

Meeting Minutes
Canterbury Agriculture Commission
Thursday, January 22, 2015
Canterbury Community Center

I. Call to order:

- a. Chairperson Dawn Pindell called the meeting to order at 7:16 PM
- b. Recording device was unavailable to obtain audio transcript.

II. Roll call:

- a. Members present: Dawn Pindell, John Baldwin, Christina Fensley, and Rob Tuttle.
- b. Chairperson acknowledged that a quorum was present in order to conduct this regularly scheduled meeting, and that the agenda had been posted as required.

III. Review of minutes from previous meeting:

- a. Minutes of the previous meeting (November 20, 2014) were reviewed and discussed. Motion by Christina, seconded by Rob to accept previous minutes as recorded and place on file. Carried unanimous.

IV. Opportunity for Public Comment:

- a. None present.

V. Old Business:

a. **ADVOCATE PROGRAM:** Lack of promulgation of agricultural related items via the Advocate link in recent months was noted as an issue during the last meeting (November.) Few notifications have been received via e-mail, compared to previous expectations. Dawn reported that funding for the Advocate program has expired state-wide, and not likely to be renewed. Purpose of the program had been achieved, with establishment of town Agriculture Commissions across the state, and multiple other information resources now available to promote farming. The Northeastern Regional Ag Commission group representatives are working together among the various towns to continue advancing farming information, and identifying issues needing group effort to resolve.

b. **PDR:** John provided update on the efforts to assist Logee-Nye family with submitting state application, for property along Route 169, contiguous with the Christensen parcel.

VI. New Business:

a. **REGIONAL AG COMMISSION MEETING:** Dawn provided a flyer and information about a scheduled Regional Ag Comm meeting on Feb 11th, at Killingly High School (5:30 – 8:30 PM), including a tour of the KHS Agriculture Science Department and facilities, refreshments, and a meeting to discuss upcoming topics. An e-mail will also be promulgated providing information and invitations to attend, to all persons on the former Advocate distribution address list.

b. **SCHEDULE FOR 2015:** Dawn presented the meeting dates for the upcoming year. Meetings will continue to be held on the 4th Thursday each month at 7 PM, with exception of July and December. Upcoming meetings will be held on Feb 26, March 26, April 23, May 28, June 25, Aug 27, Sept 24, Oct 22, and Nov 19 (prior to Thanksgiving). A motion was made by Christina, second by Rob, to approve these meeting dates for 2015. Passed unanimous.

c. CANTERBURY NEWSLETTER: Dawn discussed the article she submitted for the upcoming February Winter issue of the newsletter.

d. BROCHURES: The Brooklyn Ag Commission is planning to print an updated brochure “Brooklyn Grown” listing the local farms and agriculture businesses in that town. They have contacted other local towns to ask if there is an interest in pooling the printing fee, to reduce the cost to individual towns. The Canterbury Ag Commission has no budget, and would have to seek funds from a separate source. The previous “Canterbury Grown” brochure was printed in Spring of 2011 (four years ago) and is in need of updating to reflect changes for new Canterbury farms, and others that are no longer in business. Cost of printing would be \$500 for 1,000 copies. Previous discussions with the Canterbury Economic Development Commission indicated potential funding for this effort. New offices in the EDC are Shawn Donahue (Chairman) and Jill Fritzsche (Vice-Chair). John will contact EDC, make request from the Ag Commission.

e. CT AG WEEKLY: Dawn presented copies of the January 20, 2015 edition of the weekly newsletter, which was discussed. Newsletter is available no charge via e-mail distribution by the CT Department of Agriculture. It provides much useful information for both beginning and established farmers. Of note in this issue was establishment of a pilot program called Community Farms Preservation Program (CFPP). The program seeks to encourage towns to preserve small farms of local economic importance, with demonstrated levels of community support. Established in 2011, the CFPP is an alternative for farmers whose land may not qualify for the Farmland Preservation Program (purchase of development rights.) Currently, 26 towns in the state (including Canterbury) have completed eligibility requirements to qualify for funding via the program.

f. CANTERBURY GROWN: Dawn identified that our local town brochure is in need of updating, and that the members of the Ag Commission need to review it and submit changes by our next meeting on Feb 26th. She requested we all identify and new farms that should be added, or others no longer in business. Discussion followed.

g. COMMISSION EVENTS: Dawn requested inputs from all members regarding commission sponsored events for 2015. Discussion on thoughts, suggestions, new ideas, or changes. Topic was tabled until the next meeting (Feb 26th) due to the absence of Lee Wrigley and Kevin Lindell.

VII. Other Business

a. MAPLE LEAF FARM: Discussion regarding Lynne Denning and situation with Tony Denning possibly needing assistance with the farm business, since Lynne was expected to be in recovery for a long time. John reported that he had sent a card to the family shortly after the dog attack (in December) expressing condolences from the Canterbury Ag Commission, and encouraging Tony to contact any of us (members) for any help that may be needed to support his farm.

VIII. Next Meeting

a. Next official Canterbury Ag Commission meeting will be held February 26th at 7 pm in the Community Center.

IX. Adjournment

a. Motion to adjourn by Christina, seconded by Rob, (unanimous.) Meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.