



# Schuyler County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board

105 Ninth Street, Unit 39, Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Tel: (607) 535-8211

**February 24, 2020  
Human Services Complex**

## Call to Order:

Present: John Murch, Tom Bloodgood, Michael Bergen, Brett Chedzoy, Dan Teed, Walter Adam, Rory Miller  
Staff: Kristin VanHorn  
Public: None  
Excused: Jerry Verrigni  
Absent: Michael Lausell, Ben Rawleigh

## Meeting Called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Acceptance of Minutes:** John Murch seconded by Mike Bergen. All in favor vote

## Election of Officers for 2020

- Chair: Dan Teed
  - Motion made by Tom Bloodgood, seconded by John Murch. *All in favor vote. Motion passed*
- Vice-Chair: Walter Adam
  - Motion made by Rory Miller, seconded by Mike Bergen. *All in favor vote. Motion passed*
- Secretary: Kristin VanHorn
  - Motion made by Tom Bloodgood, seconded by Dan Teed. *All in favor vote. Motion passed*

## Old Business

1. PDR Program
  - a. Provided an update on the Barber Farm, and where he was in the process. He ended up utilizing the Dairy Transition Program instead of PDR.
  - b. Joe Ottati from the Town of Hector has expressed interest in the PDR program. He requested to have a meeting set up with Finger Lakes Land Trust. The initial meeting was scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>, but he did not show up. Another meeting will be scheduled in the coming months.
2. Ag and Farmland Protection Plan
  - a. Kristin reported that LaBella had been hired to do the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan update. A public input meeting was held with the Schuyler County Farm Bureau on February 11<sup>th</sup> which was focused on the SWOT Analysis.
  - b. Board reviewed input from Farm Bureau and offered additional thoughts.
    - i. Strengths
      - Family Farms

- Abundance of Water
  - Farmers within the county have figured out how to use the topography of the land to their favor and have become successful.
  - Farming is becoming more diverse (Agri-Tourism)
  - Mennonite Farmers
  - Large Farms are getting larger (expansion)
  - Location within NYS.
- ii. Weaknesses
- Lack of skilled labor/ responsible labor
  - Limited cell service and broadband
  - Lack of zoning
  - Limited processing facilities
    - Labor
    - Regulations
    - Lack of USDA facilities – will ultimately end up hurting Farm-to-Table effort
  - NYS Regulations
  - Traffic congestion and road capacity
  - Issues around migrant workers
- iii. Threats
- Development that is occurring on high-quality farmland
  - Solar Farms
  - NYS Regulations
  - Animal Activist
- iv. Opportunities
- Agreed with everything on the Farm Bureau List of Opportunities
  - Building on U-pick industry
  - Balance Agri-Tourism – every farm is not right for this type of effort.

## New Business

### 1. 2020 Annual Ag District Enrollment

The board reviewed all of the applications for inclusion within the Schuyler County Ag District Program.

- Tom Bloodgood made the motion to approve the following parcels for enrollment within the Schuyler County Ag District #2, seconded by Mike Bergen. *All in favor vote. Motion passed*
  - 61.00-1-25.4 containing a total of 6.67 acres owned by Bernard Baker in the Town of Orange,
  - 81.00-1-40.1 containing a total of 147.44 acres owned by Richard & Carol French in the Town of Orange
  - 41.00-3-19 containing a total of 37.80 acres owned by Martin & Peggy Roberts in the Town of Reading
  - 30.00-1-13 containing a total of 50.00 acres owned by Ronald & Roxanne Perry in the Town of Tyrone
  - 50.001-23.1 containing a total of 94.83 acres owned by Steven and Susanna Burkholder in the Town of Tyrone
  - 20.00-1-15 containing a total of 3.17 acres owned by Leroy Zimmerman in the Town of Tyrone

**Other:**

1. Farm Bureau – Upcoming training in Chemung County – Kristin will email the flyer to everyone.
2. CCE – Busy winter workshop season
  - a. CCE will be hosting a Movie Night in March around creating excitement about getting into farming.
  - b. In September will be working with the Chamber to hold an “Ag Farm Tour Weekend”
3. Soil and Water: Annual Banquet is March 20<sup>th</sup>. It was noted by the group that they should be recognized for all the significant work they did this year.

**Motion to Adjourn made by Mike Bergen seconded by John Murch at 7:02 pm**

**Next Meeting: April 20, 2020, at 6:00 pm at the Human Services Building.**



# Schuyler County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board

105 Ninth Street, Unit 39, Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Tel: (607) 535-8211

**November 16, 2020**  
**Human Services Complex**

## Call to Order:

Present: John Murch, Tom Bloodgood (Virtual), Michael Bergen, Brett Chedzoy, Dan Teed,  
Staff: Kristin VanHorn  
Public: None  
Excused: Walter Adam, Michael Lausell  
Absent: Ben Rawleigh, Rory Miller, Jerry Verrigni,

## Meeting Called to order at 6:07 p.m.

**Acceptance of Minutes:** Tom Bloodgood seconded by Mike Bergen. All in favor vote

## Old Business

1. Ag and Farmland Protection Plan
  - a. Kristin gave an update on the plan update and shared the current draft of the plan
  - b. The board had a discussion about the draft plan.
    - There is a need to look back on the action tables from the old plan. – Brett will look for these.
    - Why is the plan only recommending the protection of “high-quality” farmland vs. protection of productive farmland?
    - There needs to be a note within the plan about building and continuing to advance the on-going efforts within the county and the previous plan
    - Consider including information about the workforce that our local farm’s employee and their impact on our everyday employment numbers
    - Should there be a greater discussion about the value of the Ag Assessment program
      - The largest challenge to farming is land ownership and this program helps to overcome that challenge.
      - Potential goal would be to help educate more farmers about the program as well as the general public about its value.
    - Could there be information about the potential “lobbying topics” that could be taken on by the legislature or Farm Bureau
    - Potentially include policy recommendations that could be taken up by lobbyist, the legislature, or Farm Bureau
    - Create a goal to provide more education to local Animal Control/ Code Enforcement Officers on farming practices.
    - Would like to see the forestry section beefed up
    - General Ideas
      - Check for areas that need some additional clarifiers.

- Try and shrink down a bit to make it more user friendly
- Add additional pictures

### **New Business**

1. COVID-19
  - Overall had a net increase/ benefit to our local farms
  - Livestock producers are struggling to secure slaughter dates
    - Local processes are working overtime, there are just not enough.

### **Other:**

1. Farm Bureau – No update
2. CCE – Hosted a very successful 1<sup>st</sup> Farm Trail Weekend at the end of September. Had a very good turnout and will become an annual event.
3. Soil and Water: No update
4. Membership – John Murch resigned from the board. He was recognized for his years of service and dedicated commitment to agriculture.

**Motion to Adjourn made by Brett Chedzoy seconded by John Murch at 6.57 pm**

**Next Meeting: February 22, 2021 at 6:00 pm**