped \$50 in one day. Jeff advises not to wait to buy inputs as costs will only go higher. Urea is also up and can be attributed in part to the decreased value of the US dollar and the increased value of the Canadian dollar and the fact that ag products travel quite freely across the border.
- Farmer Rep: Doug emphasized similar facts as Jeff. Crop prices are at record high. Corn prices are not rising as expected however the input costs are rising such that they will overtake crop price.
- CCE Rep: Shawn shared a story on hops. Essentially hops production is centralized in central CA. This crop has been destroyed and prices have gone through the roof. A local Geneva man had sold his hops for \$5/pound and since has had offers for \$20 per pound. Now the real report: Moving closer to completing some more AEM work in the county. The Seneca SWCD has received \$6,000 that we (CCE) will utilize to keep Jim C. on board to continue work started and to expand beyond the Amish farms. The Ag District renewal process has taken a greater amount of time than expected.

- **Old Business**

- Review Criteria for PDR Applications: Shawn, brought review criteria currently being used in Cayuga County. Farms in this county need Tier 3 AEM before a PDR application can be filed. He would like the board to look over the text and checklist of their criteria and make a decision to adapt it as is or make modification. Harriet, the county needs to get the word out that they will look at applications and let the applicant know what is required on it. Keith moved that the Seneca County AEB adapt the Cayuga County criteria, second by Harriet, discussion; Harriet, make sure to include the Tier 3 AEM designation. Keith advised it is in there. Also, Cayuga County needs to be changed to Seneca County where appropriate. Keith commented that the document is laid out well using weighted criteria and noted that it is quite balanced; Jeff asked if there is maximum weight? No, whatever the greatest total yields gives the highest ranking; at this time Keith calls the question, Jeff asks all in favor of acceptance as basic plan with some revision, i.e. county name, all in favor; CCE staff will do this revision job.
- Review Central and North District Maps and Approve: Shawn distributed maps of the current districts as well as maps of the proposed north and central districts that will encompass the old districts. All the individual district maps passed out coincide with the new north district. Shawn does not have the parcels slated for removal or addition to the central district and was unable to print off maps of the old districts in this area. General discussion ensued. Dave asked about the map key. Shawn needed a motion from the AEB to accept these proposed north and central district maps.
  - Harriet, motion to merge districts 8, 4, and 1 into a single district that will reflect the additions and deletions of property as requested by land owners within the district, and that this is re-certified as District 8 (Central). Second by Keith, discussion, it will be called District 8 because the old District 8 is

furthest from renewal and will give the new proposed district the most time before this process must happen again. All in favor, carried.

- Harriet, motion to merge districts 3, 9, 10, 11, 6 into a single district that will reflect the additions and deletions of property as requested by land owners within the district, and that this is re-certified as District 6 (North). Second by Shawn, discussion, along border of the North District it appears that there is land unaccounted for that is likely farm land. Keith suggested that this should be investigated and make sure all land that needs to be in is in and that there is not something wrong with the data. The old individual districts confirm this gap in land. Kevin commented that districts can be renewed each year and we should accept districts as is and work on adding the “grey” areas ASAP; all in favor, carried.
- Keith, motion to submit final products to the county Board of Supervisors for their final approval, Second by Dave, all in favor, carried.

- **New Business**

- Farmland Protection Meeting Dec 10, Geneva: Shawn distributed a brochure from the Sustainable Ag Center for an upcoming program titled Protecting Agricultural Lands in the Finger Lakes. Harriet advised Kevin and other board members that their cost for attending would be covered. This program will get attendees up to speed on the different programs available and issues facing agriculture land protection.
- Other New Business: Noted by Keith to pursue research into the blank areas of the ag district maps which will comprise the North District so that they may be corrected and modified in 2008.

- **Adjourn**

- Motion by Keith to adjourn, second by Kevin, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 20:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Dennis  
CCE Rep

