

**TOWN OF GRANBY
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES
October 12, 2011**

PRESENT: Michelle Niedermeyer, *Chairman*; Kate Bogli, Steven Hayes, Stanley Hayes, Ann Wilhelm

GUESTS: Erin Pirro, John Pirro, Sam Hammer, Susan Mitchell, Jenny Emery, Bob Brockett, Ginny Wutka, Amy Gilbert, Sali Barolli, Maryann Curling

Michelle Niedermeyer confirmed a quorum and began the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVE MINUTES:

ON A MOTION BY Michelle Niedermeyer, seconded by Kate Bogli, the Commission voted to approve the minutes of September 14, 2011 as written (4-0-1). Ann Wilhelm arrived after the minutes were approved.

CELEBRATE GRANBY 225 Update

- This topic was not discussed.

IDEAS TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURE IN GRANBY

- The Agricultural Commission and guests agreed that the best way to ‘promote’ agriculture is to ‘educate’ the community first. Educate the public on where food comes from. Since Granby is a large agricultural resource in this region of the state the Agricultural Commission views Granby as taking on a leadership role. Granby could work in partnership with surrounding farming communities helping to educate and promote agriculture beyond the boundaries of the town. This could be a win-win for each community involved. To that end a lively discussion ensued with many creative ideas on how to stimulate public enthusiasm about farming:-
- Ideas suggested are as follows:
 - Thanksgiving Sampler Basket
 - A Winter Stew Sampler Basket: fresh veggies, meats and wine needed to cook a stew
 - Farm Passport: Journeying to different farms and earn coupon/discounts etc
 - Farm Entertainment Coupon Book: work in conjunction with other towns and their farms
 - Farm Tours: Partner with Simsbury
 - Taste of Granby for different seasons
 - Taste of Wine & Granby Farm Foods
 - Market to an elite list of chefs and food writers
 - Bike Tour of Granby stopping at local farms
 - Granby Grange Chicken BBQ with farm tour—start planning in February
- Ginny Wutka highly recommended connecting with the Farmington Valley Tourism Bureau. The FVTB and Historical Society work closely together coordinating events, promotions and the like. The Agricultural Commission could work in conjunction with the FVTB as well thus creating their own events and promoting the agricultural community.

Michelle Niedermeyer suggested that a plan of five or so tour itineraries be formed. When people visit Granby they can use this already pulled together self-guided tour itinerary to plan their day---visiting not only farms but local spots as well.

Michelle Niedermeyer suggested farm internships through agricultural colleges could have far reaching publicity for the town. Some guests, who have used interns on their farms in the past, offered constructive criticism to this idea.

In addition to Holcomb Farm, Bob Brocket suggested that the Granby Grange could be used as a starting point---like a tourist information center---for whichever promotional plans come to fruition.

Holcomb Farm has hundreds of members many of whom are not Granby residents. The Ag Commission and Holcomb Farm could work together to encourage the non-Granby residents to shop at other local farms in town.

Kate Bogli suggested it would be beneficial for Granby farmers to have an idea about what the other farmers in town are doing/promoting etc. so the farmers can 'talk it up' to their customers about other farms are doing in town.

Michelle Niedermeyer expressed a concern that the Ag Commission website may not be visited as often as it could be. Its purpose is to be used as a promotional tool. How can it be made more accessible? It was suggested that the Ag Commission ask the town permission to have the Agricultural Commission website link to the *Town of Granby* website. In turn, each farmer could have a direct link to their own farm website from the Ag Commission website.

PLANNING FOR 2012

The Agricultural Commission will plan their meetings for the next few months are follows:

- November 2011: Solidify ideas presented during the October meeting
- December 2011: Present its projected goals to the Board of Selectmen
- January 2012: Host a farmer-to-farmer social
- February 2012: Conduct an educational night

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Maryann Curling spoke briefly about the Granby Sampler. It has been very successful. The feedback has been positive. The number of prepared baskets will remain around 50 total.

ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION BY Stanley Hayes, seconded by Steven Hayes, the Commission voted (5-0) to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Tappenden
Recording Secretary