

WOLFEBORO AGRICULTURE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
2-5-20

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lawreen Strauch, Chair; Sarah M Silk, Vice-Chair; David Strauch; Blair Moody; Macy Gotthardt; Marge Strunk; David Senecal, BOS rep

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Bree Schuette

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wendy Rodgers

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Alan Frederickson; Matthew Plache

GUESTS: Susan Fuller, Kurt DeVlyder, Dave Rodgers

I. 50th Earth Day Discussion – Susan Fuller:

Chair Lawreen Strauch opened the meeting at 6:15 PM with Dave Strauch advising that Alan Frederickson would likely be unable to attend as he had a calf about to be born. Michele Chamberlain is unable to attend as well.

Lawreen introduced Susan Fuller who explained her involvement in the 25th Earth Day which led to working with the 50th celebration. Sue has been doing environmental stewardship to lower the carbon footprint at the Episcopal Church. Working with a NERC USDA Grant and the LRPC, she has initiated composting with several summer children's camps in Tuftonboro.

II. Ag Comm Tree Give-Away:

Dave Strauch spoke of the Boscowan State Nursery and Kurt DeVlyder's contact with them regarding White Spruce trees. Kurt noted when they are available (ground not frozen) they can be picked up, put in his walk-in, and passed out free during the event. (He will assume the cost as the Ag Comm has no budget - \$60 for 100 trees.)

There was a discussion regarding a handout with planting advice. Trees can be wrapped in moist newspaper. Everyone agreed plastic bags were not an acceptable alternative.

Sarah Silk had been in contact with Adam Tasker, Wolfeboro SWF, and Susan had been in touch with Josh Arnold, GALA. Adam is open to the annual town cleanup day scheduling to match the event. Susan reported Josh was looking at May 2nd. Sarah noted that is a date for a state-wide initiative.

After a discussion of the pros and cons for closer to the 4-22 Earth Day or the May 2nd cleanup day, the group agreed on May 2nd as: the trees would definitely be ready then; a table can be set up for the Ag Comm at the GALA building with others interested parties (possibly the Energy Comm, Garden Club, Brewster Env group, etc); there is better exposure and possibilities for larger participation by the public.

White Spruce will be obtained with the promotion of "grow your own Christmas Tree" to gain interest for the project. The trees will be stored at DeVlyder Farm for pickup. Dave Strauch, Sarah, and Kurt formed a small sub-committee to cover the Boscowan trip arrangements.

Susan distributed cards with dates of the Earth Care Film Series. She will announce the May 2nd free trees at the movie tomorrow night. Ag members can also pass out flyers at the April 4th movie for the event. There will likely be an additional movie May 2nd.

Susan and Sarah will contact Josh Arnold regarding additional coordination. Susan left at 6:45 for another appointment.

Lawreen and Marge Strunk will assume duties at the DeVlyder Farm on May 2nd. Macy Gotthardt and Sarah will be stationed at the GALA location.

Sarah will contact Susan and Josh regarding articles to the local paper. Some advance notice for the clean up as well as other aspects of the event should increase chances of people participating. Elissa Paquette usually attends the clean up day for photos.

III. Re-Appointment Reminder:

Those present having to reapply for appointment were reminded. The April 1 BOS meeting will probably be the date to attend.

IV. Ag Meeting Dates 2020:

Sarah explained that the Community Center would be utilized by another group for any **1st Thursdays** not scheduled by Ag Comm. Therefore, two additional dates were scheduled to secure access. **March 5, May 7, June 4, and Dec 3** were originally noted. The 2 new dates are **April 2nd and October 1st.**

V. Adjourn:

A new Business item was discussed before adjournment. Often farmers have multiple lots of land which may be contiguous. However, if they want to construct a barn to shelter animals, store hay/feed, or some accessory use building to store farm equipment on the property with no dwelling, they are unable to do so because of local zoning. A variance would be difficult to obtain due to the lack of hardship inherent in the vacant lot. A special condition may exist as the lot may be in farming (crops, animal pasture, orchard, etc) and the building may be uniquely suited to the activity thereon.

This question has arisen before. It was suggested by Dave Strauch to contact the Farm Bureau lobbyist for direction. Sarah suggested investigating a change in state law to prevent a hodge-podge of inconsistent local regulations. Kurt noted he has spoken to Matt Sullivan, Town Planner and Corey Rider, Codes Enforcement about this subject.

A special exception was seen as the most efficient process for allowing an accessory use for an agriculture related "accessory" building without a primary dwelling.

With a motion from Blair Moody and a second from Macy Gotthardt, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah M Silk, (substitute secretary)
Ag3-5-20