

Colchester Agriculture Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, August 17, 2012 7:00 P.M.
Town Hall, Room 3

Attending: E. Gilman, A. Savitsky, D. Wasniewski, and J. Becker

Absent: L. Curtis and J. Savitsky

Liaisons attending: S. Soby (Board of Selectmen) C. Bourque (New London County Farm Bureau)

1. **Call to Order:**

Meeting was called to order by Chairman E. Gillman at 7:01pm.

2. **Additions to Agenda:**

MOTION: J. Becker motioned to move new business 7A and 7B. A. Savitsky seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

3. **Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes:**

MOTION: J. Becker moved to approve and accept meeting minutes of Aug 20, 2012. A. Savitsky seconded.

4. **New business: 7A and 7B:** Present for discussions: Paula Stahl, Dr. Richard Wilhner: Stonington Vet Hospital, Dave Roberge: Old Lyme Fire Marshall, Meg Swatter and Laurie Anne Goulet from the Ct Horse Council

a. Update on Cost of Services Project: Paula Stahl stated that, for the Town of Colchester cost of Services, she is doing a build-out analysis of mill rate in 10-20 years based on development. Public workshop will be held in November. Study will look at if the benefits of having farms offsets lowering farm land tax rates to preserve and encourage future farms.

b. Guidelines for escaped livestock: Discussion brought to council regarding guidelines for escaped large livestock. C. Bourque of the Farm Bureau stated that there needs to be a more comprehensive way of dealing with emergency situations: loss of power, barn fires, roof collapses, in addition to escaped livestock.

Chris stated that Joan Nicoles has a phone number that the NL Farm Bureau shares with the State Emergency Mgt. He suggested that this be used as a model. Goal here is to look at the big picture for livestock emergencies that is easy to follow and use.

Invited Guest comments:

Dr. Wilhner: stated that there is a regional planning team in Region 4 that looks at individuals to participate in a Civilian Emergency Response team (CERT). This is a 20-hour course which certifies a team with liability protection if assisting the State Police. This could take 4 weeks to put together: Jeff Williams would be the contact person. Training is normally in Groton open to 25 people.

Dave Roberge: spoke on behalf of the RAPT 4 Emergency Response in Old Lyme. He spoke on funding that is available through homeland security that formulates, develops, and trains. This would be a volunteer support team. Funding is still unallocated in Region 4. Colchester Ag commission can have a core team as Colchester as a hub. Emergency planning programs for Ag owners: emergency responders involving large breed animal care and response training program for public safety; using a working group of Farm Bureau, RAPT 4, Ct. Horse Council to build a method that would be used to train.

Emergency planning programs for Ag owners, emergency responders involving large animals care and response training program for public safety. EFS II; animal care. Demis checks need to be cut by Nov. Application for EFS II will secure funds to provide a training program.

Request to Steering Committee.

Question presented: would there be a requirement for local police to also be trained under continuing education: post training. Comments: that it would be under the union/management approval and it is not something easily granted.

Red Cross would be another resource working together with established organizations. 911, dispatch at town and local troop K, fire department.. C. Bourque: Agriculture Commission can prepare an "Emergency Plan" on the local level. Groton did it for small animal.

S. Soby: Colchester does have a CERT trained team and contact is Reed Gustafson.

CT Horse Council: has a horse 911 training on how to handle horses and cows. Training available in a 3-hour program. (Region 3 and 5).

Joan Nicole (Connecticut Farm Bureau): Emergency preparedness to Ag of Ct tracking is communication. Ag needs a higher priority to large farms, e.g., egg farms or large dairy. 1st to put together directory for Ag producers: phone numbers list and contacts. 2nd ask farmers to give us

contact information for shared resources for local and state data base. 3rd: communication for Ag for natural disasters. Bob Kenny is the contact person grant is good until April 2013.

MOTION: J. Becker moved that Agriculture Commission to facilitate formation of a local CERT training for large breed animals program for Emergency Response for large animal events. A. Savitsky second, There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Old Business:

a. Slembek farm, update from town planner at next meeting.

b. Bylaws (Item 1 on on list of pending items – see agenda) D. Wasneiwski will forward final draft to Ag Commission Chairperson. She will forward it to members before next meeting, so that we can approve them in November.

c. How to involve Colchester Schools system in farm awareness programs (Item 7 on on list) Slow food. Local and traditional foods. Colchester Children’s Collaborative is Shelly Flynn Ag Commission will contact her. D. Wasneiwski: Education for the community, who is available, volunteer adult education programs, solicits planning sessions. Identify individuals to promote Ag programs through the town.

d. Resolve issues concerning the future expansion of the Colchester Farmers Market (Item 12 on on list) to be discussed at next meeting.

6. New Business: there was no additional new business.

7. Citizens comments:

S. Soby thanked Chris Bourque for his efforts of getting resources together for today’s meeting.

D. Wray stated that there will be an open “Listening Meeting” of the Governor's Agricultural Commission this Wednesday at Norwich Thames Valley (3 Rivers) Campus. Anyone involved in agriculture is invited to come and speak on issues and concerns.

8. Adjournment: Motion: A. Savitsky moved to adjourn meeting. J. Becker seconded, There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.