

Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee
September 16, 2019
Approved Minutes
7:00 PM

Attendance

Present:

Chair Emily Kunelius
Cindy LeBlanc
Selectman Chuck Myette, Spring Hill Farm Trustees Representative
Maria Oakley
Stephen O. Landau, Selectman Liaison
Colin Costine, Alternate

Absent:

James Piper, Alternate
Joe Krasowski
Kendall Kunelius

Members of the Public Present at Various Times:

Dan Fournier
Ted Broadwater
Ryan Neal, Ryan's Sugar Shack

1. Call to Order – Open Meeting

Chair Emily Kunelius called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

2. Review of Minutes – August 19, 2019

Selectman Myette motioned to accept the August 19, 2019 minutes as amended. Chair Emily Kunelius seconded the motion. Mr. Costine abstained due to absence from that meeting. Approved 5-0-1.

New Business

3. Ryan Neal – Ryan's Sugar Shack, LLC - Lease Renewal

Mr. Neal appeared before the Advisory Committee to renew his lease of the taps at the North Chester fields that was entered into with the Town by written agreement last year. In exchange Mr. Neal provides donations of his product, speaking engagements and presentations at local events such as Breakfast with Santa, Library Story Time, Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts as well as reaching out to other communities.

Mr. Neal who graduated from Pinkerton last year has also begun a pressure washing business that is his full-time work. Mr. Neal enjoys the educational aspect of teaching how maple syrup is made. Mr. Neal noted he often gets questions from passersby at the property who see his tubing. Mr. Neal proposed putting up a kiosk by the trail closest to where his tubing is visible. Selectman Myette recommended putting it at the entrance to the Class VI road/trail. Mr. Neal noted he is not able for insurance reasons to pay to lease the taps or at a point financially with the business to make cash payments for the lease. Mr. Neal noted the value of the lease at .40 cents per tap

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is approximately \$320.00. Mr. Neal has donated \$562 in product to local events. Mr. Neal taps approximately 750 trees with varying sugar content, some are Red Maple and a small portion are Sugar Maples. Chair Emily Kunelius asked if he knew how much syrup was being brought out? Mr. Neal noted it was hard to determine specifically because it is combined with another run, but he believes it yielded over a hundred gallons of syrup last year. Mr. Neal noted it was difficult to market and he is working on that with a brand designer. Mr. Neal noted a slim profit margin dealing with Hannaford and also sells the product at his Sugar Shack at 118 Meadow Fox Lane and online. Mr. Broadwater recommended cutting and thinning practices that would keep the Red Maples and Sugars from competing with each other.

Mr. Neal noted he will be at the Fall Festival in October with his product and some educational materials. Mrs. LeBlanc will get in touch with him to get some syrup for the raffle basket to benefit the barn repairs. Mr. Neal noted he would put information about the Festival and tractor show, possibly the flyer on his Facebook page. Chair Emily Kunelius indicated it was great to have people at the Festival who were using the property.

Mr. Neal notified the Advisory Committee that someone had cut a rather wide trail and marked it in the Raymond portion of the property near where his tubing is. Mr. Neal initially thought the Committee was responsible however they informed him they knew nothing about it. Mr. Neal provided directions to the approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of disturbed area. Selectman Myette asked if trees were cut. Mr. Neal noted some small trees were removed by whoever made the trail which has been used by horses.

Mr. Neal handed out two copies of the contract with the only notable change the signature lines for the Committee. The contract will then go to the BOS to be signed at their next meeting. Mr. Neal is on the agenda for that meeting, however Selectman Landau noted he did not need to be there as timewise the BOS is working through the budget which is due earlier now that Town Meeting has been moved up. Chair Emily Kunelius noted she would be at the meeting to represent the Committee.

Chair Emily Kunelius motioned to approve the renewal of the lease with Ryan's Sugar Shack, LLC. Selectman Myette seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Emily Kunelius noted she would get a signed copy to Mr. Neal.

Mr. Neal departed the meeting at 7:50 PM.

Old Business

4. Town Fair

Chair Emily Kunelius recapped the Town Fair and noted both Selectman Myette and Mrs. Myette and herself were there. Raffle items were donated by Mr. Towle, a bird house, bird feeder and bat house and revenue from that raffle was \$78.

5. Members

Mr. Broadwater will be going before the Board of Selectmen to be appointed on Thursday as the Alternate Liaison for the Conservation Commission. Chair Emily Kunelius noted she will add Mr. Broadwater to the mailing list.

