

MINUTES
AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE
REMOTE PARTICIPATION
September 16, 2020

OPENING: The remote Zoom meeting is being held in pursuant to the Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A, 18 and the Governor's March 15, 2020 order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place.

ATTENDANCE

Burt Hansen, Chairman	Present
Maryssa Cook-Obregon, Vice Chairman	Present
Dennis Clark, Commissioner	Present
Dan Cook, Commissioner	Present
Zach Barnett, Commissioner	Present
Ron Cecchini, Commissioner	Present
Brett Colson, Commissioner	Absent
Lenita Bober, Commissioner	Absent
Tammy Ciak-Bissaillon, Commissioner	Present
Diana Flynn, Alternate Commissioner	Absent

7:00 pm: Chairman Hansen opened the meeting announced the meeting date, Commissioners Roll Call attendance, that the meeting was being recorded, and noted the regulations associated with a remote meeting.

MINUTES

Commissioner Clark made a motion to table the minutes of July 15, and August 19, 2020. Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

Burt Hansen – yes	Dan Cook - yes
Maryssa Cook-Obregon – yes	Tammy Ciak-Bissaillon - yes
Dennis Clark – yes	Ron Cecchini – yes
Zach Barnett – yes	

Farming In Wetland Resource Areas Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon contacted the NRCS and received a document detailing the Agricultural exemptions and wetlands. Even if the provisions allow farmers to work within wetland areas, they should still contact the Conservation Commission to relate their intentions. Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon will review the 132 page document and relate specific information to the Commissioners at the next scheduled meeting.

Hilltop Farm – Suffield, CT The owners of Hilltop Farm expressed their appreciation with the attendance of the Southwick Agricultural Commission. The Commissioners will explore other options for site visits such as Blossoming Acres for an exchange of ideas.

Right to Farm Vice Chair Maryssa Cook-Obregon reviewed placement of the signs and determined that 11 signs will be needed to be placed throughout the Town. Randy Brown, DPW Director, agreed to the installation. Once a quotation is received, a purchase order will be created and the signs will be ordered.

APR Signs Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon received a list from Boston of the APR farms in Southwick. The farm owners will be contacted to determine if they are interested in posting a sign on their property. The signs will be available to farms that have their farm in the APR Program. Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon will order 10 signs where will be sent at no charge from the Kestrel Land Trust.

Farm Brochure Commissioner Tammy Ciak-Bissaillon suggested that a farm in Southwick be spotlighted on the Agricultural Committee's Face book page and will contact farmers to determine their interest. Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon will discuss uploading a list with Commissioner Colson.

Sodom Mountain Farm Commissioners Cecchini and Cook will contact the owner to determine if there is any interest in land preservation.

Community Garden Chairman Hansen stated that the crops are drying up due to the recent drought which also caused the well to go dry. The Well Digger, Richie Reed, will be contacted to determine if the well can be drilled deeper to produce water for the next growing season. Chairman Hansen will gather a work party to help with replacing the fence posts. Tilling will begin at the end of October or early November.

Land Preservation Properties Vice Chairman Maryssa Cook-Obregon again met with the owners of the property on Mort Vining Road. There has been no further progress on a determination relative to preservation by the owners at this time.

There are approximately 80 acres of land behind Commissioner Cook's residence on Tannery Road. The owner may be interested in preservation. The land which is currently in Chapter 61A is on Tannery Road. The property has been up for sale for some time, and the Town will have a Right of First Refusal. Commissioner Cook will talk to the property owner.

Commissioner Clark will again contact Mr. Feldman to determine his interest in putting his land in preservation.

The Kellogg property may be more of a wild habitat issue for preservation. There is also a right-of-way and a bridge crossing that may also be an issue.

275 Granville Road Right of First Refusal is one of two building lots for sale. The property has a Purchase and Sale in place at this time. There is another Prifti parcel on Fred Jackson Road that connects with Kline Road that may be of interest for APR. Commissioner Clark made a motion to declare the 275 Granville Road property as no interest in perusing the Right of First Refusal. The roll call vote is as follows:

Burt Hansen – yes

Dan Cook - yes

Maryssa Cook-Obregon – yes

Tammy Ciak-Bissaillon - yes

Dennis Clark – yes

Ron Cecchini – yes

Zach Barnett – yes

Farm Scape Commissioners Colson and Barnett have not as of this meeting been able to take pictures throughout the Town for a visual 250 Celebration event.

Lake Management Committee Mr. Norman Cheever or Mrs. Pratt from the LMC may be able to attend the next scheduled Agricultural Committee meeting to discuss the usage of irrigation from Congamond Lakes.

cc:

Select Board

Town Clerk

Burt Hansen, Chairman

Maryssa Cook-Obregon, Vice Chairman

Dennis Clark, Commissioner

Dan Cook, Commissioner

Zach Barnett, Commissioner

Tammy Ciak-Bissaillon, Commissioner

As there was no further business to discuss, Chairman Hansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Commissioner Barnett seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

The next scheduled meeting of the Agricultural Commission is October 7, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Nilsson

Ron Cecchini, Commissioner

Brett Colson, Commissioner

Lenita Bober, Commissioner

Diana Flynn, Alternate Commissioner

Date