

Pomfret Agricultural Commission Meeting Minutes for August 20, 2015

In Attendance

James Rowley Chairman
James Labbe Vice Chairman
Adam Squire Secretary
Bill Wood
Ellsworth Chase
John Wolchesky
Absent
Tina Kelly
Bradley Beeler

Meeting started at 7:00

Meeting Minutes for July 16, 2015 Submitted by Adam Squire

Motion made by John Wolchesky to accept minutes as submitted motion seconded

Citizen Participation and Conversation

There were no citizens present at the time so this agenda item was closed. First Selectman Maureen Nicholson did stop in towards the end of the meeting to offer some encouraging words surrounding the upcoming one day farmers market.

Current Business

Pomfret Farmers Market

Bill Wood provided a brief update surrounding final vendor count and vendor placement for the market.

There was discussion on signs that had been placed at strategic locations throughout the community by James Rowley.

There was discussion about am and pm radio advertisements on Whiny radio in advance of the event as well as recap off the print advertisements that had made it into several local newspapers

There was also discussion of details surrounding set up times and how vendors would be directed to their appropriate spots within the pavilion. Bill Wood volunteered to be on site before any vendors arrived to direct set up. Also James Rowley and James Labbe volunteered to be on site for the event to support. Both John Wolchesky and Adam Squire volunteered to support while participating as vendors

Farm to Plate

This agenda item was tabled

Pomfret Grown Brochure

There was limited conversation surrounding the brochure. The commission agreed to keep the course of liquidating current brochures in advance of a reprint. It was confirmed that brochures has been received by all members that Ellsworth Chase had intended to distribute them to.

Plan of Conservation and Development

This Item was tabled as the recommendations of the commission had been received and considered by the Pomfret Planning and Zoning board and the Ag Commission was awaiting a response or follow up from that board if more input was desired

Farmers Market Grant Application

This item was tabled pending if the grant was made available in the next fiscal year and granting cycle

15th Celebrating Agriculture-September 26th 2015 9:00am-3:00pm at the Woodstock Fair Grounds

It was noted that Adam Squire would be participating in the event and would brandish the Pomfret Ag Commission banner. There will be no other participation by the commission for this years event

Positively Pomfret Day Farmers Market Discussion

The commission agreed that this event was not the best format for another market especially with the limited lead time to aggregate vendors. Bill Wood said he would forward the opportunity out to the vendors participating in the one day Pomfret Farmers market and have each vendor independently decide if this event was a good opportunity for them.

New Business

Upcoming Workshops

James Labbe noted that he knows someone that has experience with canning and pickling that might be willing to conduct a workshop. The individual had concerns about permitting that were discussed and it was determined there would be no need for any permitting for a workshop of this type. The group also talked about when the next workshop should be and it was agreed that early fall was not a good option so a commitment to a firm date and content for the next workshop was tabled.

Education and Outreach

Ellsworth Chase resubmitted his idea to encourage an incubator farm possibly on some town held property. There was general discussion surrounding the basics of the concept and who would administer the incubator farm. Adam Squire suggested that from an institutional perspective it could be challenging for the Ag Commission to actively steward an incubator farm but that the commission could support a third party in their efforts. Bill Wood posited that it could pose a conflict of interests or potential liability to existing farms that had not benefited from the kind of support structure an incubator farm provides for aspiring farmers. It was agreed that the concept warranted further exploration.

Education and Outreach

Ellsworth Chase suggested cultivating a partnership with Killingly VoAg

Other Business

There was a spirited conversation surrounding the charter of the commission and refining the focus of the commission by establishing a mission statement. Ellsworth Chase submitted that the group should familiarize themselves with the founding documents that he had sent to the group on several occasions. It was suggested by John Wolchesky that a succinct Mission Statement could be established that would not replace the founding charter documents but help hone the focus of the commission. An impasse was reached and it was agreed that the conversation should continue but after all members had familiarized themselves with the charter.

The meeting ended at 8:37pm

Meeting Minutes Accepted Sept 17, 2015
Respectfully Submitted

Adam Roy Squire
Secretary Pomfret Agricultural Commission