

Lanesborough Agricultural Commission Meeting Minutes – June 5, 2008

**Attendees: members - Prudy Barton, Pete Gallant, Marv Michalak
alternates - Darlene Newton, Aimee Thayer**

The meeting opened at 7:10 p.m. in the Planning Board Room at the Lanesborough Town Hall.

1. **Minutes** - Aimee reported she would bring them to the next meeting and e-mail them to the members to review beforehand.
2. **Town Meeting Warrant Article** - Pete reported that he withdrew the article to create an account for Ag Commission Funds in light of the fact that we proceeded incorrectly to establish the fund. He will work with the town accountant and Paul Boudreau to prepare the correct verbiage for the next town meeting expected to be in late summer or fall.
3. **Right to Farm By Law** - members discussed distribution of the RTF bylaw by including it in a town mailing, such as the census or tax bills.
4. **Open Space Plan** - Aimee informed the Commission that there were a couple of line items in the Town's recently generated Open Space Plan which required AgCom involvement.
5. **Farmer's Market By Law** - members discussed the creation of a Farmer's Market by Law which had been brought up at the time the Berkshire Area Farmers Market relocated to town. Aimee suggested the issue might best be handled by a couple of definitions and a use table line item in the existing Zoning by Law which is currently being reviewed by a special committee for updating.
6. **Farm Inventory Survey** - narrative report is in process
7. **Grant opportunities** - Aimee reported she had contacted the Berkshire Taconic Foundation to find out if Ag Commissions were eligible to apply for the Green Pastures fund and received a response that they could. With that in mind members generated some promotional ideas such as a newsletter, ads in local papers, kiosks and signage in local stores "Our Family Garden" concept etc. Commissioners generated a list of 18 businesses in town which are either farms, landscapers, orchards or businesses which serve farmers either by selling their produce or providing feed or supplies to farmers. Each member agreed to contact some of the folks on the list and ask them directly "How can the Agricultural Commission help you with marketing?".
8. **Ag in the Classroom** - Commissioners discussed possible agricultural projects for Lanesborough School which might be funded by the LIFE fund, also a grant program administered by the Berkshire Taconic Foundation Grant. Suggestions included providing funding for teachers to obtain continuing ed credits in Ag in the Classroom subjects and curricula. Also, possible small scale ag projects including a vegetable garden, a christmas tree farm in conjunction with the tree committee, and paying for field trip transportation of students to working farms.
9. **Representative Guyer** - Prudy reported that pursuant to our discussion and approval at the April meeting, she sent correspondence to Representative Guyer congratulating him on his receipt of an award for his service on the Mass House of Representatives Committee for Natural Resources and the Environment.
10. **Commission Organization** - The voting committee members, Pete and Marv nominated and unanimously elected Prudy Barton to continue as chairperson remarking on the good job she has done. Aimee will continue to act as clerk for the time being to record the minutes.

Adjournment and next meetings

Members confirmed there is no meeting in July and the next meeting for August 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the Planning Board Room at Lanesborough Town Hall. A motion was passed to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.