

**Agricultural and Farmland
Protection Board Meeting
August 5, 2020**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Lawton called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.
 - A. Introductions – Introductions were made. Ms. Jardine thanked everyone for coming and Ms. Griffiths introduced T Hanson, new Executive Director of CCE Tioga.

- II. **ATTENDANCE**
 - A. Members: Elaine Jardine, Tim Lawton, T Hanson, John Lacey, Howard Visscher, Ed Hollenbeck, Terie Huseby, Lisa Bloodnick, Dale Weston, Pam Moore
 - B. Staff: Megan Griffiths
 - C. Guests: Wendy Walsh of TCSWCD, Barb Neal of CCE Tioga
 - D. Not in attendance: Ben Whitemore

- III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Chair Lawton asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Howard Visscher made the motion to approve the agenda; Terie Huseby seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Chair Lawton allowed a few minutes for everybody to look over the minutes, then asked for a motion to approve the following minutes:
 - A. February 27, 2020 - Howard. Visscher made the motion to approve the minutes; Legislator Dale Weston seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- V. **OWEGO - NICHOLS AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT 8-YEAR REVIEW** – Megan Griffiths reported the following:

This eight-year review resulted in the addition of 2,057 acres added to the district, and no land was removed. The total acreage of this district is now 27,491.

Pam Moore mentioned that some farmers in the Town of Nichols did not receive the initial notification mailing, and confirmed that if a farmer want to include land, they could do it during the January Annual Inclusion process. Elaine Jardine explained that the mailing was done by bulk-mail to save tax payers' money, and for some reason the Nichols pieces stopped at the post office in Syracuse. When Pam notified EDP staff of this problem, we did what we could do to reach out to some farmers. We will add two Engelbert Farms Organic parcels in now, those being the Jordan chicken processing location and the farm store in the Village of Nichols. And yes, any farmer can contact us for the January inclusion process. Howard Visscher also requested to add a wood

parcel that is part of his farm located on the state border that he just recently re-purchased.

Chair Lawton asked for a motion to approve Resolution #2 of 2020 to Recommend Adoption of the modification to the Owego - Nichols Agricultural District #2. Pam Moore made the motion to approve the resolution; Howard Visscher seconded the motion. All were in favor. Megan will connect with Tim Lawton, Chair, on how to sign the resolution.

VI. RIGHT TO FARM –

Elaine Jardine started the discussion by saying there have been at least a couple incidences recently of farming incompatibility with residential neighbors. Wendy Walsh asked to bring this issue to the Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board in relation to municipal Right To Farm laws. Promotion of Right To Farm Laws to our towns is a strategy listed in the 2015 County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan. Additionally, the Town of Nichols adopted an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan in 2013, and subsequently adopted a Right to Farm Law in 2014. E. Jardine scrolled through that law for Board Members. The basics of the law is to establish farming as a preferred land use in the Town, require the Real Estate Agricultural District disclosure in all sales contracts, and establish a process for mediation of issues.

It was decided by consensus that the best way to promote this to the town governing boards was to approach the Farm Bureau to ask if they would write a letter to municipal boards gauging their interest. If a municipal board is interested in such a law, EDP staff can assist them in developing one. Megan Griffiths will email the Town of Nichols Right to Farm law to all Board members.

Right to Farm highway signs- Pam Moore brought to Elaine's attention in the spring that the Nichols Town Board is interested in installing Right Farm road signs on West River Road. Elaine approached the County DPW Gary Hammond regarding this, as West River Road is a county road, and County DPW makes these types of road signs. Gary's position is not favorable. He does not want to erect more signs than already exists to not cause more sign pollution. He also does not want to promote one individual's right over another.

As Gary Hammond is not favorable on this project, Elaine Jardine cannot circumvent or overrule him. Legislator Ed Hollenbeck suggested contacting Mike Roberts, the County Legislator who is the DPW Committee Chair. He gave Pam Mike's phone number. Elaine also suggested that Pam have the Nichols Town Board document in a letter that they do want these signs on West River Road and provide it to Mike Roberts as well. Legislator Dale Weston also suggested that the Town of Nichols approach County DPW

from a road safety aspect. He offered to contact Sheriff Gary Howard to see if there is a significant history of vehicular crashes with farm equipment on roads in the county.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS –

Pam Moore inquired about the result of the farm building permit meeting in the Town of Candor. Terie Huseby, who lives in Candor, said she hasn't heard anything other than they are doing business as usual. Elaine Jardine commented that at least they are knowledgeable now that farm buildings do not require building permit or associated fees. Terie offered to do a follow up check with Town of Candor officials.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT –

With no further discussion, Chair Lawton asked for a motion to adjourn. Legislator Hollenbeck made the motion to adjourn and Howard Visscher seconded the motion. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 3:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Jardine
County Planning Director, Economic Development & Planning