

## **RESOLUTION 16-56**

### **RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING TOWN OF LANSING AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE, IDENTIFYING INITIAL STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS, APPOINTING INITIAL MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSON, AND ISSUING CHARGES TO COMMITTEE**

The following Resolution was duly presented for consideration by the Town Board:

WHEREAS, the Town Board had duly appointed, circa 1998, an Agriculture and Farmlands Protection Committee ("AFPC"), whose function was, among others, to examine the history, significance, and viability of agricultural businesses and lands within the Town, including under the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets ("NYSDAM") grant program, and to report to the Town Board upon the results of such study, analysis, and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 the AFPC submitted a formal report to the Town and to NYSDAM, which report was formally approved and accepted by NYSDAM, and which report was further accepted by the Town as part of the Town Comprehensive Plan by and under Town Law § 272-a; and

WHEREAS, although the process of planning never really ends, the AFPC was created and funded by a grant program and such committee expertly concluded its purposes and recommended, among many recommendations in support of the viability and importance of agriculture locally and regionally, that a formal agriculture committee be created to examine various regulatory updates, suggestions, right to farm laws, and programs to enhance the viability of agriculture in the Town of Lansing; and

WHEREAS, and after due deliberation upon this matter, and in respect of the adoption and unanimous approval of such AFPC report and plan by the Town Board, be it now hereby **RESOLVED** as follows:

1. There is hereby formed the Lansing Agriculture Committee (the "LAC"), which shall consist of a Chairperson and as many members as the Town Board shall periodically appoint or remove as based upon vacancies and the needs of the Town, the LAC, and the agricultural community generally. Initially the committee shall consist of at least nine (9) members composed as follows: (i) at least five (5) persons active in agriculture as a profession or as a farm or woodland products enterprise; (ii) a liaison from the Town Board; (iii) a liaison from the Planning Board; (iv) one member from the Town Planning Department or ZBA (or otherwise engaged in zoning or planning); and (v) at least one rural landowner. The Town Board, upon its own initiative or upon the request of the LAC, may change the number of committee members and may appoint any number of non-voting members or alternate members as may seem advisable. Each position shall hold a three-year term, and initial appointments shall be made with four (4) positions having terms that expire December 31, 2016, three (3) that expire upon such date in 2017, and four (4) that expire on such date in 2018. Vacancies will be filled for the unexpired portions of the vacant seat or, if at the end of the term, then for the full three years of such term.

2. The members of the committee shall receive no compensation for their services.

3. The LAC may request technical assistance or specialized advice from any resource it may deem appropriate including, but not limited to, other local residents, other Town officers or employees, Tompkins County Planning, Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation, Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, Finger Lakes Land Trust, American Farmland Trust, New York Agricultural Land Trust, and NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. However, as a citizen advisory committee, the LAC may not authorize any expenditure of Town funds or enter into any contract arrangements for the payment of goods or services by, for, on behalf of, or in the name of the Town. Funds necessary for proper LAC operation or technical assistance may be requested by the LAC from the Town Board and, in accordance with customary procedures, the Town Board may authorize such funds and approve the expenditure thereof, and execute contracts in support of approved expenditures.

4. The purpose of the LAC is to advise the Town Board and other Town agencies on matters pertaining to the preservation, promotion, and ongoing operation of agricultural activity and enterprises in the Town of Lansing, including to strengthen the agricultural economy, to improve public understanding of farming, to establish appropriate tax policies that support agriculture, and to enhance land use policies to better protect farmland. Towards these ends the following more specific guidelines and charges shall guide the activities of the LAC:

A. The Agriculture Plan for the Town should be utilized as a guide for the protection of valuable agricultural lands, in particular high quality soils that occupy the northern area of the Town, serve as a reference for planning, and as a blueprint for agricultural economic development. The Agricultural Plan should be periodically updated by the LAC to remain relevant, including by monitoring changes in agriculture and the community over time and recommending policies that benefit agriculture and achieve Town goals, including goals as defined in the Comprehensive Plan and in the NYS Agriculture and Markets Law.

B. The LAC shall regularly review, update, and prioritize agricultural strategies as relate to Town policies and local laws, including the prioritization of recommendations to help ensure that agricultural plan recommendations are addressed in a timely manner and engage relevant community and agency partners. The LAC shall further advise the Town Board regarding federal and New York State laws and regulations affecting agriculture, as well as in regards to agricultural policy in the Town, including zoning and other land use policies. When requested by the Town Board or other agencies engaged in an environmental review of any proposed private or public development or infrastructure projects, the LAC should provide input regarding impacts on agriculture and the agricultural environment.

