

Colchester Agriculture Commission Minutes
Monday, November 19, 2016, 7:00 P.M.
Town Hall Room 2

Attending: Chris Bourque (Chairman), David Wasniewski, Charlie Csere (Alternate),
Leslie Curtis (Alternate)

Absent: Olivia Duksa, Donna Rosenblatt

Also Attending: Selectman Stan Soby (Liaison to Board of Selectmen),

1. Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order by Chairman C.Bourque at 7:05 P.M.

2. Additions and/or changes to Agenda:

MOTION: L. Curtis moved to rearrange the evening's meeting Agenda by moving Item Number 8 (2017 Agriculture Commission Calendar) to become Item Number 5 (Farm to School Initiative) and vice-versa. D.Wasniewski seconded.

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

3. Approve minutes of the Agriculture Commission on October 17, 2016:

MOTION: C. Csere moved to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2016 Agriculture Commission Meeting with the change to note that Alternate C.Csere was also absent at that meeting. D. Wasniewski seconded.

VOTE: Approved, with C. Csere abstaining due to his absence at the October meeting.

4. Citizens comments:

None.

5. 2017 Meeting Calendar:

Selectman Soby asked whether the proposed dates for the Agriculture Commission's 2017 meeting schedule had been circulated to the commission members in advance of this meeting. Chairman Bourque said that this had not been done. L. Curtis pointed out that the Commission's usual meeting dates and times were not being proposed to be changed. Mr. Soby advocated that to insure open and inclusive governance in our town, it would be a better practice to defer action on establishing the meeting dates for the next year until all members of the commission had the opportunity to vet the proposed meeting calendar in advance of voting on it. By observing this formality in the scheduling process, there would be fewer unanticipated conflicts (such as with religious holidays) which might otherwise inadvertently render some individual commission members unable to fulfill their civic duty to attend a specific meeting due to such a conflict on a particular date.

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MOTION: L.Curtis moved **that action on approving the Agriculture Commission Calendar for 2017 be postponed until the commission's next meeting on December 19, 2016.** D.Wasniewski seconded.

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

Chairman Bourque will email the proposed Agriculture Commission 2017 Calendar to the commission's members and alternates prior to the December meeting.

6. Zoning Regulation Change Proposal:

Chairman Bourque reported that the Town Planner's Office had not yet completed its review of how many parcels in the Suburban Zone would be large enough to support the raising of livestock if zoning regulations were to be changed to permit such land use in that zone. He said that he would follow up with the Town Planner to see whether this information could be made available in time for the commission's consideration at our December 19 2016 meeting.

7. Colchester Farm Tour - July 2017:

Chairman Bourque reported that the national convention of the American Community Gardening Association will be held in Hartford from July 27 thru 30, 2017. Katherine Kosiba of the Colchester Garden Club contacted Mr. Bourque, reporting that one of the organizers of this group's convention had contacted her about the possibility of arranging a field trip to tour Farms and Gardens in Colchester as part of the offerings to its convention attendees. Mr. Bourque has agreed to be the point person for this opportunity to showcase our town's agricultural assets to this group of community gardening members from all over the country.

Mr.Bourque noted that some of the possible venues which might be showcased in this proposed field trip might be in towns which border Colchester. Any interested farmer or gardener in the Colchester vicinity who is interested in the possibility of having their property included in such a field trip is encouraged to contact Mr. Bourque.

8. Farm to School:

D.Wasniewski and C.Bourque reported that there is much activity in the effort to increase the agriculture and nutrition education into the whole curriculum from K thru 12 in the Colchester School System. More groups such as the Colchester Garden Club and the Colchester Collaboration for Children are becoming involved in this effort. The consensus of opinion among the proponents of these activities is that the Curriculum Director of the Colchester Public Schools needs to be brought in to the process to give some structure and guidance to the many individual initiatives which are currently under consideration.

There will be a meeting on November 30, 2016 at 6:00 PM at the Colchester Elementary School in the second grade classroom number S-6 to move the discussion forward. The meeting is open to anybody who has an interest in attending.

9. Adjournment:

L. Curtis moved to adjourn the meeting and D. Wasniewski seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leslie Curtis".

Leslie Curtis
Alternate, Agriculture Commission