

Augusta Charter Township

8021 Talladay Road

Whittaker, MI 48190

Farmland Preservation Board Minutes

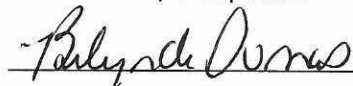
March 11, 2021

1. Sue Jantschak called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. Sue introduced Drew Vielbig, Development Manager from Ranger Power LLC who was present to give a presentation about solar farms. In person meeting was convened in the modular. Safety protocols were followed with masks and social distancing. Both outside doors were opened for ventilation. Susan announced to the board she would take minutes for Belynda who could not attend.
2. Roll Call: Present: Sue Jantschak, Dr. Sylvia Taylor, Susan Burek, Wes Mallonen, Liz Waffle. Absent: Belynda Domas
3. Unfinished business: The board checked with Liz to see if she had been able to review the previous board meeting minutes to bring her up to present since she was absent last meeting. She confirmed that she had.
4. Treasurers Report: Susan provided the current Expense and Revenue sharing report for Farmland Preservation Fund Balance. Please see attachment. The report from the Greenbelt meeting is tabled until the next meeting.
5. Solar Farm Discussion: Drew Vielbig presented short power point presentation giving an overview of how solar farms operate. He talked about Ranger Power as a company, solar farm overview, agricultural benefits, and community benefits. It was followed by a very informative question and answer period.
6. Park Committee Meeting Report: Sylvia presented her notes on the park visit that was attended by Sylvia and Wes from the FPB, and Dan Woolf on 02/09/2021. Please see attachment.
7. Other items: None.
8. Augusta Township Farmland Preservation Board meeting adjourned at 4:20pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Sue Jantschak, Chairperson



Belynda Domas, Secretary

Farmland Preservation Board Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2021, 3:00 P.M. Township Hall

Agenda

1. Call to order:
2. Public Comment.
4. Unfinished January business
5. Treasurer's and greenbelt report
6. Special order of business:
Solar Farm Discussion.
7. Park committee meeting report
8. Other items from members
9. Adjournment.

NOTES:



Reseeding snow on the north side of the woods gives way to a new season.

"Working Mission Statement": To support active farming and the rural character in Augusta Township through education, networking and implementation of the Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance.

Notes by Sylvia Taylor: Park Committee site visit: February 3, 2021.

Following a special zoom meeting of the Augusta Township Park Feasibility Committee, members Wes Mallonen, Dan Wolf and Sylvia Taylor visited the 5-acre open space site, currently under study, to evaluate opportunities following undergrowth clearing of the property.

Dan and Wes concentrated on options to facilitate vehicle access. Attention was given to balancing logistical considerations while avoiding actions that might interfere with yet to be developed site plans. Several options were considered. There was agreement that this phase should be completed before "next-step" plans are developed. Wes returned home while Dan and Sylvia surveyed the wooded area.

Sylvia concentrated on the resulting impact of the recent brushing out of understory woody plants, identification and evaluation of woody native plant species and their importance in future site planning, with attention to landscape value and interpretative use. Dan was also interested in potential trail development

Shrubs of interest: The recent understory clearing removed a dense covering of invasive shrubs, hence improving aesthetics and providing a better visual base for site development. It did, however, risk some unintended damage to desirable species. A clone of the native shrub *Xanthoxylum americanum*, a member of the Citrus family, has interpretive value as the larval host of the Black Swallowtail butterfly. Although most of the clone was cut off during clearing, several sprouts persist at the margins of the cut and can be protected for any desired future clone recovery. Elsewhere, the abundant brushed out invasive shrubs are capable of very fast recovery. They will require annual treatment by mowing, brush hogging and/or chemical treatment. Shrubs along the county drain were not brushed out or inventoried. Their Inventory with management recommendations will be needed as site plans progress.

