AGRICULTURE COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday, June 6 ,2022

MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX

MEETING ROOM 3

REGULAR MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dr Ron Gross at 19:05

Attendees were Ron DiStefano, Mark Henderson, Bonnie Buongiorne, Aaron, Shaleen Thody, Ron Gross

Guest: First Selectman Irene Haines, Jim Curtin

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Chairman Ron Gross made a motion to elevate voting rights for Aaron, Mark Henderson 2nd all approved.

Motion made by Ron DiStefano to approve tonight's agenda 2nd by Mark Henderson all approved.

Motion made to approval minutes from 1/10/22 regular meeting by Ron DiStefano. 2nd by Mark Henderson all approved.

Comments from the Chair: Dr Gross spoke as a trauma surgeon, about the increase of mass shootings and encouraged everyone to call their reps in DC to look at making weapons of mass destruction harder to obtain.

Communications: Received resignation letter from Peter Dean due to health issues. Peter has been a member of the Ag Commission from the beginning and a life long farmer in town. Chairman Ron Gross asked about sending something to Peter in thanks for all his years of hard work for the commission and agriculture to this town.

Old Business: Jim Curtin continues to talk with the state regarding the property on the corner of Dainels Rd and Town St. Jim has proposed the site for a permanent Farmers Market. The appraisal of the property is the hold up now. The state feels the property is worth $18K which is more than Jim wants to pay for it. After appraisal will be approval on the setbacks. Jim said the property has tremendous issues, but is a great location for the sole purpose of a Farmers Market. Jim showed to the commission a site plan for the building. Jim asked First Selectman Haines if she could write a letter with State Senator Needleman asking for support and money towards the project. Selectman Haines responds was that she would consider asking for the property to be donated to the town. Chairman Gross asked about a grant for the property. There was conversation around hiring a grant writer. First Selectman Haines asked who will own

the building after construction? Chairman Gross said the town. Selectman expressed concern with the obligation to the town, since this was the first, she has heard about it. Chairman Gross relayed that the commission had been in conversation with the prior Selectman Robert Smith. He was also CC on all meetings regarding the Farmers Market. There was talk about going on a field trip to other towns with town owned F.M. Aaron asked about the organization of it. Expressed the many hours it takes to manage and organize one. Chairman Gross asked Aaron to put something together for the next meeting regarding the running of a F.M. He agreed he would. Shaleen asked to include the schools. Everyone was in agreement.

New Business: a) Resignations of Keith Wilson due to job constraints. Peter Dean due to health. Chairman Gross will be putting a notice in the local paper asking for volunteers.

b) Shaleen's needs and wants for the Middle School Garden. Mark Henderson said Shagbark has donated a 2 wheel water barrow, all she needs to do is come pick it up. Shagbark also donated garden fabric. Mark asked Nancy at Ballek's but they were all out. Aaron said he has ground cover he is willing to donate also. Garden Club worked together with the students. Jamie Burgess donated tomato plants, they cleaned, mulched and added soil amendments to the garden so it is ready for the growing season. They harvested rhubarb and the cafeteria will be making a dessert. Shaleen stated the students loved the asparagus and asked for more. The students said they could taste the difference from store bought. Shaleen will bring her students to the July 11th meeting.

With no other business, motion was made by Ron DiStefano 2nd by Mark Henderson to adjourn at 20:10