

January 29 , 2013

Lee Agricultural Commission

Present were Erick Sawtelle, Dwight Barney, Chuck Cox, Carole Dennis, Paul Gasowski, Laura Gund.

Guest: Annie Gasowski

Grange/Grange Building: General discussion about the future of the Jeremiah Smith Grange. We discussed what we could do to help the Grange and protect the building. There might be grant money for restoration. The problem is how to handle to changing of the Grange, i.e. fewer members, how to keep it going. Also, how to ensure that the building becomes the property of the town. This is a situation that concerns other groups, as well as the Ag. Comm.

Minutes: Dwight moved to accept the minutes of December 18, 2012, as read. Motion seconded and minutes were approved.

Financial: An Agriculture/Conservation Newsletter has recently been published at a cost of \$1432.50. This includes layout and design, mailing and postage. The Conservation Commission paid a portion of this bill. The ag. brochure cost \$930, of which \$600+ was covered by advertisers. So, after bills there is \$5488.60 in the account and \$1108.10 in the Farmers' Market account. The Backyard Farming initiative may cost \$100 for filming (\$50 an hour). Motion was made to approve the payment of the invoices for the printing of the newsletter and for the brochures. Also approved paying the Farmers Market Association dues.

Brochures: Discussed the distribution of the brochures. We will have some on a table at the upcoming Deliberative Session and also on voting day in March. They have been distributed to the library and the Town Hall and to Dover Agway. Also, several advertisers who attend winter markets have taken a supply of brochures. There could be one at the dump, opened up on the bulletin board. It turns out there are a few additions to the list of advertisers – either folks who didn't respond or were not included. This will be changed when we re-publish the brochure. Paul will see about getting it up on the town website.

Meeting with Doris Demers, Farm to School Initiative: Members of the school district from Durham, Lee and Madbury met with six farmers and producers. They are interested in selling to the district and the district is interested in buying. Talked about the possibility of "putting up" food in the summer time, when the school kitchens would be available. The possibilities should be explored. \$15,000 for the "kids eating local food" initiative will be requested. 22% of the students buy lunch. Where do the funds come from to pay for "all" the children, including those who cannot afford school lunch? Having time to eat their lunch is another school problem. Doris is thankful for all the support she is receiving from this community. Paula Fields, from North Hampton, did a local food day. Paul says that now Doris has the connections with the local farmers. He feels the meeting the other day was successful.

Seacoast Local Foods Initiative: There was a trade show on Monday afternoon, matching buyers and sellers. There were 20 or 30 buyers, but since it snowed that day not too many people showed up. They are working on distribution, trying to stay away from refrigerated items. One problem is that there is not a consistent supply; they need a system for coordinating. They talked about how to handle a

sudden “emergency” with produce that needed to be picked right away. There will probably be opportunities to buy “blemished” product and other products that don’t sell at the market. “What about new food safety rules?”

Critique of “You Are What You Eat”: 55 folks attended this program at the Grange on Monday night. Paul felt the program was wonderful, there was lots of good information that was relevant. The atmosphere was great. John Carroll did a great job of facilitating the program. The lay out was good.

Community Gardens: Chuck mentioned that there is a possibility of having a Community Garden at the corner of Old Mill Road and Route 4. Chuck plowed the ground in preparation for a garden. The county agent, Kelly McAdam, may be involved, as well as a Master Gardener. Chuck also mentioned that Jill Nooney, High Road, has open gardens in the summer, once a month.

NHFB Annual Meeting: Laura mentioned that the Farm Bureau annual meeting this year will be in Strafford County and will be held at UNH. We are looking for local foods.

Next meeting will be March 26, 2013.

Minutes submitted by Laura Gund.