

NOT APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION – MEETING MINUTES
September 3, 2020

CALL TO ORDER- Chair Jenny Larson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00PM

PRESENT: Jenny Larson, Jessica Edwards, Theresa Wentzell, Stephen Doherty, Alternate Jeff Caira, Alternate John Spottiswood, Alternate Laura Spottiswood

ABSENT: Cindy Kirkpatrick, Stephanie Kelly

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MEETING MINUTES

(Edwards/Doherty) To accept meeting minutes from the August 13, 2020 Agricultural Commission meeting

ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

Mr. Cote advised the member of the commission that Cindy Kirkpatrick resigned from her 2 year seat on the commission due to family problems.

OPEN FORUM

No one came forward

APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments

DISCUSSION

Re-election of officers

Ms. Larson appointed Ms. Spottiswood to be a voting member for the September 3rd meeting, sitting in for the absence of Cindy Kirkpatrick.

Ms. Larson noted that the election of officers needed to be held again. Ms. Kelly had made nominations for officers as an alternate member.

Ms. Edwards nominated Ms. Larson Chair. Mr. Doherty seconded.

MOTION: (Edwards/Doherty) To appoint Jenny Larson as Chair

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Wentzell nominated Ms. Edwards Vice Chair. Mr. Doherty seconded.

MOTION: (Wentzell / Doherty) To appoint Jessica Edwards as Vice Chair

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Mr. Doherty nominated Ms. Wentzell as secretary. Ms Edwards seconded.

MOTION: (Doherty/Edwards) To appoint Theresa Wentzell as secretary

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

2-year Alt position

Discussion about the 2-year alternate opening and now, with Cindy Kirkpatrick's resignation, the 2-year vacancy.

Ms. Spottiswood stated that she would apply for the 2-year vacancy.

AG By-Laws

Ms. Edwards asked about rules for advertising and communication. Ms. Larson stated that we can use the office of the Board of Selectman as a point of contact. The information would be sent to Chair, Bob Haverty and forwarded to Ms. Larson.

Mr. Caira asked about transparency. Ms. Larson stated that the Agricultural Commission will have a binder with the agendas and meeting minutes in the office of the Board of Selectman that is available to the public.

Ms. Larson suggested a subcommittee to work on the By-Laws. Ms. Larson, Mr. Spottiswood, Ms. Edwards, and Mr. Caira volunteered for the subcommittee. A suggestion for residents to join the subcommittee was made. Ms. Donna Weadick, who was present at the meeting, volunteered.

The group discussed looking at other town's by-laws as a starting point.

Rules of Procedure

We talked about Roberts Rules which are much more complicated than most realize. Mr. Cote had a copy of the NH Planning & Land Use Regulation handbook. Ms Larson will look into getting copies of the handbook.

Livestock Ordinance

Mr. Cote explained that the Board of Selectman do not expect a final proposal from the Agricultural Commission for the October 14, 2020 meeting, but a presentation of the progress that the commission has made. Mr. Cote stated that the commission has a responsibility to respond and present a better solution. Mr. Cote stated that the Board of Selectman was adamant that the Agricultural Commission should not come back to the Board of Selectman stating that there is

Ms. Larson stated that she spoke to the State Agricultural Commissioner on the phone and he is looking at getting us some resources. Ms Larson is trying to set

up a meeting with the State Agricultural Commissioner to come speak with the Pelham AG Commission.

Ms Spottiswood asked what the steps are now in town for and how do we track the problems? Mr Cote said the Code enforcer keeps record of his calls. Ms Spottiswood asked what are the first steps taken and who goes out first. Mr Cote said whoever is called first where the complaint goes to. also asked was there any communication between the code enforcer and the ACO?

Steps need to be added in our solutions to who to call first and cross communicate between the Code Enforcer, the ACO and AG Commission.

Mr. Spottiswood presented an RSA that could be used to form a solution for our town. The RSA is pertaining to dogs, it defines levels of offenses and has good wording for what we are looking for. Mr. Spottiswood asked if the town enforces this RSA. If so, we could adopt it for all animals. Mr. Spottiswood noted that if there are such laws for dogs and none for livestock, this may be the fair compromise that people are looking for.

Mr. Cote stated that this RSA is not enforced in Pelham. At the state level there is not just one agency to help there are many that have to be involved and lots of shuffling around. That is why it's important to handle these things at the local level.

Mr. Spottiswood suggested then, using this RSA and changing it from “dog” to “animals”

Everyone agreed to look over this RSA 466:31, 466:31-a.

Ms. Larson inquired about setting up emergency meetings to help find a resolution. All members agreed that they would be available on 9/17 and 9/24 to meet and discuss this issue further.

Ms. Larson hopes to have more info from the Commissioner by then.

Ms Spottiswood will reach out to our Code Enforcer to come talk with us on his processes and introduce ourselves to help

Ms Wentzell will reach out to our ACO to also come speak with us during one of our emergency meetings in September.

Ms. Edwards asked about communication and advertising and creating a facebook page and a pamphlet. The pamphlet could be given out when the ACO and/or code enforced go to a call where there is a complaint or problem.

fundraising

Discussion on participating in the festival of trees and seeing if we can run one of the tables to fundraise and raise awareness. Ms. Spottiswood noted that she will look into it. There was discussion of participating with the Livestock Meet and Greet for public outreach.

COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Doherty /Edwards)

VOTE: (5-0-0)