

Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee
March 21, 2022 - 7:00 PM
Approved Minutes

Present:

Beth Sautter, Chair
Kristina Snyder
Chuck Myette
Kim Rairdon
Cindy LeBlanc

Members absent:

Joe Biedrzycki
Mark Desiderio
Maria Oakley
Colin Costine, Alternate
Ted Broadwater, Alternate
Stephen O. Landau, Selectmen's Liaison

Guests present:

Marilyn Bartlett
Chester PACT

I. Call to Order

Chair Sautter called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

II. Old Business

A. Approval of minutes – February 21, 2022

Ms. LeBlanc moved to accept the minutes of the February 21, 2022 meeting as written. Ms. Rairdon seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Desiderio was absent and did not provide a report, so it will be presented at next month's meeting.

C. ADA ramp for farmhouse

Selectman Landau was not present, so there was no report on the possibility of an Eagle Scout building the ramp. Chair Sautter said the cost of an aluminum ramp is prohibitive and she would rather pursue the use of pressure-treated wood that could be maintained. Ms. LeBlanc said composite is slippery, but could be used for the railing. Chair Sautter will contact the ADA to see if they have a suggested design for a ramp. The SHFAC agreed it would be good to have the ramp completed before the Fall Festival, so the farmhouse could be used.

Chair Sautter researched the requirements for a door. Mr. Myette estimated it could cost approximately \$2,000 to purchase and install the door, including the wiring.

D. MOU for SHF Cattlemen

Mr. Myette reported that the MOU has been drafted and reviewed by the Trust. He will send it to the cattlemen for their review this week. It asks for a lease up front similar to the High Tunnel lease and suggests a different split in the hay amount than was done this year. There will be a better balance between the farm and the cattlemen, taking into account expenses incurred by the farm.

The maple trees have not been tapped and the lease has not been renewed. Mr. Myette reached out to Ryan Neal, but has not received a response.

E. Winter Carnival Review

The SHFAC agreed it was a great success, with over 400 people attending. They discussed parking and the need to avoid damaging the field and thus endangering the hay crop. Mr. Myette suggested applying gravel to the road coming into the field to mitigate muddy conditions. Mr. Myette said the Carnival was at capacity and attendance needs to be monitored.

The SHFAC congratulated Ms. Rairdon on the kids' games and Mr. Myette on the wagon rides. There are pictures on the 300th anniversary celebration website. \$237 was received in donations. There was a chili pot left on the farmhouse porch. Ms. Rairdon said the Recreation Committee has discussed moving the carnival to MLK Day in January, hoping for more snow and colder temperatures. The SHFAC will establish the date and suggested having more food vendors.

F. Fall Fest – Date Verification

Chair Sautter reported that the Town Fair Committee has offered to help with the Fall Fest, as the Town Fair has been canceled this year. The SHFAC discussed which aspects of the Town Fair would be appropriate to include in the Fall Festival. The SHFAC discussed possible vendors, including farming activities. They suggested requesting a donation for parking, but decided to wait. Ms. LeBlanc suggested sending a flyer to advertise the Fall Fest to Chester residents. The SHFAC will find out if the Town Fair is definitely canceled. If so, the Fall Fest will be held on September 10th. Otherwise, it will be on September 17th. It will be advertised to establish the difference between the Fall Fest and the Town Fair to avoid confusion.

G. Trails/Trail Marking Update

Ms. Rairdon will check the trees to see if they are appropriate for blazing once the trails are drier. Mr. Myette suggested posting "You Are Here" maps on posts. The SHFAC discussed posting small signs versus blazing trees. There will be trail maps available in a kiosk, the design of which was discussed.

90 **H. Autumn Olive Update**

91 Mr. Myette reported a quarter of the fields overrun with autumn olive were brush-
92 hogged. Many spots were too wet; once they are dry, they will work on it again.
93 There are large areas with 20- to 30-foot trees that might be autumn olive. The field
94 can be reclaimed; it will have to be plowed and reseeded if it is going to be hayed.
95 There are two areas that could be turned into sled runs and trails running up the hill.
96 The SHFAC agreed any barbed wire found should be removed. More people are
97 needed to complete the project.

98
99 **I. Grants**

100 Chair Sautter submitted an application for the AARP grant, which is \$10,000, to pay
101 for the ramp. A grant was submitted last year, so she updated it and minimized the
102 wish list. The decision will be made in mid-May and a public announcement of the
103 winners made on June 29th. The funds must be spent by November 30th. Mr. Myette
104 said there are other grants available, if someone has time to do the research to find
105 them, particularly recreational grants.

106
107 **J. Goals for the Year**

108 The SHFAC discussed goals for the year, which include:

- 109 1. Spring cleanup day (May 14th)
- 110 2. Trail marking (by June 15th)
- 111 3. Pollinator plantings (by June 30th)
- 112 4. Fall Festival (September 10th or 17th)

113 **III. New Business**

114 **A. Removing Invasive Plants**

115 Ms. Snyder verified that the property line behind the High Tunnel is the rock wall.
116 The Ortins would like to remove some of the invasive burning bush on the farm side
117 of the wall and the SHFAC agreed.

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119 **B. Member question**

120 Chair Sautter reported that Ms. Oakley has relinquished her seat on the Committee,
121 so there is an opening for a voting member.

122
123 **C. Next meeting – Monday, April 18, 2022**

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125 **D. Adjournment**

126
127 *Ms. Snyder moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. LeBlanc seconded the motion. A*
128 *vote was taken, all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

130 The meeting was adjourned at 8:28.

132 Respectfully submitted,
Beth Hangel, Recording Secretary