

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Minutes

February 5, 2019

Members Present: Diane Dorfer, Ed Hall, Jeremy Jelliffe, Jennifer Kaufman (staff), Chris Kueffner, Jude Lovdal, Stacey Stearns

The meeting was called to order at 6:09pm

Review of Minutes

- a. January 8, 2019 - Jude motioned to approve the minutes and Diane seconded, the minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comment

UConn Agricultural Advocacy - Kayte Sousa from UConn Ag. Advocacy Club shared information about events on UConn Storrs campus during Ag. week in March (3/10-15). She asked if anyone from the committee is interested in attending and participating in a panel. Stacey shared about the GMO panel April 24th that will be held on campus in WB Young 100.

Old Business

- a. Taste of Mansfield collaborative
 - Diane Shared information about *Family Friends and Farmer Fun Night* which is included as a Taste of Mansfield sponsored event to introduce community members to CSAs in the area, the event is Feb 22 at 5:30pm Windham Town Hall in the ballroom.
 - Partner update on Thurs 2/14 at 9am in the community center
- b. Agricultural Lease/License Summary
 - Jennifer suggested that based on committee response it would be appropriate to roll over leases for another term of 60 months to the current lessee. She also indicated that NRCS conservation plans and edge maintenance with brush removal should be included in the language on lease renewals. The group discussed the cost associated with the edge maintenance and brush removal and Jennifer is going to ask the town about the use of town mowing services to aid in this maintenance. The committee can also consider farmland restoration grants to aid in edge maintenance and brush removal.

- c. Library Sustainability Series Update – Diane reported on discussions about doing something on the Mt Hope property, but the group decided that this year is not good to hold an event. The group asked about chainsaw training as part of the series but is going to hold on the idea for now.

New Business

- a. Zoning regulations – Jennifer presented an overview of the proposed zoning regulations packet. The group discussed the adjustments to agricultural regulations. The overview of proposed changes was discussed by the committee. The regulatory committee is considering an agricultural overlay specification that would provide more flexibility to agricultural operations in the area.
- b. Multi-Town Outreach – Jennifer reported that Heidi – the town planner from Tolland – reached out to ask about the next event and if Mansfield is willing to host. She also asked about interest in hemp production as a topic that has been coming up, the committee will reach out to Matt and Gerry at UConn about coming to speak. The tentative date is Tues 3/5 provided the committee can secure a room. Agenda will include introductions of people present, Ag. committee activities for each town represented, and a presentation on hemp.
- c. Mansfield Grown Brochure – Jennifer asked if it makes sense to reprint brochures as we are nearly out of copies. If we are going to reprint, then it makes sense to check the brochure for accuracy and make sure it is current.
- d. Handbook for Elected and Appointed Officials – at the last meeting the group discussed the article that came out in the community corner section of Mansfield Connections. The group was referred to the handbook to review all applicable guidelines.

Communications/Reports from Members

Future Agendas

- a. Renewal of Ag Leases/Licenses

Public Comment: There is no public comment to report.

Chris moved to adjourn at 7:59 pm, Ed seconded.