**Town hall illustration**

Concentrated animal feeding operations are proliferating in Wisconsin. Many communities consider whether to welcome them, but few have experienced the level of political intrigue that has gripped the Burnett County town of Trade Lake, where a developer wants to build the state’s largest pig farm. The community was gripped in heated debate in the months after the proposal found its way to Trade Lake Town Hall in January 2019. (Andrew Mulhearn for Wisconsin Watch)

**Jim\_Melin**

Trade Lake Town Board Chairman Jim Melin, center, is seen at a public meeting in Trade Lake, Wis., on June 13, 2019. After a developer proposed to build the state’s largest pig farm in Trade Lake, opponents sued to remove Melin from his position for alleged conflicts of interest. Melin denied any wrongdoing, and the lawsuit was rendered moot when Melin’s term ended in April 2021 and he decided not to run for office. (Screenshot courtesy of Guy Wagner)

**No Cafo sign**

A sign opposing a proposed concentrated animal feeding operation that would house thousands of pigs is shown in the town of Trade Lake in Burnett County, Wis., on April 28, 2023. (Drake White-Bergey / Wisconsin Watch)

**Agenda**

An agenda from a Jan. 10, 2019, Trade Lake, Wis., town board meeting is shown. The item that stated “Jeff Sauer-Clear View Solutions Grp-Ag Growth” was in relation to a proposed pig farm, but no other details were given in advance. Just seven people attended the meeting.

**Pahl**

Joanne and Howard Pahl are photographed outside their home in the town of Trade Lake in Burnett County, Wis., on April 30, 2023. The pair of retirees are members — and Howard is the president — of the nonprofit advocacy group KnowCAFOs, which opposes a proposal to construct a large pig farm in the area. (Drake White-Bergey / Wisconsin Watch)

**Town Hall 2**

Trade Lake Town Hall is shown in Burnett County, Wis., on April 28, 2023. (Drake White-Bergey / Wisconsin Watch)

**Andy Marshall**

Trial lawyer Andy Marshall is photographed on his property in the town of Trade Lake in Burnett County, Wis., on April 30, 2023. Marshall represented residents in a lawsuit that accused Trade Lake Town Board Chairman Jim Melin of backroom dealings to facilitate construction of the state’s largest pig farm. (Drake White-Bergey / Wisconsin Watch)

**Proposed site**

The site of a proposed concentrated animal feeding operation, or CAFO, is shown in the Burnett County, Wis., town of Trade Lake on April 28, 2023. (Drake White-Bergey / Wisconsin Watch)