

ONTARIO COUNTY
Agricultural Enhancement Board

MEETING MINUTES: February 5, 2019
Chairman Fred Lightfoote

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Supervisor Fred Lightfoot
Maria Rudzinski – for OCPD Tom Harvey
Robert McCarthy
Erin Bullock
Frank Fessner
Tucker Kautz – for OCSWCD Megan Webster

Members Excused:

Elizabeth Newbold
Tim Davis, CCE
Jason Weykman
Robin Johnson, OCRPT
Guest
Giavanna Townsend

Call to Order: Chairman Lightfoote called the Agricultural Enhancement Board (AEB) meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

November 14, 2018 Minutes: R. Johnson stated that she did not attend the November 14, 2018 meeting.

Motion made by R. Johnson: Change R. Johnson attendance to Members Excused. Seconded: F. Fessner. Motion carried. Motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Made by R. Johnson. Seconded: R. McCarthy. Motion carried. R. Johnson abstained.

Appointment of Chairperson

M. Rudzinski noted that Sup. Lightfoote has been serving as acting chair for the past year and said she asked him if he wanted to consider serving as Chairman or if the Board needed to seek another person for the position.

Sup. Lightfoote noted that he had served as Chairman prior to becoming a member of the Board of Supervisors. He stepped down as chair when he took John Champlin's place as Ex Officio representative of the Board of Supervisors when he retired. He inquired and found out he was not prohibited from serving as chairman. He said he would serve if appointed.

M. Rudzinski asked if there were anyone wanted to place a name in nomination. No additional nomination was made. Motion: Nominate Sup. Fred Lightfoote to serve as chairman for 2019. Made by: R. Johnson. Seconded: R. McCarthy. Passed unanimously.

Board Vacancy

Ben Lowe resigned from the Board because his business was expanding and he did not have the time he felt was necessary to devote to the Board. His four year term ended December 31, 2018. M. Rudzinski asked what process the Board wanted to follow to fill the vacancy.

Sup. Lightfoote noted that he would continue to seek a representative from the Mennonite farming community which the Board has long sought representation.

Qualification to Continue to Serve on the Board Question

Jason Weykman notified the Board that he has left his position at Bonna Terra Farm and started his own trucking business. He wanted to know if he can continue to serve on the Board since his position was to be held by an active farmer.

M. Rudzinski did not know if his trucking business primarily served farms. Sup. Lightfoote asked her to check with J. Weykman and consult with the County Attorney to determine if he needed to resign from the Board. She will report back to the Board.

Update: Agricultural Enhancement Plan Implementation Projects

The following table summarizes the projects' status:

Project Sponsor	2019 Agricultural Plan Implementation Projects	Status
Geneva City School District	Development of Agricultural Education Program for GCSD	Developing materials related to careers in agriculture for a career event the District is hosting. Program is targeted to 8 th grade and will continue to add grades.
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County	Adult Tractor & Farm Safety Educational Programs	CCE staff is working with the NY Center for Agriculture, Medicine & Health to develop the program's curriculum. Farm implement dealers are supporting the project. The number and dates of workshops are being determined.
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County	Update of Ontario County's Finger Lakes Agricultural Website	CCE retained Karen Strapp to redesign the fingerlakesagriculture.com website. She has prepared alternative page design templates which are being reviewed by CCE, Finger Lakes Visitor Connection and OCPD staff.
Finger Lakes Land Trust	Farmland Owner Land Protection Training Workshops	A kickoff meeting with the land trusts and OCPD will be scheduled for March.
Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District	Educational Activities to Promote Healthy Soils/Ag Practices	SWCD is looking at options for reusable signs that can be placed along fields that demonstrated health soil practices as a way to educate the public. Planning is continuing for the March 7 Healthy Soils Workshop.
Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District	Agricultural Tire Clean-Up Project	The tire cleanup project is a continuation of an ongoing District program.

Consideration of Proposed Parcels for Inclusion During the 2018 Annual Agricultural District Enrollment Period

M. Rudzinski reviewed the parcels proposed for inclusion and how they addressed the NYS criteria of being part of a farm operation that contributes the agricultural industry and containing important agricultural soils. She noted that since the state program has been in place since the late 1970's, the vast majority of active farmland is included in a District. Generally, the parcels that are submitted during this period are isolated parcels that were either missed over the years or the landowner changed their mind about inclusion. (The draft report is attached.)

M. Rudzinski said that she added the two parcels located in the Town of Phelps after the deadline after being contacted by the Phelps assessor regarding their inclusion. She said that over the years applications had been submitted after the deadline because landowners missed the deadline or became aware of it too late and she included them in the proposed submissions.

R. Johnson expressed concern that since the 30 day review period is set in NYS regulation that applications submitted during the enrollment period should be considered. The Board of Supervisors established the Nov. 1-30 enrollment period by resolution.

After Board discussion, they reached consensus that since M. Rudzinski had indicated to the landowners and the assessor that the submissions would be considered and that it had been past practice, the Board would allow the applications to be considered for 2018. The Board said it would discuss whether the November period should be changed to avoid conflicts with holidays at a subsequent meeting.

The Board considered whether each parcel met the criteria and found that they did.

Motion: The AEB has reviewed applications for parcels requesting inclusion in NYS Agricultural Districts 1 and 6 and has found that they meet the NYS Department of Agriculture and Market (NYSDAM) criteria under Article 25AA—Agricultural Districts §303b. for inclusion and recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve a resolution recommending that NYS DAM add them to Agricultural District 1 and 6. **Made by:** F. Fessner **Seconded by:** R. McCarthy. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business/Agency Reports

CCE: M. Rudzinski reported for T. Davis. He met with the new OC Sheriff Henderson and discussed the recommendations in the AEP regarding road safety and movement of farm equipment on the highways. Sheriff Henderson was very interested and looked forward to working with CCE on this.

OC SWCD: T. Kautz reported that the OC Soil and Water Conservation District:

- Received a State Ag Non-Point Source Grant for erosion control projects on 5 farms in the Mud Creek Watershed with \$200,000 in total project value.
- Is working on wrapping up soil group worksheets for the March 1 tax deadline.
- Will hold a soil health workshop for local farmers at Kings Catering on March 7th. This is a partnership activity with Ontario and Yates SWCDs and the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association. All are welcome to attend.
- Has been actively working on recycling a large volume of Ag Tires in the Town of Seneca, as well as researching small tire recycling options for farms around Ontario County.

2019 Meeting Dates

The Board will meet on the following dates. April 2, August, 20, and November 19.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by,
Maria Rudzinski, Senior Planner

