

Minutes from Agricultural Commission Meeting

Date: 27 Dec 2007

Place: W. Barnstable Fire House

Attendance:

Hank Farnham. Liaison

Tim Friary

Bill Plettner

David Ross

Hilary Sandler

Leslie Spencer

Cheryl Lekstrom, guest

Susan Fernald, guest

Hilary Sandler, submitting minutes for Mary Knoble, not in attendance. Bill Plettner took minutes until voted in as Chair. These minutes started at 7:15 PM. Apologies made in advance for name misspellings.

Meeting called to order by Hank Farnham, Liaison to Barnstable Town Council. Hank reviewed Open Meeting Law, Code of Ethics, parliamentary procedure and the Administrative Code for the Ag. Com.

Hank nominated Bill Plettner to be Chairman, noting that all officers need to be reappointed by June 30 every year.

Motion was made by D. Ross, 2nd by L. Spencer, unanimous vote

Taking over as Chairman, B. Plettner asked for nominations for Secretary. Mary Knoble, not in attendance, had sent email offering to be Secretary. Motion was made by L. Spencer, 2nd by H. Sandler, vote was unanimous.

A request was made to elect a Vice Chairman and D. Ross moved to elect H. Sandler. 2nd by L. Spencer, vote was unanimous.

Discussion of Future projects for the Ag Com

1. Aquaculture issues perhaps dealing with floating oyster bags and similar. Scott Soares was mentioned as potential resource.
2. Develop a Right-to-Farm law for Barnstable.
3. Encourage (more) sustainable farming in town, perhaps targeting town-owned land as well as private land.

4. Catalog parcels of land that could be leased by the town. GIS currently notes land in Chapter 61. Sue Guiducci (Dartmouth Ag Com) was mentioned as a potential resource as well as Irene Winkler (RC&D).
5. Find ways to capitalize on the economics of local farming.
6. Catalog farms and farmers in Barnstable. Contact First Pioneer (John Jaffe); they have methods to ID farmers, which can vary from town to town. Grant monies can be procured from American Farmland Trust (Chris Cauflin) to produce economic analysis of the value of Ag to the town.
7. Resolves some issues around farm stand sales.
8. Discuss and perhaps find easier ways to handle annual filing of 61A.
9. Develop support strategies for farmers who are struggling to pay taxes.

Other Business

Members were encouraged to check out the Mass Ag Commission web site
www.massagcom.org

Discussion on setting a meeting date and place. WBF house was considered convenient. Bill to ck into availability of perhaps meeting on Wednesday, if space is available.

No firm date was set for the next meeting as there were several conflicts and a meeting space was unknown.

Motion to adjourn made by Hilary and seconded by Leslie. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.