

**Town of Chester Agricultural
Commission Meeting Tuesday,
January 26, 2016
Municipal
Complex
Approved
Minutes**

I Preliminaries

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Van Geyte called the meeting of the Town of Chester Agricultural Commission to order at 7:12 pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Members present:

Jodi Boeske, Alternate

Steve Boeske

Patrick Connelly

Chuck Myette, Vice Chair

Gary Van Geyte, Chair

Cindy LeBlanc

Members

absent:

Jeff

Geary

Stephen Landau, Selectman Liaison (ex-officio)

II. New Business

2.1 Resignation of Member

Chairman Van Geyte informed the Commission that he received a resignation letter from Patrick Connelly resigning as a member of the Agricultural Commission. Mr. Connelly's family will be moving to California.

2.2 Upcoming Year Goals and Plans

Chairman Van Geyte stated that as this is the first meeting of 2016 for the Agricultural Commission the agenda is light and it will be used to determine a good list of ideas of what the Commission would like to accomplish this year. The following were the specific areas of discussion relative to the plans for the 2016 year:

- [Town Fair
 - o The Commission will do the Town Fair again.

- [Facebook Page
 - o Chairman Van Geyte has been working on a facebook page for the Agricultural

- 46 Commission. He is going to reach out to Pat at the BOS office to ask if there is a town
- 48 email address available for him to use as a contact for the facebook account.
- 50 The Commission feels the Facebook page will allow for communication, inquiry from
websites. the public and an area to post recipes, events and how to videos. It will also
allow the Agricultural Commission to reach the community and point them to information
- 52 This facebook page will allow local farms to post and advertise as well.
- Chairman Van Geyte asked the Commission to provide him with some good photographs for him to choose from to have as the profile page and to add to the page for viewing.

[Soap Class for the Town

- Ms. Boeske is heading up the event to plan a soap making class. She stated there is a family in Amherst that has goats and would be interested in hosting a soap making class.
- This class would be a weekend event held on a Saturday and Sunday.
- The event is estimated to be held in April.
- This event will be advertised in the Tri Town News once the dates are confirmed.

[Canning Class

- The previous canning class last year was a success.
- The Commission would like to make it an annual event.
- The canning class could include jams.

[Educate the public to buy local and fresh food

- The Commission would like to further educate the public to buy local and fresh food.
 - It is noted that the Commission should also educate the public on how to use the extra including pickling.
- It is noted that the value of the Commission is to educate the public.

After further discussion the commission will be moving forward with the following:

- [First Quarter: Facebook page
- [Second Quarter: Soap Making (April)
- [Third Quarter: Jams/Canning (June)
- [Fourth Quarter: Pickling (August)

The Commission discussed the possibility of beekeeping or hobbies of interest that the extension may offer to include as part of the Agricultural events. Another option that was discussed was on how to dry and store herbs. They will research this further with the herb society and may utilize the facebook page to share information regarding this or have pamphlets for public use.

Ms. LeBlanc inquired about the old meeting minutes and their location. She feels that reviewing the old minutes may trigger some other ideas that may have been brought up in the past and were forgotten.

Chairman Van Geyte will assist in directing Ms. LeBlanc on how to get the meeting minutes.

Mr. Connelly informed the Commission that last year the school had a vegetable garden that the school felt was a success. Mr. Connelly had provided composting for the school. Chairman Van Geyte will reach out to the school to make sure their needs are met this coming year to continue the vegetable garden again.

The Commission also felt that a composting class may be a good idea to educate the public on how to compost correctly.

III New Business

3.1 Mail

Chairman Van Geyte presented the Commission with the mail received. One item was from the NH Agricultural Classroom looking for a donation. The other item was from the NH Food Alliance. This was information regarding a food system and its purpose to provide education, marketability, land and sea and availability. They provided an in depth pamphlet and ability to access a "pdf" version for view. The Commission will review this further and possibly may contact them to discuss partnering with them.

3.2 Budget

The Commission reviewed the 2015-16 budget and agreed to present the same budget for the 2016-17 year. This will be reviewed with the BOS on February 4, 2016. Chairman Van Geyte will attend the BOS

meeting to present the proposed budget.

3.3 Badges

Chairman Van Geyte informed the Commission that all members need to acquire a badge. All members will go to the Police Chief for their badges prior to the March 22, 2016 meeting.

IV. Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2016 at 7:00 pm. The Commission agreed that the meetings will be every other month unless there are items that arise that need to be addressed sooner.

Mr. Connelly moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Myette seconded. All in favor, so moved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

*Recording
Secretary,
Michelle
Trodella*