

The February 21, 2023, regular meeting of the Agriculture Commission was convened at 8:00 p.m. by Chairman Chris Sorensen via WebEx.

Present: Chair Chris Sorensen, Vice Chair Andrea Urbano, Kristyna Hulland, Steve Munno, and Leland Torrence. Selectmen Paul Kuriakose and Geraldine Shaw, Clerk

MINUTES

The minutes of the January 10, 2023, meeting, were approved (Sorensen – Torrence).

MICHAEL BURNS RE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX

Michael Burns, 44 Newton Road discussed the items farmers are required to list on the personal-property tax forms. Items to be included are the percentage of time and value of computer, office furniture, or a dining room table, pens, etc. Even a painting you may have on the wall in the room where you do your farm accounting. He said that he farms about 2.5 acres using hand tools – and those tools also are to be declared. He noted that he was not required to make these declarations until about two years ago. The members of the Commission were not familiar with the particular form and separate letter Mr. Burns received from the Assessor.

Mr. Sorensen said he would meet with the Assessor to clarify the requirement and report back to Mr. Burns and the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

REVIEW MATERIAL FOR WEBSITE POSTING

The Commission reviewed and **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Sorensen – Urbano) to approve the material to be posted on the Commission’s Website page.

FARMLAND LEASES

The Commission reviewed the Agricultural Land Use Permit Agreement for The Farm at the Southbury Training School. Members of the Commission will seek other Town’s agreements/leases for review. They also discussed if changing the designation from a lease to a permit would make a difference in the Charter requirement.

JUMPING WORMS

Ms. Shaw said that the Conservation Commission member who was spear heading the March 14th program at the library has resigned. Another member is working on the program. Ms. Shaw will find out if the program will be televised/posted live on YouTube. That way members could watch the program prior to the 8:00 p.m. regular meeting.

APRIL 22 – INITIATION TO SELECTMEN TO TOUR LEASED PROPERTIES

The Commission voted to invite the Selectmen to tour two of the leased farmland properties on Earth Day, April 22 to demonstrate the stewardship of the leased property.

The Commission **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Sorensen – Urbano) to approve the letter with the addition of the two farms to be visited - “Off Center Farm”, 48 Center Road, owned by Kristyna and Oliver Hulland; and 1910 Litchfield Turnpike, leased by Chris Sorensen (part of Bishop Estate West).

ADJOURMENT

On a non-debatable motion by Mr. Sorensen, seconded by Mr. Munno, the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Geraldine S. Shaw, Clerk