Trees of interest: The site is dominated by second growth native tree species. Of these, Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*, Silver Maple, *Acer saccharinum*, and Red Cedar *Juniperus virginiana*, are the primary dominants. All are desirable species for park development, many are high quality specimens worth including in future landscape plans. Of these Red Cedar occurs in unusually high numbers, singly and in closed stands. This reflects their early establishment in a once sandy field on Willis Rd. (Sylvia remembers viewing their growth stages as a frequent passer-by throughout the 1970's.)

An impressively large and well formed, Shagbark Hickory, *Carya ovata*, near the NE corner of the wooded area is likely the oldest tree on the property. Together with a nearby tall White Pine, they suggest a local area of somewhat higher ground with fewer flood events and better potential for upland tree establishment. Soil samples will give better information. Other White Pines have been noticed over the years. One was found near the front of the property, seriously suppressed by adjacent Maples. Others may yet be found among tall Juniper stands.

The three of us agreed that this small land area presents many unique variables; well worth the discipline of staged, practical development for achieving a well-planned Township Park.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR AUGUSTA CHARTER TOWNSHIP
 PERIOD ENDING 03/31/2021

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2020-21		YTD BALANCE 03/31/2021	ACTIVITY FOR MONTH 03/31/2021	AVAILABLE BALANCE	% BDCY USED
		AMENDED BUDGET	NORMAL (ABNORMAL)				
Fund 251 - FARMLAND PRESERVATION FUND							
Revenues							
Dept 000							
251-000-404.000	FARMLAND CY PROPERTY TAX	25,974.00		27,570.67	0.00	(1,596.67)	106.15
251-000-405.000	PY PROPERTY TAX ADJUSTMENTS	0.00		1.25	0.00	(1.25)	100.00
251-000-441.000	LOCAL COMMUNITY STABILIZATION AUTHORITY	300.00		4.38	0.00	295.62	1.46
251-000-665.000	Interest Income	200.00		64.25	0.00	135.75	32.13
Total Dept 000		26,474.00		27,640.55	0.00	(1,166.55)	104.41
TOTAL REVENUES							
		26,474.00		27,640.55	0.00	(1,166.55)	104.41
Expenditures							
Dept 250 - FARMLAND PRESERVATION BOARD (FPB)							
251-250-727.000	Office/Operating Supplies	1,000.00		0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
Total Dept 250 - FARMLAND PRESERVATION BOARD (FPB)		1,000.00		0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES							
		1,000.00		0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
Fund 251 - FARMLAND PRESERVATION FUND:							
TOTAL REVENUES							
		26,474.00		27,640.55	0.00	(1,166.55)	104.41
TOTAL EXPENDITURES							
		1,000.00		0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES							
		25,474.00		27,640.55	0.00	(2,166.55)	108.50



