



**Minutes**  
**Pomfret Agricultural Commission**  
**Thursday, June 21, 2012**  
**Pomfret Senior Center**  
**7:00 pm**



**Present:** Aq Commission members: Ellsworth Chase, John A. Wolchesky, James Rowley, James Labbe, Brad Beeler, Tony Amaral. Guests: Susan Austin and Jennifer Kaufman (AGvocate).

1. **Open Meeting** - Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM by Ellsworth Chase
2. **Review of Minutes** - J.A Wolchesky motioned to accept the May meeting minutes. Jim Rowley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
3. **Welcome New Alternate Members** - The two new alternates, Brad Beeler and Tony Amaral, were introduced to those in attendance and each gave a brief comment about themselves and their experience.

The function of an alternate was explained to the two new alternates; there are five regular members of the committee, and if one of those were absent, one of the alternates would be asked to participate if there were any issues to be voted upon.

**4. New Business**

- a. **Pomfret Grown Brochure** - Ellsworth Chase advised that he had 16 Pomfret businesses that would like to be included in the brochure. The brochure needs to be completed and ready to go to the printers within the next two weeks with all entries vetted again confirming all of the listed information. After a group discussion, all are welcome to be included in the brochure. John Wolchesky advised that he had an additional entry to be included. Pictures of Pomfret agriculture need to be submitted ASAP as a decision needs to be made as to which to include – there are 6 pictures in brochures done by surrounding towns. After discussion these pictures could be of an “iconic” nature depicting agriculture interests in town, a baler, a wagon with pumpkins & gourds, etc. The brochure would be updated on periodic basis.

The definition of agriculture was discussed and again agreed to go by the State of Connecticut definition so as to not to run into any issues down the road.

There was also a discussion of whether or not the brochure was educational or promotional. Jennifer commented that it would be seen as outreach, support and educational in shining a spot light on what Pomfret has to offer. Brad Beeler commented that the future of agriculture from his experience around the world had to come from a market direction and not government intervention, such as legislation or tax abatements. John Wolchesky felt it was purely promotional, Ellsworth Chase felt that it was both.

A discussion was had whether or not the Audubon Society promoted the best use of farmland and whether or not to include any mention in the Pomfret Grown Brochure. The comment was made that they would regulate what you could produce on the property and when it could be harvested based on the needs nature, not the needs of the farmer to bring in his crop.

- b. **POCD (Plan of Conservation and Development)** - Ellsworth Chase suggested that this is the area that the Ag Commission needed to put its immediate attention as we focus our efforts on what we want to see as expanded language in the new revision of zoning with regard to agriculture.

Jennifer stressed that the Ag Commission should again ask the Selectmen to obtain a mapping of the most important farmland soils – to date Pomfret has not requested it.

- c. **Positively Pomfret Day** - Ellsworth Chase advised that he checked with his own insurance broker to see what would be necessary to cover himself if he brought a tractor to display. He was advised that he was covered on his own property, but would not be covered off. He cautioned that anyone wanting to bring a display should check with their own personal insurance agent to make certain that they had liability coverage. The town has “event” coverage but this would not cover your personal property or your liability if someone was injured by you tractor or animals that you might bring.

As far as Ag Commission participation, the Commission would need updates as to direction and what we would want to present. Suggestions are needed soon.

## 5. Other

- a. Tony Amaral suggested that the committee take an interest in future town purchases of land and suggested that purchased of land locked and/or swampy property was not in the best interest of Pomfret to purchase.
- b. Abington Social Library – Ellsworth Chase advised that they would be the Grand Marshall in the Holidazzle Parade in December bringing attention the 300 anniversary of Pomfret next year.
- c. Brad Beeler asked if someone from the Selectman's Office could come and address the Ag Commission and update us as to what is happening with the Chef's Fresh (Idawilde Property) so we could get some facts and dispel some of the negative comments in the press.
- d. This was Jennifer's last meeting with us, and the Ag Commission presented her with a small gift and thanked her for all of her support in our effort to get the Commission going

## 6. Future Agenda Items

- a. Pomfret Grown Brochure
- b. POCD (Plan of Conservation and Development)
- c. Positively Pomfret Day
- d. Upcoming Fairs (Brooklyn, Woodstock...)
- e. Education and outreach
- f. Zoning

7. **Adjourn-** meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm. Next Meeting is scheduled for 7/19, 7:00 PM at the Pomfret Senior Center

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ellsworth Chase / Stephanie Austin**