

HOLLISTON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MINUTES

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

Members present: Janet Horne, Natalie Kent (associate), Tony Lulek, Helen MacArthur and Paula Mark.

Members absent: Justin Brown (associate) and Tyla Doolin (associate).

Interested Parties: Bobby Blair and Andy Reseeka.

Meeting Called to Order: Chairperson, Tony Lulek called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Minutes of the last two meetings: Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by Helen MacArthur, to accept the minutes of the December 15, 2015 and January 12, 2016 meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

Rogers Road Property: Tony Lulek stated that this topic will no longer be on our agenda. It is now in the hands of the Board of Selectmen who are forming a Farm Advisory Committee to oversee the property in order for it to become a community farm. He stated that he is very happy with how this has been handled and feels that it is the appropriate way to go. We will need to contact the Selectmen to give them the keys to the property.

öThe Future ó AgCom Moving Forwardö: There is currently an opening on the commission. We do need to focus on our mission. Tony Lulek stated that we need to develop relationships with the farmers in the town. He asked us all to think about what our mission statement should be and bring our thoughts to the next meeting.

Butterfly Aviary: We need to decide on an opening date in the spring for the aviary. We need to come up with a plan. Natalie Kent inquired as to if the aviary will be moving to the Rogers Road property. Tony stated that as of right now there are no plans to do this. Natalie stated that perhaps members of the Newcomers Club would like to be involved. Natalie will reach out to them and invite them to come to our next meeting. Tony stated that we do not have the manpower to do all of the work that is involved at the aviary. Andy Reseeka suggested that perhaps we could approach the schools. Paula Mark will invite the science teachers to come to our next meeting with regard to the aviary. There is a green team at the middle school. Tony asked how do we make it truly educational. Paula suggested that perhaps we could have shelves to show the different stages. It was also brought up that the structure should be seen by the Building Inspector for his approval.

Website: Tony stated that he went on the website and updated some of the information. There are some things that we should be doing such as putting out information as far as addressing different situations and what regulations may apply.

Spring Event: Tony passed around the flyer that he has created for this event. He will order a banner to be put up at MacArthur Farm. We will be putting posters up at the library, Fiskes, Superette, Outpost, Coffee Haven, Arcadian, MacArthurs and Town Hall. Tony will start a facebook page for the event. The information on the event will also be sent to the Holliston Reporter and the Holliston Local Pages. Paula Mark will send the information to the MetroWest News and to cable. Tony will send out an e-mail to all who had volunteered to participate in the event to make sure that they are still on board. With regard to the craft of decorating pots and planting flowers, Helen will get 100 pots. It was suggested that we plant hollyhock seeds. Natalie will check to see what will stick and not smear on the pots. Natalie reported that she has information on the tent. The one that she got a quote on was a 10x10, 4 sides with our logo on the front at a cost of \$697.00. There is a two to three week lead time involved. After much discussion Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by Janet Horne, that we put a cap of \$500.00 on the cost of a tent with our logo. The motion passed unanimously. Natalie will go back to the supplier with this information to get a new quote.

Community Garden: Natalie stated that she needs to get the 2016 application out to the planters. She has taken off the handicap portion. Her target date for those who had a garden last year is March 17, 2016. She will contact these individuals via e-mail. She stated that if we are going to continue with the cranberries, we need to keep the plot that they are in weeded.

Helen MacArthur made a motion, seconded by Paula Mark, that our next meetings will be on March 8, 2016 and March 29, 2016. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Andy Reseeka addressed the Commission with regard to a letter which was sent by them to the Mass. Audubon in 2012 with regard to beehives on Highland Street property. He stated that he was completely unaware that there was a problem. He has read our minutes where this situation went into discussion and then the letter was drafted which he stated is totally against Agricultural Commission regulations. He only wants a conclusion to this whole situation. He has spoken to a lawyer and stated that the Agricultural Commission violated Article 97. We should have gone to him for resolution of the situation rather than going to the Mass. Audubon which in his opinion was the reason that he was not allowed on the property the following year. Tony Lulek stated that he has spoken to Elissa Landre at the Mass. Audubon who stated that our letter had no bearing on the lease arrangements. Andy Reseeka stated that we facilitated the problem. We made an assessment with no knowledge. Andy stated that he wants resolution to this situation and an apology from us. Tony Lulek stated that he felt that we had nothing to apologize for. Andy stated that he felt that this was a travesty of agriculture and that he was going to pursue this further with the Selectmen. Chairperson Tony Lulek closed the discussion.

Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by Helen MacArthur, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Horne, Clerk

