

Franklin Agriculture and Conservation Commission

FRANKLIN TOWN HALL

7 Meetinghouse Hill Rd.

Franklin, Connecticut

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, November 16, 2017

7:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order: Chairperson Susan Allen called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Susan Allen, Vice Chair Alan Holmberg, Craig Staebner. **Members Absent:** Gail Miller. **Alternate Member Present:** Roland Mihok, **Alternate Member Absent** Chester Rynaski.
Mr. Mihok was seated as a voting member.

2. Recognition of Visitors and Initial Inquiries:

3. Election of Officers: Chairperson Susan Allen opened the floor for nominations.

MOTION #1 (11-16-17): made by Roland Mihok SECONDED BY Craig Staebner that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission nominates Susan Allen as Chairperson – there were no other nominations. Nominations were closed.

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

MOTION #2 (11-16-17): made by Susan Allen SECONDED BY Craig Staebner that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission nominates Alan Holmberg as Vice Chairperson – there were no other nominations. Nominations were closed.

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. February 16, 2017:

MOTION #3 (11-16-17): made by Alan Holmberg SECONDED BY Craig Staebner that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission approves the Minutes of February 16, 2017 as amended

- Clarification to New Business f. - Janvrin Sisters donated \$16 Million. \$8 Million to Southeast CT Community Foundation and \$8 Million to Middlesex Community Foundation

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

- b. June 15, 2017:

MOTION #4 (11-16-17): made by Craig Staebner SECONDED BY Alan Holmberg that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission approves the Minutes of **June 15, 2017 as amended**

- Correction to New Business a. Community Garden / The Hub: Steven Ayer attended the AG CON meeting to discuss the Ayers Vegetable Farm idea of growing and selling organic vegetables in Franklin at a local hub for purchase by both residents and restaurants interested in utilizing organic vegetables.

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

5. Call for Additional Agenda Items:

MOTION #5 (11-16-17): made by Susan Allen SECONDED BY Roland Mihok that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission add Franklin Website to New Business

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

6. Correspondence:

1) Latest AGVOCATE Events; 2) Healthy Soils Program Lebanon Nov 27; and 3) Farm Tour – November 30th

7. Old Business:

- a. **SPRAGUE LAND PRESERVE RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY 9/12/17:** There was review of pictures. State Representative Congressman Joe Courtney and Senator Cathy Osten were present at the ceremony to celebrate the recent purchases of the Robinson / Watson farms.
- b. **CONSERVATION EFFORTS:** Efforts are ongoing to conserve preferred land such as, but not limited to, an area along the river where the old mill used to be. Sprague is looking into a possible option for land acquisition related to the Bombaro property.
- c. **GRAPE SEED EXTRACT TOUR:** See Agenda Item 8c.
- d. **COMMUNITY GARDEN / THE HUB:** The hub experienced a very successful first year. The Community Support Agriculture (CSA) program of paying up front for a weekly supply of vegetables has worked out well.
- e. **FRANKLIN ESTATES GOLF COURSE:** No new information.

8. New Business:

a. **2018 MEETING CALENDAR:**

MOTION #6 (11-16-17): made by Craig Staebner SECONDED BY Alan Holmberg that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission 2018 Calendar as presented

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

- b. **BUDGET REQUEST:** Tabled
- c. **AGRI-TOURISM IN FRANKLIN (OLD MUSHROOM FARM):** No new information at this point. There is the potential that a representative from K-Best will attend a future AG CON meeting to discuss current plans for this site and the idea of agri-tourism.
- d. **SOLAR PANEL PROJECT IN FRANKLIN:** Site is located across from Old Mushroom Farm at Williams Crossings Road. Project is moving forward.
- e. **NASIN PROPERTY – MINERAL RIGHTS:** It was noted, mineral rights are held with Windham Sand and Stone for about 800 acres on the Nasin property behind the old mushroom farm. Mineral rights will expire in three years.
- f. **LEBANON FARMERS MARKET:** The market will continue through January 2018 at the Senior Center.
- g. **COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACT:** Tabled
- h. **MERGER BETWEEN DEPT OF AG AND DEPT OF ENVIRONMENT:** No merger

- i. **WCCC MEETING 11/29/17 PRESERVATION:** Windham Country Conservation Consortium will hold a discussion consortium about the preservation of land and obtaining grants.
 - j. **PROTECT STATE OWNED PUBLIC LANDS:** Generally, this resolution of protecting State owned public lands is driven by concerned people asking for a legal requirement that a public hearing be held for an activity associated to a developer or persons wishing to change the status of state owned public property. The requirement to enact a change into law is that it must pass the legislative approval process twice. The resolution passed once last year and in this coming year it will be placed on the floor in hopes of a second approval.
 - k. **FRANKLIN'S NATURAL RESOURCES:** This is a goal of AG CON to develop a database of Franklin property that can be referenced when developing an effective Open Space Plan. The database would act as a natural features inventory of property in town when designating a value for such property.
 - l. **WEBSITE:** The Franklin Town Website is now underway. AG CON has a dedicated page. If anyone is interested in adding important, interesting, or helpful information please contact Sherry Pollard, Website Coordinator.
9. **GENERAL COMMENTS:** The Farm Bureau annual meeting will be held in January. The Farm Bureau is also preparing to host a series of workshops with surrounding Agricultural and Conservation Commissions to be located in Bozrah. Dates coming soon.
10. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None
11. **ADJOURNMENT:**

MOTION #7: made by Craig Staebner SECONDED BY Alan Holmberg that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry Pollard

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