6. Budget FY 2020-2021

Chair Emily Kunelius noted the last fiscal year's budget was \$600.00. The new budget is due on September 23rd. The Board is scheduled to meet with the Board of Selectmen on October 31, 2019 to defend its budget.

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104 Selectman Myette recommended breaking down the budget into different line items. Selectman Landau
105 explained how a bottom-line budget works. Chair Emily Kunelius asked for clarification purposes if the
106 buildings being Town-owned would be maintained by the Town. Selectman Landau provided Chair Emily
107 Kunelius with contact information for Mr. Cavanaugh who requests for maintenance should be presented to.
108 Selectman Landau explained the Trustees are working on two other Town projects now but could be scheduled to
109 work on painting or replacing boards in the barn stall or repurposing the garage as a garden shed. Selectman
110 Myette noted the lumber was on hand for repair of the barn stall which is where hay is stored from last year's
111 cut. It isn't dangerous right now but wouldn't hold the weight of farm animals.

112
113 The Advisory Committee discussed priorities, the management plan and activities next year which include
114 hosting the Fall Festival again. This year access to the home was denied due to it being not compliant with
115 ADA, there being no ramp and other issues the Fire Department recommended before workshops and
116 presentations could take place in the home that are open to the public. The Committee weighed two options
117 which are to bring the building into compliance or have the building put on the register of historic places.
118 Selectman Myette advised with that came restoration guidelines. Chair Emily Kunelius noted the ability to use
119 the house for workshops and educational programs was an important focus of the management plan they had
120 recently completed. Mr. Broadwater noted a lot of people want to see the house and barn and that should be a
121 priority for next year. Selectman Myette offered the larger project list could be shared with Maintenance Man
122 Paul Cavanaugh.

123
124 The Advisory Committee weighed whether the cost of doing the work needed to make the buildings ADA
125 compliant could prove to be less than the historic registry. The entryway was wide enough to be wheelchair
126 complaint. The ramp would need to be done. There were other recommendations by the Fire Department. Mrs.
127 LeBlanc noted the bathrooms need work for example. Selectman Landau proposed building bathrooms
128 accessible outdoors as a future project. Costine recommended bringing back the old stove to the kitchen.
129 Selectman Landau offered an antique toilet with a raised tank as a donation. Mrs. Leblanc noted the existing
130 toilet leaks and the porcelain in the bathroom is stained. \$400 was recommended to get the buildings on the
131 historic register. Selectman Landau advised the Committee had until June to ask to encumber funds from this
132 fiscal year and it was not difficult getting Stevens Hall on the registry. Selectman Landau noted when the new
133 Town Administrator is hired, he or she may have some ideas how to make this happen.

134
135 Chair Emily Kunelius noted current expenses to date were \$3.35 for the year. Selectman Landau noted the
136 expenses for the building were oil and electricity and the security system. Chair Emily Kunelius questioned
137 whether the police detail should be carried as a line item in the event the Town isn't able to pay for that next
138 year. Selectman Landau explained how the TRC has determined the recommendation, which is not yet an
139 ordinance, that any public event with more than 50 people should have a police detail. The Fire Department may
140 add to that in the near future that an EMT be present. Mr. Costine asked if there was distinction between Town
141 roads and feeder roads? Selectman Landau noted no, but that was a good question. The cost of renting the port
142 a john was recommended. Selectman Landau noted a regular rental was about \$90/day but handicapped cost
143 more.

144
145 Mr. Costine question expenses to do with haying the fields in the future. This year Bob Pepper did the North
146 Chester Fields and Selectman Myette, Richard LeBlanc did near Wason Road and Cindy LeBlanc's family did a
147 couple of the fields. Mr. Costine agreed the rocks and ledge were a huge deterrent to anyone wanting to hay the
148 fields. Mr. Pepper would like to remove the rocks if he is able, but if it is ledge...Mr. Costine recommended
149 trimming the edges of the hay fields with a rotary mower which keeps saplings from creeping in. Mr. Costine
150 questioned whether some of the fields could be converted to pasture. Water would be an issue but a solar pump
151 could be installed and there would need to be "some skin in the game" from Mr. Fournier for fencing if he
152 wanted to use the pasture to his cows. Mr. Fournier noted there is also no shelter out there. Mr. Costine
153 recommended \$600 per year for haying noting that it had been done twice yearly when the tenant was there and
154 once per year this year and last. Charmingfare had not done a second cut.

