

HOLLISTON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Members present: Justin Brown (associate), Janet Horne, Natalie Kent (associate), PJ Kilkelly (associate), Donna Kramer, Tony Lulek, Helen MacArthur and Paula Mark.

Guests: Bobby Blair, Rolf Briggs and Lixy Carey.

Meeting Called to Order: Chairperson, Tony Lulek called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Minutes of the Last Meeting: Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by PJ Kilkelly, to accept the minutes of the October 14, 2014 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Serocki Farm: Lixy Carey, a member of the Open Space Committee, gave us an update on the Serocki property. Everything is moving forward. A conservation restriction is needed. Those mentioned to handle this were the Audubon Society, trustees of the Upper Charles and the Massachusetts Farm Bureau. There are fewer organizations who are interested in doing this. An endowment fund needs to be established to hold the conservation restriction. The amount of \$15,000.00 has been budgeted for this. There is a meeting in Medway on December 1, 2014 relative to this subject. We have to make sure that the property stays as agriculture. With regard to the buildings on the property, the Housing Trust has now expressed an interest in the house. We need to keep the house. We could gut it and turn it into a meeting area. The garage could be used for storing farming equipment. The closing on the property is December 23, 2014. With regard to the conservation restriction, this could take a long time. There will be more discussion relative to this property at the Open Space Meeting on December 8, 2014. Tony Lulek stated that he hoped that the members of the AgCom would be able to attend the meeting on the 8th. Rolf Briggs expressed an interest in being part of the process. He spoke about the rail trail which is now coming to completion. He is looking for another project to volunteer for. Things that he mentioned that he could do included opening up trails, removing invasives, reduce hazards on walking trails. It was felt that it would be great if we could use the house to do workshops and demonstrations. Other thoughts for the property were demonstration gardens and wildflower meadows. There is so much that can be done with the land that is available. Mark Connelly has knowledge of what type of wildlife is on the property. He would be interested in teaching about the property. We could hold educational classes, there would be land available for livestock, we could lease some of the land and we would also have a meeting center. Rolf Briggs said that he would go to see Karen Sherman to inquire as to the boundry lines. Natalie Kent said that once the closing has been completed, we should plan a field trip to the land. It was also suggested that we have a test for arsenic done on the soil.

Community Garden: Natalie Kent stated that the first weekend in December (both Saturday and Sunday) would be a good time for the clean up at the garden. We also need to plant 500 daffodil bulbs. Natalie will send out an e-mail to all the gardeners. The towers have been put away. PJ Kilkelly stated that he wants to put up shelves in the shed. Tony Lulek stated that he has a lot of gardening books that can be put in the shed for everyone's use. The new application is up on the

website. We currently have 30 plots available for planting. It was decided that Natalie Kent will be the individual in charge of the community garden. Discussion was also held relative to creating one plot as handicapped accessible. Donna Kramer made a motion, seconded by PJ Kilkelly, that we allot \$25.00 to Tony Lulek for the purpose of making plot signs. The motion passed unanimously.

Kiss the Pig: PJ Kilkelly reported that he went to Town Hall to get the guidelines for the contest. He has a mock up of the ticket. Justin Brown will print information on the back side of the ticket as to what it is all about. PJ said that he has a spot outside of the Congregational Church for the Holiday Stroll. Boss Hog will be there as well as Rudolph the goat and his sleigh with the bag for the letters to Santa. There will also be a table where we will be asking people to vote (\$1.00 per vote) for one of the nominees to "Kiss the Pig".

Website: Justin Brown asked for more pictures to put up on the website. PJ Kilkelly asked if there was something that could go on the website relative to the cranberries.

Winter Program: The winter/spring program will be on March 22, 2015. Everyone should bring their thoughts and ideas to the next meeting relative to a theme that we can build off of. It was also felt that the event would be a good time to promote the sale of our weed killer.

Miscellaneous: It was felt that we need to have a Treasurer's report at each meeting so that we know exactly where we are financially. Tony Lulek stated that we need to come up with a date as to when we want to make a presentation at a Selectmen meeting by the Commission members. PJ Kilkelly mentioned that presently there are five people who have expressed an interest in becoming members of the Commission. He expressed the thought that perhaps we should develop some type of review and screening system for when there may be an opening on the Commission. It was decided that our next meeting would be on Tuesday, December 9, 2014.

Helen MacArthur made a motion, seconded by Justin Brown, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Horne