RANGER
POWER



Augusta Township Farmland Preservation Board

March 11, 2021



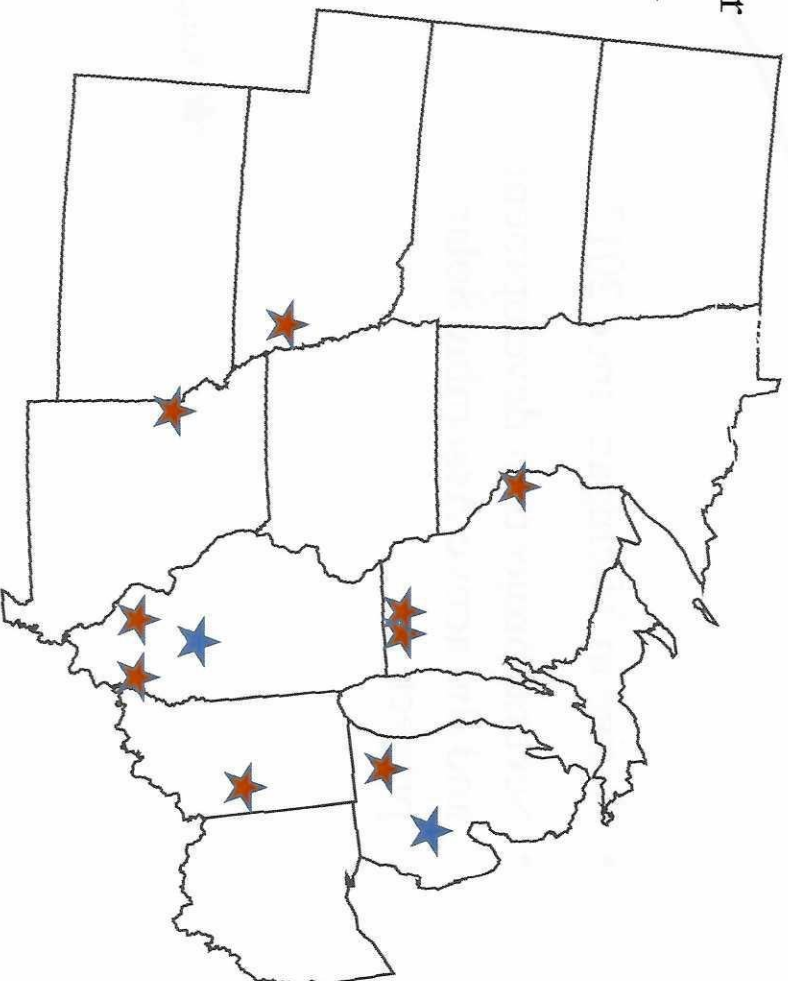
Topics

- Ranger Power
- Solar Farm Overview
- Agricultural Benefits
- Community Benefits
- Discussion & Questions



Ranger Power

- Ranger Power is a utility-scale solar development company focused on the Midwest region
- Led by an experienced team of veteran developers and environmental specialists
- Midwestern US portfolio of 30+ projects across the Midwest; over 1,800 MWs of successfully permitted projects



