

**Town of Chester
Agricultural Commission
Approved Minutes
March 27, 2018**

Attendance

Members Present:

Gary Van Geyte, Chairman
Chuck Myette, Treasurer
Cindy LeBlanc
Tiffany Coroka

Absent:

Richard Trask, Selectman Liaison
Jeff Geary

Call to Order

Chairman Van Geyte called the meeting of the Chester Agricultural Commission to order at 7:05 pm on Tuesday, March 27, 2018.

Old Business

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

January 23, 2018: Mr. Myette motioned to approve the minutes, as written. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion, all in favor, so moved.

Treasurer's Report (Chuck)

Mr. Myette reported that they have a \$600 budget and as of this date only \$100 had been spent for the daffodils. The budget for the next year was discussed. Mr. Myette stated that he required invoices for donations and that he cannot take out the other \$100 until he receives an invoice.

Mr. Myette reported that there was \$303.93 in the checking account.

Mrs. LeBlanc motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report as stated. Ms. Coroka seconded her motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Daffodils

Chairman Van Geyte reported that the daffodils at Edwards Mill Dam were not planted yet due to the construction and they could be planted in the Spring at Spring Hill Farm.

Foodscaping Class

Mrs. LeBlanc attended a NOFA Winter conference along with several workshops to learn more about foodscaping, which she described as the growing of heirloom plants with landscaping. Mrs. LeBlanc was looking for a place to present it and Chairman Van Geyte recommended Spring Hill Farm. Chairman Van Geyte recommended making a presentation to the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee to allow them to do the class. Mr. Myette stated that they had plenty of money in the budget to do this and could raise more. Mrs. LeBlanc suggested that while this was intended to be a one-day class on foodscaping it could evolve into a series of classes. Mrs. LeBlanc requested that the class should happen sometime in May when it's the best time for planting. Ms. Coroka suggested asking around for plant donations to save money. The Commission agreed that it would benefit both the agricultural and educational elements as well as making the house look more aesthetically pleasing.

Mrs. LeBlanc motioned to present the proposal for the foodscaping class to be done at Spring Hill Farm to the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee and the BOS. Mr. Myette seconded her motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Ms. Coroka stated that the next Spring Hill Farm Advisory Meeting would be on April 2nd and Mrs. LeBlanc should attend then.

Local Food Guide

Ms. Coroka said that she had seen a Local Food Guide for Coos County and that it was very attractive for generating interest and showing where the local farms were. In addition to making one for Chester, they should have one for Rockingham County, which could be pitched to UNH Extension.

Ms. Coroka gave as an example that if they had a Farmer's Market at Spring Hill Farm, no one would even know where that was, so this would also benefit.

Chairman Van Geyte stated that he would email UNH to see if they have anything like that already.

Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee

Ms. Coroka stated that she and Mr. Myette were working on the decision criteria for the Advisory Committee meeting. The meetings were progressing slowly with a lot of similar ideas. There was a ladies meeting held last weekend and the consensus was that people were leaning toward education. Mr. Myette said that the committee was a good avenue for the Agricultural Commission which could do all sorts of things for this farm, but going into this year the Committee still hasn't finalized a mission statement.

Non-Public Session 91-A:3 II(c)

Chairman Van Geyte motioned to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II(c) (matters which if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board). Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion, with all in favor, so moved.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 8:04 pm.

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 8:14 pm.

Chairman Van Geyte motioned to seal the minutes. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Resignations & Appointment

Mr. Van Geyte offered his resignation as Chairman of the Commission, which was accepted and asked if any other member would like to serve.

Mr. Myette motioned to appoint Ms. Coroka as Chair of the Agricultural Commission. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion, with all in favor, and Ms. Coroka accepting the appointment, so moved.

Town Fair

Mrs. LeBlanc expressed concerns about participation in the upcoming Town Fair. Mr. Van Geyte agreed that Cow Plop Bingo would be too much of an effort to do again. Mr. Myette stated that the best way to deal with the lack of participation would be to make it known that they want more members and possibly approach the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee members. Ms. Coroka stated that she sees a bridge between the Advisory, Conservation and Agricultural boards.

Mr. Myette stated that the Historical Society could mention Spring Hill Farm and educate the younger people and do the history on Miss Church and the farm. Ms. Coroka stated that this would be the year to revamp the Commission, if any.

Ms. Coroka suggested a raffle with Food Bounty Baskets.

Adjournment

Mr. Myette motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion. All in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer,
Recording Secretary