155
156 Mrs. LeBlanc noted she would like to install raised bed gardens and asked if she could have some lumber for

that, there are 2x6x12s on hand in the barn.

The Advisory Committee agreed to increase the budget for FY 20-21 to \$1,400.

Selectman Landau departed the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Projects and Events

7. Fall Festival

Chair Emily Kunelius indicated the Fall Festival is on Saturday, October 5th from 10 AM to 4 PM with a rain date on Sunday, October 6th. The second clean-up day for indoor and outdoor clean-up is scheduled for Saturday at 9 AM.

Mrs. LeBlanc recommended reaching out to the Tri-Town to do an article. Flyers have been posted around Town. Mrs. LeBlanc will help to post more flyers. Selectman Myette indicated if the flyer were provided to Mrs. Doda that she could make ten more color copies as the main copier only does black and white.

Selectman Myette noted he and Mr. Leblanc will check the trails and wagon for the hayrides.

Chair Emily Kunelius noted the stories of Miss Church that were going to be done in the house would have to wait until next year.

The welcome booth will have flyers, schedule of demonstrations, maps and a separate set up for the donations by the barn, both of which will need to be manned. Chair Emily Kunelius asked for volunteers to be available for one-hour time slots: Emily Kunelius, Kendall Kunelius, Cindy LeBlanc, Ted Broadwater and Maria Oakley after 1 PM.

A handicapped port a john has been ordered. Chair Emily Kunelius reached out to the Fire Department to see if the Explorers would help with parking. The police detail has been scheduled.

Food and Entertainment

- Mr. Fournier will be grilling his beef products and provide the beef from his stock and donate buns with the proceeds to the Farm. There will be a steer presentation. The price for burger and chips would be \$5. The Cub Scouts will provide hotdogs, popcorn, drinks, chips and sausages. Chair Emily Kunelius reached out to the "Snow Cone" lady who also does milkshakes and coffee. Kendall Kunelius will have eggs for sale. The SHFAC will bring buns and condiments.
- Mrs. Oakley will donate her Keurig and it will be setup outside by the porch so they have access to electricity.
- The Cassistas will provide music during the early part of the day until 12:30 and the next group will start playing after Kendall Kunelius lumber jack demonstration.
- Kids Games – Beth Swanson volunteered to help with this and will set up on the grassy area.

Displays and Demonstrations:

- Antique Tractors
Selectman Landau noted he had a few pieces of equipment. Mr. Costine and Selectman Myette may have some they can bring also. Mr. Broadwater and Mr. Fournier may also bring their tractors.

- Photo Area

Mrs. LeBlanc will set up a photo area.

- Barn Restoration

Mrs. Leblanc has been working on restoring the antique saddles for display there.

- Art Show & Photos

Chair Emily Kunelius put together a schedule and overview of the Festival and will email it and post the day of the Festival. Kendall Kunelius has not heard back from the Blacksmith and Chair Emily Kunelius has not heard back from Ms. Somers. Cindy LeBlanc noted if she did not hear back about the pony rides in the next few days she will reach out to someone else. Selectman Landau noted earlier his granddaughter, Emma will be bringing rabbits. Mr. Fournier's presentation is scheduled for 10:15 AM.

8. Mr. Fournier's update

Mr. Fournier sent a letter to the abutters to advise the bull was being brought in and signs were posted, the bull is in and doing his job. The water faucet needs repair before Winter.

Mr. Fournier proposed having his metal detector club come in and remove any metal debris in the fields, so the cows don't ingest something like Norma had. Mr. Fournier also proposed a brush clearing day open to the public with hot chocolate and cider sometime after the Fall Festival to clear the brush along the fence lines and to have a bonfire. Mr. Costine discussed the permitting requirements for what would be considered a commercial burn.

Mr. Fournier noted he has some intruders, calves wandered in with his cows and he heard them and discovered Mr. Donigian of Fremont Road had them boarded at the Healeys and they were returned.

Mr. Fournier would like to remove the chain link fence and debris near the chicken coop. Mrs. LeBlanc noted there was another area to be cleaned up near the metal roofing.

9. Adjournment

Next Meeting: October 21, 2019

Selectman Myette motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 PM. Chair Emily Kunelius seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer,
Recording Secretary
Via PACT