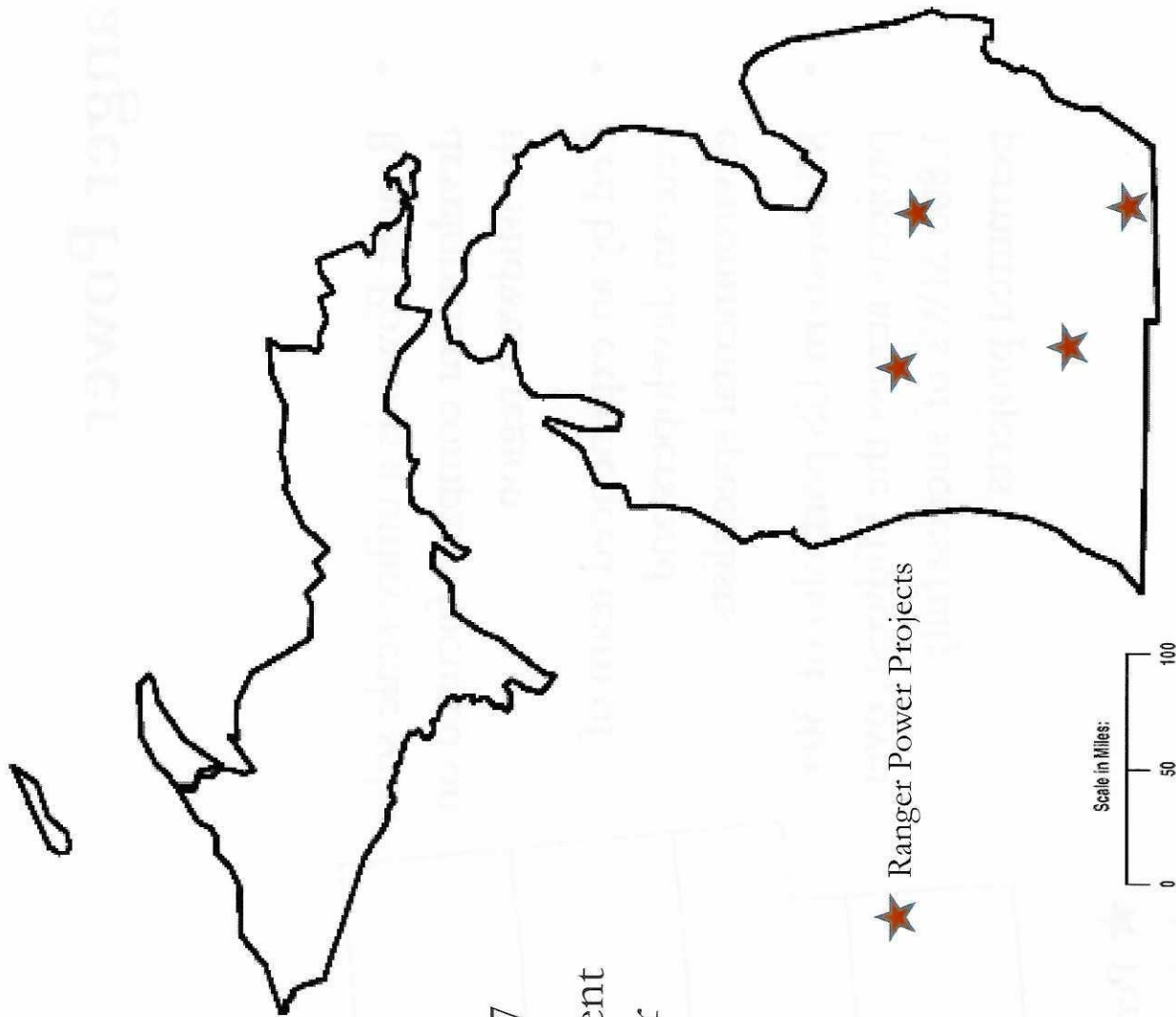
★ Permitted Projects

★ In Construction



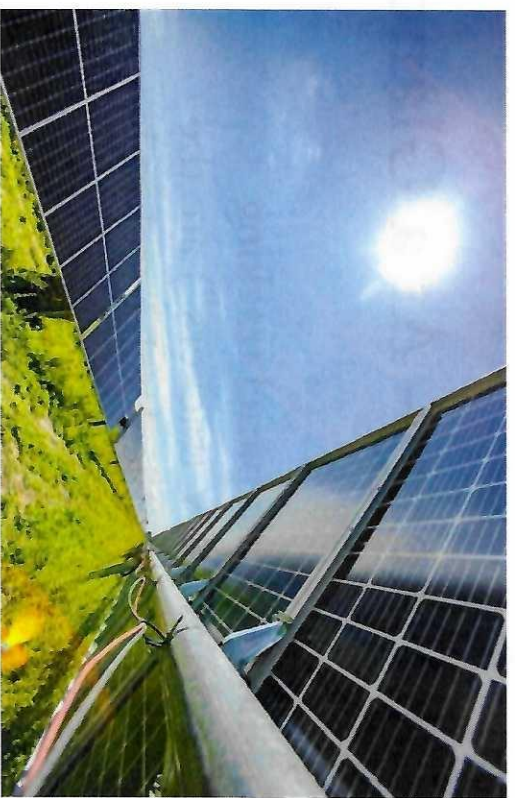
Ranger Power Activity in Michigan

- Active in Michigan since 2017
- Several projects in development and the active Assembly Solar project



Assembly Solar Project Shiawassee County, MI

- Largest Solar Project in Midwest
- Approximately 2,000 acres
- 239-Megawatt Project



