



**Minutes
Pomfret AGvocate Program
Tuesday, January 19, 2012
Pomfret Senior Center
207 Mashamoquet Rd
7 pm**

Present: Sandra Smutnich, Brad Beeler, Nick Gardner, Rob Ellsworth, Stephanie Austin, Jim Rowley, Jim Labbe, Nora Johnson, Linda Rich, Kevin Huff, *Bonnie Ryan, John Wolchesky, John M. Wolchesky, Ellsworth Chase, Deb and Jim Ellsworth, Tony Abbott, Maureen Nicholson, and Jennifer Kaufman*

1. **Welcome/Introductions-** Members were welcomed and introduced. Jennifer gave a brief overview of the AGvocate Program.
2. **Review December 13th Meeting Minutes-** The minutes from the 12/13 meeting were reviewed and accepted.
3. **Update on Agriculture Commission Ordinance-** On January 17, 2012 Pomfret's Board of Selectmen agreed to send an enabling ordinance to establish an Agriculture Commission to Town Meeting. The Town Meeting will be scheduled sometime in February.

One attendee expressed concern about establishing an agriculture commission so quickly. She also expressed concern that the commission would be regulating what farmers do in Pomfret. She suggested that the Board of Selectmen wait to have the Town Meeting to vote on the ordinance until after a meeting in Willington on 2/21 that will discuss Agenda 21.

Jennifer reviewed the charge/ordinance for the Pomfret Agriculture Commission and explained that agriculture commissions are advisory, with no regulatory power, and serve as the voice of agriculture in a community. While non-farmers may serve on an AgCom, per the Pomfret Agriculture Commission charge, "insofar as practical, members appointed shall be representative of all groups interested in the management, protection and regulation of agriculture as defined by Connecticut General Statutes 1-1(q), particularly those directly involved in agriculture".

A list was sent around to see who would be willing to serve on the commission. Jennifer will compare this list to the one that was circulated at the input session in November and will give to Bonnie Ryan.

The board of selectmen will set the Town Meeting date and will advertise and publicize the meeting accordingly.

4. **Review of AGvocate Program goals-** As discussed at the last meeting, the group agreed that a town Agriculture Commission (if established) should direct the majority of the goals for the program. However, it was agreed that the group could begin developing a "Pomfret Grown" Agriculture Product and Service Providers Inventory/Brochure. Attendees discussed what criteria would be used for farms to be included in the brochure. It was agreed that an Agriculture Commission should establish criteria, if and when it was formed. However, it was agreed that information could still be gathered. Maureen Nicholson will include the form with a request for participation in the Pomfret Times. Ellsworth Chase agreed to begin inventorying the farmers in town and gathering information.

Attendees also discussed how the brochure would be paid for. Jennifer explained that there might be grant money available. Attendees will discuss how they would like to proceed at the next meeting.

5. **Other-**Jennifer reminded attendees of the CT Agriculture Commission Conference: Growing Farms in your community on March 24th in Hampton. Information was distributed.
6. **Next Steps-**Jennifer will consolidate the AgCom list for the BOS, will draft a brief article explaining the meeting for the Pomfret Times and will work with Maureen Nicholson on the request to be included in the Pomfret Grown Brochure (using the Pomfret Times).
7. **Adjourn-** Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 pm

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, February 16th, 7 pm at the Pomfret Senior Center