



TOWN OF WINSLOW AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING Minutes of April 2, 2021

Via ZOOM

Present: Chair Kate Newkirk; Secretary Judy Mathiau; Members; Sally Harwood, Jasmine Gregory, Elery Keene, Steve Russell and Town Manager Erica LaCroix

Absent: Members Rocky Gravel, Mike Heavener. Parks and Rec Director Amanda McCaslin

The Meeting opened at 10:00 a.m.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of March 12, 2021 – Sally moved to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Elery, all in favor.

Old Business:

1. Charter Revision – Kate asked the group to weigh in on the current AG Commission Charter. Proposed amendments include the following:
 - a) Following the second paragraph, add: *The Agriculture Commission shall include (non-voting) representatives from the Parks and Recreation Department and the Assessor's Office.*
 - b) Under **Agricultural Commission Roles and Responsibilities**, strike out the last bullet.
 - c) Under **Procedures**, 1. The group should annually, at their June meeting, elect a chair and secretary and agree to a committee structure and process for decision-making; 2. A detailed work plan and timeline will be developed annually that reflects any priorities agreed to by the Commission members. This work plan and timeline will be distributed to the Town Council, Planning Board, Parks and Recreation Department and the Assessor's Office and other committees as appropriate for comments.

Kate also presented an updated member list and their respective affiliation. She pointed out that a couple members' terms run out this July and they will need to request to serve another term. She will distribute the list to the members.

2. Charter Requirements – Kate presented the items in the Charter that we are not fulfilling and wanted to make sure that in the future we adhere to the requirements. A discussion took place on how best to do that, given the current website's lack in performance and

ease of administration. Erica suggested that the Commission post what they can such as minutes and agendas and possibly recorded meetings.

A *Facebook* page was suggested, and Erica said she could help set it up.

In the future, agendas will include a Public Comment opportunity.

The Commission also needs to create an annual plan that is submitted the Council. There are many projects on the table and having a plan of objectives and past accomplishments may support the need for a working budget.

Kate moved to create a plan for the 2021 Calendar year, seconded by Sally, all in favor.

Kate will work a draft and send to members, with the plan to include but not be limited to the creation of a *Facebook* page, Town Forest Development, Edible Gardens and Grants.

3. Town Forest – Tabled

New Business:

1. COVID Stimulus - Sally asked Erica if the COVID Stimulus money expected, is restricted to certain projects or uses. Erica said that the Town expects to receive \$765,000 over the next 2 years and that the guidance so far, is vague. However she did say that the money can not be used to reduce the tax rate, but can be used towards deferred capital items.
2. Solar Farms on Agricultural Land – Elery asked the group if they would be willing to consult with the Planning Board when a solar farm applies to develop open land. One recent case is a large tract on Veteran Drive with hay fields. The members agreed that it would make sense to offer feedback on a case by case basis. It was also suggested that the AG Commission be consulted on any large developments considered on open land.

Elery moved to adjourn at 10:54 a.m., seconded by Sally, all in favor.

Next meeting is May 7, 2021 at 10 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Judy Mathiau, Secretary