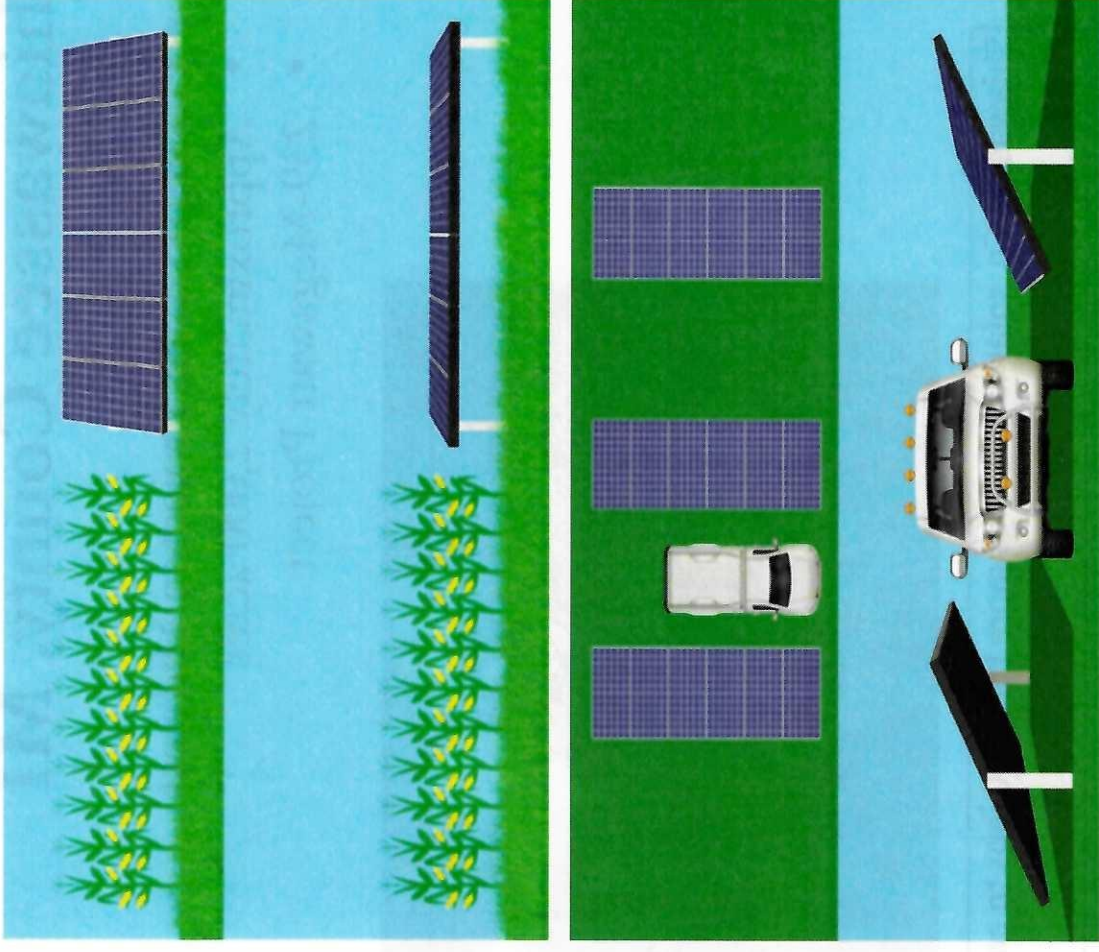
Shiawassee Co. solar farm brings more than 300 jobs to area in 2020

Whitney Bryan

6/17/20

Solar Energy- At a Glance

- Photovoltaic panel tracking systems (“PV trackers”) are the most economical solar technology available
- Solar PV projects do not produce air pollution or greenhouse gases
- Major equipment includes solar panels, steel I-beam posts, racking, electrical collector lines, inverters, a substation, and access roads, and fencing



“It looks like a vineyard!”

