

**Town of Chester
Agricultural Commission
Approved Minutes
January 23, 2018**

Attendance

Members Present:

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

Absent:

Richard Trask, Selectman Liaison
Jeff Geary

Call to Order

Chairman Van Geyte called the meeting of the Chester Agricultural Commission to order at 7:09 pm on Tuesday, January 23, 2018.

Old Business

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

September 26, 2017: Mr. Myette motioned to approve the minutes, as written. Ms. Coroka seconded his motion, all in favor, so moved.

Treasurer's Report (Chuck)

Mr. Myette reported that they have a \$700 budget and as of this date only \$100 had been spent for the daffodils. The budget for the next year was discussed. The Agricultural Committee is scheduled to present their budget with the Board of Selectman on February 8, 2018.

Daffodils

Chairman Van Geyte reported that they need volunteers to plant the daffodils at Edwards Mill Dam and the construction had caused some problems with getting them planted. Mr. Myette asked if the daffodils could be planted in the Spring. Mrs. LeBlanc advised that they could be but they wouldn't exactly bloom.

Foodscaping Class

Distribution of a circular to local farms was discussed to draw more interest. Mrs. LeBlanc is still interested in doing the class.

Right to Farm Law (as it applies to helping small resident farms/animal husbandry)

Ms. Coroka spoke to her frustration recently with trying to build a shed for her horse and finding out she lacks the required frontage. Both she and Chairman Van Geyte stated that they found the right to farm law, as it applied to other zoning ordinances, a bit confusing. Mr. Myette explained that the right to farm ordinance gives you the right for the purpose of farming but you still have to comply with zoning ordinances as they relate to structures and setbacks and so forth.

Volunteers Needed

Chairman Van Geyte reported that he had posted on Facebook that he was looking for volunteers. Mrs. LeBlanc asked how many meetings a member would have to be absent for, prior to being terminated from the board. Chairman Van Geyte advised that there was not a definite number. Mrs. LeBlanc voiced her frustration with how others give up their time to be here and also with the Town Fair and that if you want to be on the board you should show up and volunteer and show support. Mrs. LeBlanc stated that they needed more help with the Town Fair. Mr. Myette stated that another problem is that they are lacking farmers in the group. Mr. Myette stated that the attendance Agriculture had at their first meeting was great and hasn't seen the turnout since. Chairman Van Geyte stated that without volunteer participation we have nothing. Ms. Coroka noticed that there were a number of new farmers in town and she would make efforts to recruit some of them. Mr. Myette revisited the plan of having a farmers market at the Wason Pond barn. Mrs. LeBlanc mentioned September Farm as a model for the farmers market.

Chairman Van Geyte reminded everyone that they still had a budget for postage and could mail out letters to get people interested again. Chairman Van Geyte will speak to Deb about sending out a letter to the local farms about volunteering and the Foodscaping Class.

Adjournment

Mr. Myette motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion. All in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer,
Recording Secretary