

ENFIELD AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, September 14, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Enfield Agricultural Commission was called to order by Chair Karen LaPlante in the Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, Connecticut on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 @ 7:06 PM

ROLL CALL

Kathy Vose took the roll.

Present - Chair LaPlante, Commissioner Cote, Commissioner Dynia, Commissioner Vose, Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall, and Commissioner McGuire

Also present: Georgie Driver – Staff and Karen Timpone – Recording secretary

Absent – Commissioner Wyzga, Commissioner Sacerdote and Commissioner Kober

Approval of Minutes - A motion to accept minutes of July 13, 2021 was made by Commissioner Vose, seconded by Commissioner Cote. No discussion - 4/2/0 – Abstentions by Commissioner Cote and Commissioner Dynia.

Public Participation – None.

Correspondence –

Discussion of an earlier start time to give the Commissioners more time for discussions. Chair LaPlante stated that the EAC committed to a 7pm start time when the calender was adopted last November for the 2021 calender year. Georgie will look into this to see if it can be changed prior to setting the new calender in November. They agreed that 6:30 would be the time when it can/will be changed. Commissioner Dynia made a motion to keep it at 7 pm for now until more information is presented but it will probably change for the 2022 calender year – seconded by Commissioner McGuire – passed unanimously

Chair LaPlante went through the Town Clerks Records and there is an Assessors Certificate that gets published every year. This particular one was published in December of 2020 and it is a list of the farms that she believed qualify for 490. It has increased from 28 properties from the year before to 30 properties this tax year.

Election of Officers - Chair LaPlante asked for a motion for a slate of officers. The nominations are Commissioner Cote for Chair, Commissioner McGuire for Vice Chair and Commissioner Vose as secretary. A motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Dynia - passed unanimously. Chair LaPlante made a motion to withdraw the first slate which inadvertently had three Democrats as officers and there can only be two as majority party – seconded by Commissioner Dynia – passed unanimously. A motion for a new slate was made by Gretchen Pfeifer-Hall with Karen LaPlante as Chair, Tim McGuire as Vice Chair and Kathy Vose as Secretary, seconded by Michael Dynia – no further discussion - passed unanimously.

Review of the Bylaws - Chair LaPlante stated that she heard the staff was changing Bylaws of all commissions. Georgie stated that she heard in 2016 the Commissions got approval for their Bylaws from Town Council under #3019 and the EAC Bylaws also represent the ECC bylaws. The EAC did set up separate Bylaws and Chair LaPlante will e-mail the ECC Bylaws to Georgie.

Approval of Invoices and other financial matters - None

Reports of Officers Committees and Staff - Commissioner Cote has asked in the past if there can be a subcommittee to investigate or conduct a project. During the conversations regarding initiating a committee – they concluded that they cannot have a committee if they have more than 3 people then they have a quorum and they have to have a public notice. Can they appoint a committee to investigate a subject or work on project and if they can, how many people can be on the committee before it becomes a public meeting? He asked Georgie to look into this to see if they can do it and what the parameters/procedures are.

Chair LaPlante asked if there was an update on the Mullen Farm. Georgie said the state thinks it is an issue with funds. Commissioner Cote stated that in order to get approved by the State the Town had to create a fund for this. He stated that somewhere around \$25,000 was put in a fund for this. Georgie gave two suggestions to get try to get this information. One was to check with Laurie and the other is to ask the Finance Department.

Unfinished Business –

POCD – Chair LaPlante has been doing to the virtual meetings, no in-person meetings. There has not been a good turnout at the meetings. Chapters 1 thru 6 are completed and they are under revision as he writes the next chapters. He is waiting for comments back from the steering committee and comments back from Commissions.

Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall is concerned about the Winstanley project possibly taking soil off site which is not supposed to leave the town. Georgie asked that if they see that to take a picture.

One goal for the EAC is to meet or exceed the state goal of preservation of farmland (cropland) acreage.

New Business–

Farmland Preservation List – Georgie gave out an updated list of all 490 parcels – (239 properties total acres - farmland is 3986.18 – and forestland is 1365.19 – open space is 129.78)

The EAC has to develop a system to rank farmland – This will be tabled until the Bylaws are reviewed. 490 criteria was discussed as some properties were very small - Forestland 25 acres or more. Farmland acreage can include woodlands. Farmland state law set no minimum for farmland – but a town can set a minimum amount of acres.

Commissioner Dynia reported that Stafford Agg Commission sponsored a farm day. That may be something to think about for next year. Commissioner Dynia will get more information for the next meeting.

Next Meeting Date - Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Adjournment – A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Cote, seconded by Commissioner Dynia – passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned @ 8:15 pm

Prepared by: Karen Timpone

Respectfully submitted by

Kathleen Vose, Secretary

DRAFT