- An Augusta Township resident that recently attended a tour of the Assembly Project

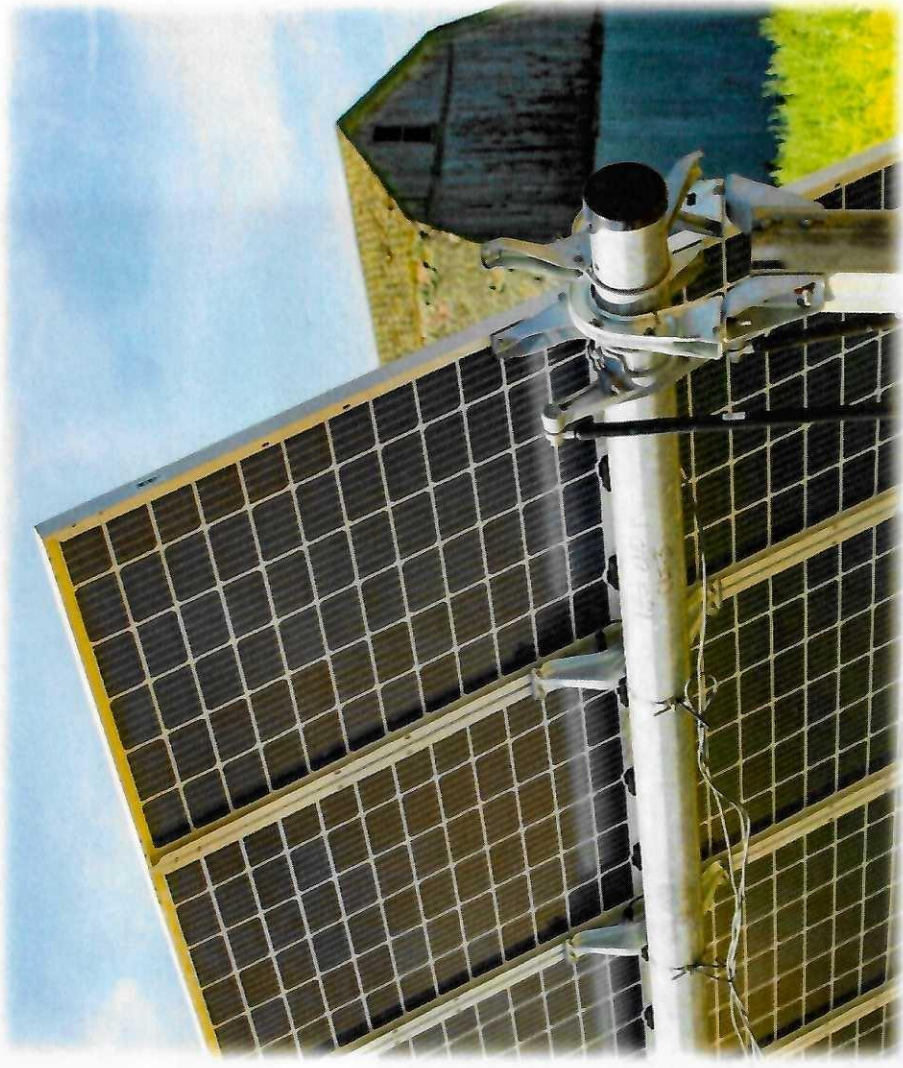


Assembly Solar, Shiawassee County, MI



Benefits to Local Farmers

- Income diversification for active Farmers to hedge against commodity prices and weather disruptions
- Long-term, reliable income
- Prevents land subdivision, preserving large tracts for future farming and multi-generational ownership
- Permanent vegetative cover improves water retention and allows the soil nutrient base to regenerate
- **Upon decommissioning, the land will be restored and again be available for agricultural use**



Assembly Solar, Shiawassee County, MI



Pollinator Habitat

- Benefits agricultural production in the community
- Solar Honey



North Star Solar, Chisago County, MN

Grass Cover Crops

- Reduce fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide use
- Reduce storm water runoff
- Allow the land to naturally restore over time
- Create opportunities for grazing



North Star Solar, Chisago County, MN

Community Benefits

- New tax revenue generated locally for Augusta Township and Washtenaw County in addition to property taxes currently paid on the land
- Solar Projects generate in-demand construction jobs, many of which can be filled locally
- Support to local farmers
- Support for local businesses





Any Questions?

Drew Vielbig

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www.rangerpower.com