C. The LAC shall remain informed about farming in the Town, including the scope and impact of agriculture and woodland practices affecting employment, food supplies, land, and the residents and neighborhoods of the Town, including the current and ongoing challenges, needs, and opportunities for agricultural practices and businesses in the Town. The LAC shall identify methods whereby the Town Board, County or State governments can: (i) encourage existing farmers to continue in active agricultural operation; (ii) help connect people interested in farming with available farmland in the Town of Lansing; (iii) inform local farmers of the LAC and its ability to advise and assist farms; (iv) to invite participation in LAC activities and

facilitate local presentations of educational programs by Cooperative Extension and other experts on farming and farm-related issues; (v) encourage and assist applications to farmland preservation programs and, when such applications are submitted, provide input into the review thereof.

D. The LAC shall become engaged with the Town's Comprehensive planning process and future zoning plans, and make recommendations respecting the changes to or updates of current rural and agriculture zones. The LAC shall endeavor to periodically provide a forum for the expression and collection of input for and concerns about Town policy recommendations that may impact agriculture enterprises and farmland, including: (i) to serve as a clearinghouse for relations between farm operations and the Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Code Enforcement and other agencies of Town Government; (ii) as a sounding board for farmer-neighbor or farmer-town complaints; (iii) as an intermediary to work with Tompkins County and the TC Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board to recommend properties for state-funded farmland protection grants and to monitor activities in the state designated agriculture district (Ag. District #1), including to provide input relating to the agriculture district review process; and (iv) to work with Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County and the Tompkins County Soil & Water District to develop recommendations, plans, programs, and like measures to protect and promote agriculture and the wise stewardship of agricultural resources.

E. The LAC shall identify opportunities to help promote direct marketing and commodity marketing opportunities for local farmers and to expand value-added agricultural operations in the Town.

F. The LAC shall call at least 4 meetings per calendar year, and at least one such meeting shall be a meeting to which all members of the local farming community are invited, such meeting(s) to consist of such agenda, content, discussions, training, or information as the LAC may deem relevant to its charges and work for such year or otherwise then under review. At least once per year the LAC shall provide a comprehensive review of its activities and recommendations to the Town Board. Further, the LAC's Chairperson shall serve as a liaison to the Town Board for the LAC.

G. The LAC shall undertake such other tasks as requested by the Town Board or the Planning Board relating to agriculture and its above-referenced functions and duties, including making recommendations concerning reasonable and desirable changes to this listing of responsibilities.

6. The initial members appointed to the LAC are:

Connie Wilcox, Chairperson with a term to expire December 31, 2018.  
Skip Hardy, Vice Chairperson with a term to expire December 31, 2018.  
Adam Buck, with a term to expire December 31, 2018.  
Robert Hatfield, with a term to expire December 31, 2018  
Larry Moore, with a term to expire December 31, 2017.  
Todd Eldred, with a term to expire December 31, 2017.

Norman "Lin" Davidson, with a term to expire December 31, 2017.  
Jeannine Kirby, with a term to expire December 31, 2016.  
Ken Patchen, with a term to expire December 31, 2016.  
Pete Larsen Jr., with a term to expire December 31, 2016.  
Doug Baird, with a term to expire December 31, 2016.

Andra Benson – Town Board Member Liaison  
Larry Sharpsteen, Planning Board Liaison  
Michael Long, Planning Department Liaison  
Judy Drake, Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison  
Debbie Teeter or Monica Roth, Cooperative Extension Liaison

7. Connie Wilcox be and hereby is appointed as Chairperson of the LAC until further order or direction of this Board. The LAC may adopt internal policies and procedures for conducting its business and the election of such officers as it may deem necessary, and such procedures shall be deemed by-laws of the LAC. However, the Town Board appoints the Chairperson of the LAC, but will undertake fair consideration of any recommendations for such position as submitted by the LAC or any outgoing Chairperson.

The question of adoption of such proposed Resolution was duly motioned by Councilperson Katrina Binkewicz, duly seconded by Councilperson Edward LaVigne, and put to a roll call vote with the following results:

Councilperson Katrina Binkewicz - Aye  
Councilperson Doug Dake - Aye

Councilperson Robert Cree - Aye  
Supervisor Edward LaVigne - Aye

Accordingly, the foregoing Resolution was approved, carried, and duly adopted on February 17, 2016.