

RECV'D: Office of the Town Clerk Jan 19, 2016 4:10pm

Durham Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 15th, 2015
7:00 PM, 3RD Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Members: Fred Mastele Roger Passavant, Warren Herzig, Melissa Dziurgot

Alternates: Dick Porter, Joe Pasquale

Seating: Joe Pasquale was seated for David Zemelsky

1. Meeting was called to order by Fred Mastele at 7:06 pm and roll call was taken.
2. Motion was made by Joe Pasquale and seconded by Melissa Dziurgot to accept the December 15th 2015 Meeting Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Motion was made by Warren Herzig and seconded by Roger Passavant to accept the November 17th, 2015 Meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Public Comment - there was no public comment.
5. Old Business

Durham Grown Signs

Fred inquired whether Roger had been reimbursed for the signs yet. Roger stated that he had, but that he was not happy with a notation the Board of Selectmen had put on the check - "signed under protest." Dick reported that Roger had brought the matter up at the last Board of Selectmen meeting and that Laura had mentioned her concerns that the Ag Commission had installed the signs without permission. Roger gave the BOS a handout showing that the money in question had been given to a local charity. Roger and Dick once again stated their opinion that "it was better to get the job done and ask for forgiveness rather than permission."

Guilford Road Properties

A majority of the Commission members had attended a site walk on these properties on Tuesday, November 24th, 2015. All there were in agreement with what maintenance should occur on the Properties. At this evening's meeting, the Commission discussed a proposed "shopping list" of items to be included in the Maintenance Plan that the AgComm will give to the Board of Selectmen. Some of the items were: cleanup of "invasives," cleanup of existing

Town debris, removal of Town silt fence, removal of neighborhood debris, and cleanup of trees along Route 77 roadside. It was also suggested that we request help from the BOS regarding the following: notification of neighbors, boundary markers, certified survey, and budgetary questions.

Coginchaug River

Warren reported that he has been extremely busy with Christmas tree season and was unable to attend the last Coginchaug meeting. He will try to get an update for the Commission.

Plan of Conservation and Development

Joe reported that Planning and Zoning had yet to take up the topic of the POCD. Joe continued to stress the importance of a POCD and thought the Ag Commission should start work on its "Chapter" sooner rather than later. He said he would try to pick out agricultural points of interest from the existing Planning and Zoning regulations. He also felt it would be a good idea to involve the "River Cog" planner to help in developing the Commission's POCD chapter. This discussion of the Ag Commission POCD then led into a discussion of businesses on agricultural properties such as vineyards, wineries and farm stands, and regulations governing these entities.

Deerfield Farm

Dick and Roger reported on what they had heard at the last Board of Selectmen meeting regarding the newly installed UV water filtration system at Deerfield Farm. It was reported there that the cost to replace the filter cartridge was approximately \$10.00 per month and to replace the UV bulb once a year was approximately \$40.00. The Ag Commission felt any expense to the tenant was unacceptable!

A motion was made by Fred Mastele and seconded by Warren Herzig as follows: "The Ag Commission strongly believes that the Town of Durham/Landlord is responsible for providing Deerfield Farm/the Tenant with potable water and should therefore pay all maintenance expenses related to the UV water filtration system recently installed at Deerfield Farm." The motion passed unanimously.

6. New Business

Meeting Dates

A motion was made by Joe Pasquale and seconded by Melissa Dziurgot to approve the amended meeting dates for 2016. The dates are as follows: January 19th, February 16th, March 15th, April 19th, May 17th, June 21st, July 19th, August 16th, October 18th, November 15th and December 20th. No meeting in September due to proximity to Durham Fair date. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers

Fred brought up the topic of Officers for the upcoming year. A motion was made by Joe Pasquale and seconded by Warren Herzig - "to leave Officers as is for the 2016 year." The motion passed unanimously (with an "ugh" from the Secretary).

Farm Bureau / Melissa Report

Melissa reported that she had presented a resolution to the Connecticut Farm Bureau. The resolution stated that "Hay, grain and bedding for livestock should not be taxed." She reported that this resolution had passed the CT Farm Bureau, which allows the CT Farm Bureau to advocate for, as well as take an official position on, this matter. Melissa asked if Roger's father, Pierre, had heard back from Laura yet - in regards to the Ag Commission's meeting with Board of Selectmen members in August 2015 regarding farm taxation issues.

7. Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Melissa Dziurgot and seconded by Joe Pasquale. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 pm.