

CAB MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 5, 2006

Members Present: Leonard Janiga -Chairman
Dave Muench
Jim Heinrich
Roger Gustavel
Warren Cullen, Sr.

Members Absent: Ralph Burch, Bud Pearce
Also Present for part of meeting: Councilman Fred Specht

Leonard Janiga opened the meeting @ 6:35PM.

Leonard asked for approval of the minutes from August meeting. Dave Muench recommended a grammar correction and Leonard informed that the state which he had referred to at last month's meeting was Maryland and not New Jersey as written in the minutes. The August minutes were then accepted with the two changes.

Old Business: Leonard informed the board that he and Butch Wiggler closed on their PACE purchases today. Leonard estimates that this likely makes 10 or 11 PACE purchases in the Town of Marilla so far. These two purchases added another (approximately) 186 acres into conservation easement.

Roger presented for board review, a rough draft of a letter to be sent to property owners in Marilla for the purpose of seeking new candidates for PACE. He presented a second letter for land owners who have already participated in PACE, thanking them for their participation while also seeking more qualifying land. Roger asked for suggestions and criticism from the other members.

Leonard presented a paper with information stating "NYS Tax Conservation Easement tax credit becomes reality". These tax credits have just recently become available according to Leonard. According to this information, a land owner who puts property into easement will be able to have 25% of property tax on that parcel paid (up to \$5,000). Multiple easement owners can also claim more than one tax credit (\$5,000 limit). This credit is applicable on parcels that have previously entered into conservation easement.

After review of this tax credit information, it was decided that this information regarding financial benefits should be included in the informational letter to be sent to property owners. Some other changes were also discussed

Roger mentioned that the list of property owners reviewed at last month's meeting excluded many residents right in his own neighborhood. He wondered how complete this list could be if those property owners (who have considerable

amounts of farmable land) had been left out. Leonard stated that he felt the town had concentrated their efforts on certain areas that were under more development pressure.

After discussion of what criteria to use when selecting landowners who should receive these letters, Roger suggested that it would be beneficial for all town residents to receive it. This would help inform Marilla residents of the town's commitment to conservation of agricultural land while also seeking candidates from the entire population.

Leonard said that according to Supervisor Foss, the town will likely seek only one PACE grant next year due to the county's financial situation.

Jim Heinrich questioned why the Town does not continue forth with the PACE program, even when the State and federal grants do not. Normally the Town provides 25% of the funds for a PACE purchase, with the State & Federal government providing the rest. He feels that even if State & Federal money does not become available during a fiscal year, the town's allotted money for that use. That money could be used (banked for use by the town) to make its own conservation easement purchases. Previous to this year, 2001 was the last grant money available from the state and federal government. That amount was \$500,000.00. If the town committed 25% of that amount (\$125,000) and continued that each year for the last 5 years, another \$500,000 would be available to use from the town alone. He feels that if you're committed as a town to this, it should be a full commitment.

Leonard presented a magazine article about California's dilemma with a population explosion invading the state's farmland (approx. 50,000 acres per year). He points out how this will affect the entire country because of the fact that California is the largest producer of a long list of agricultural products. It may even affect National Security because our nation is becoming more dependant on imported food, unable to produce enough for our own population. He states that last year for the first time in history, the US brought in more agriculture products than it exported.

The members discussed other tasks presented to the board by Supervisor Foss (see attached letter) such as creation of a Master Plan for the Town Park and to recommend a location for a new shelter. Money is currently available to the town for another shelter through a donation.

Jim offered information regarding some prospective plans for another trail in the park as part of a scout project.

The board discussed other duties given to them per Supervisor Foss's letter. This included finding PACE candidates, interviewing the landowners and ranking the

PACE applicants according to state guidelines. Dave Muench said that he would like to do research to find what these guidelines are so that we as a board could better determine which land parcels will be best for PACE grants. The members discussed different criteria that should make up these guidelines such as parcel size, location, soil type, etc...

Discussion went on to the 5th item on list from Supervisor Foss regarding duties specified in the code book (12-6-c and g). This involves inventory and survey of the towns natural and man made resources and working with the town board and planning board regarding plans, programs, features, rules and laws regarding environmental improvement with regard to the town's master plan.

The board feels they should continue to concentrate on the PACE letters and candidates for the time being and can work on other duties in future months.

Roger asked Councilman Specht if selecting a location of the new shelter at the Town Park is something that the board should make a priority. Councilman Specht said that he believes they would like to start construction of the shelter in the spring.

The board discussed the best way to mail out the PACE letters and to whom they should go to. It was suggested that possibly the letter could go out with a town mailing which should be coming up soon. Councilman Specht found that a town mailing is currently being processed and that we should wait for the next mailing due out around December.

Jim Heinrich moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50PM, Warren seconded the motion and all members approved.

Respectfully submitted by Roger Gustavel