

**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
JUNE 24, 2008 AT 7:30 PM IN COA CONFERENCE ROOM
LITTLETON TOWN OFFICES, 37 SHATTUCK STREET**

Members Present: Ken Banks, Vice-Chairperson
Jill Brown
Alex Campbell
Linda Cantillon, Clerk
Jamie Cruz, Chairperson
Amanda DeFreest
John Mitchell
Dan Pickard

Members Absent: Janet Dutcher
Peter Yapp

Also Present: Vera Cohen
Elaine-Braun Keller (8:30)
Alex McCurdy (8:45)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

The minutes from the previous meeting were unavailable; they will be approved (along with other outstanding minutes) at our next meeting. Ken Banks recorded the minutes and will have them available at that time.

Progress from Committee Members

Jill Brown – Signs: Jill has been working on signs for directing people toward our farmstands when they come off the highways. She has met with people from Littleton Millworks, Littleton Lumber and has made other contacts. Jill designed a sign. Suggestions were made such as contacting Nashoba Tech, artists in the area, where to get material, etc. Jill also contacted people from the Dept of Agriculture, Mass Highway Cisco and other entities. She was told that there are plans at the State level for funding for signs such as “Welcome to a Right to Farm Community.”

Jill has offered to paint the signs herself. She has checked in with the Building Department on the applicability of the sign bylaw and said that the signs should be fine. Dan Pickard suggested checking the dimensions again. Jill will forward ideas for the wording around.

Also, Ken Banks will check with Nashoba Tech for availability of students who might be interested in helping with the signs. Vera Cohen said she would help in any way.

John Mitchell – Newspaper Articles: John has been in touch with the *Independent* and the editor has agreed to John's request to write regularly on agricultural matters for the newspaper. It might be titled, "Eco Log."

John also reported that he has been in contact with the Oak Meadow Montessori School in Littleton. The school is interested and quite enthusiastic about getting the children involved in growing local produce. They are interested in working/leasing a piece of farmland in Littleton. This would involve parents and teachers, too. John will remain in contact with them.

Alex Campbell – Cable Shows: Alex has made contact with all of the appropriate parties at the cable company to film farms, etc. He stated that Bob Spinzola is ready to go and waiting for ideas. Linda Cantillon will call one of the local farms to see if they'll agree to allow filming.

Alex also mentioned "horse-powered" farming and that there's a meeting in Vermont on this. It was suggested that he contact Littleton Climate Action Network to exchange information.

Linda Cantillon/Janet Dutcher – Calendar and Buy Local Campaign: The gift fund has been established by the Selectmen and the Town Accountant. Letters have been addressed to local businesses asking for donations for these two projects and will be mailed out this week. Andrew Harrington (a young photographer) has offered to donate his time and is out in the community taking pictures. The target date is Oct/Nov for final printing and to have in stores to be sold.

Ken Banks – Media/Filming: Ken will check with Nashoba Tech to see if there are students interested in filming some farms. Ken also suggested a calendar of events for the paper and/or website. Ken will re-schedule our presentation to the BOS for the fall.

Dan Pickard – September Fay Park Fair: Dan has volunteered to bring his tractor and a calf to the fair. The liability question has been answered from the Town Administrator and Dan will review that information. Dan has also taken some pictures for the fair. We will look into having panels to display the pictures. Linda will see if the Historical Society will lend pictures for the event. The plans are to have a presence at the fair, possibly brochures and general information on farming and farming in Littleton.

Jamie Cruz – September Fay Park Fair: Jamie has agreed to organize/coordinate this. She is looking into various display material. The coordinate will involve pictures, tables, tent, signs, maps, etc.

Dan Pickard needs to review the basic liability issues; Alex McCurdy thought that the specific town needs to be mentioned in one's own insurance policy.

Mandy DeFreest - *Agriculture in the Classroom*: Mandy and Jamie have spoken with some teachers; Mandy has had conversations with Mr. O'Connell from the high school; Jamie has been in communication with Mrs. Harvey regarding the third and fourth graders.

Grower's Market: Elaine Braun-Keller

Elaine is a Littleton resident who lives in Littleton and is interested in forming a Grower's market. She has been involved with farming; raises chickens and produce on her small farm on Boxboro Road. Elaine presented a well thought out proposal with suggestions and ideas. She provided a list of towns that have these markets as well.

Members discussed the various aspects of a grower's market. Jamie noted the difficulty in obtaining permits for the food; things are becoming more strict; higher standards, etc. Jamie also said that other towns would have to be invited in, etc. Linda will look into the permitting through Nashoba Associated Boards of Health in Ayer.

Dan suggested doing this once or twice a year, maybe at the fairs.

The committee thanked Ms. Keller.

Permanent Preservation of Farmland

The selectmen have voted and adopted their goals for the upcoming year. Selectman Alex McCurdy will attend an upcoming meeting to discuss one of his goals of permanently protecting a piece of agricultural land in a prominent location in Littleton. He will be scheduled to attend our next meeting to discuss this proposal.

Next Meetings

Ken Banks asked that the next four meetings be posted ahead of time. The next meetings will be held on July 15, August 19, September 16 and October 21. Linda will send that in to the Town Clerk.

Ken Banks moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 pm; motion seconded by Dan Pickard; vote: aye, unanimous.

Minutes submitted by Linda Cantillon