

Town of Lincoln
Minutes of the Agriculture Commission Meeting
Held on Tuesday 3/9/2021 via Zoom teleconference

Members Present:

Voting: Louise Bergeron (co-chair), Ari Kurtz (co-chair), Nancy Bergen, Lynne Bower
Alternate Voting: Stacy Osur, Corey Nimmer, Karen Seo

Members Absent:

Voting: Ellen Raja

7:33 pm – Meeting commenced

Article on Lincoln's Right to Farm bylaw

Corey did a great job. The write-up provides the context and rationale for the bylaw and includes links to the video on the history of farming in Lincoln and Ag Comm brochure on "10 Ways to Support Agriculture in Lincoln Massachusetts."

**** Decision (unanimously)** – Agreed that Corey's article on Lincoln's Right to Farm bylaw will be sent to LincolnTalk and to the Lincoln Squirrel.

Annual report

Ari distributed another draft prior to the meeting for final review. Aside from minor edits, no additions or major changes were made.

Budget

As of 1/31/2021, the Ag Comm had a budget of \$5944 that is good to the end of June 2021. The town's suggested break down for these funds is (see Appendix A):

- Printing: \$4755
- Salaries and wages: \$1189

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Stacy to send Karen the annual Ag Comm budget info she obtained from the town.

Agricultural water rate

We discussed the Lincoln Water Dept's Definition of a farm, which is basically the Massachusetts state definition.

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Karen to distribute Water Dept text

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Stacy to follow up on with MLS re: adding information about Lincoln's Right to Farm bylaw to all Lincoln listings

Video education

- Recording has begun on the process of making maple syrup at Flynt Farm (Nancy Bergen). Tom Flynt is videotaping and handling the editing. Corey may take some stills and Nancy has some stills. These can be added to the video.
- There may be a video on sheep shearing. If not, a Corey has a video of alpaca shearing.

Mosquito spraying

Buzz Constable has continued to track this issue and to keep Louise informed.

- There is a way for a person to have land NOT sprayed.

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Louise to publish [where will you publish it?] the form one uses to request that one's land NOT be sprayed for mosquitoes and send it to Karen for inclusion in minutes

- Mass Audubon is involved in trying to minimize mosquito spraying on their land.
- LLCT would like to have all of Lincoln not be sprayed for mosquitoes. The town has until May 15 to ask to be omitted from spraying but the form to request this [Is this form different from the one an individual uses?] is not yet available. To qualify for this, the town must show it has taken steps to educate the residents about the issues associated with mosquito-borne diseases, mosquito control, aerial spraying, etc. LLCT is working on putting together the training required. It may not require Town Meeting approval to request that the State not spray in Lincoln. It may be sufficient for the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Health to approve.
- Ag Comm will be meeting with Board of Health. [Is this correct?] Do we need to provide them with information on where mosquitoes are located in Lincoln?
- Ag Comm should urge Farmers to ask to be NOT included in mosquito spraying.
- If there is EEE, West Nile, etc. people may want spraying
- The state's Mosquito Taskforce was supposed to hire academic experts to evaluate the chemicals for their impacts/toxicity/etc. So far this has not happened. Spraying may kill both mosquitoes and their predators
- Malaria program uses trapping to locate where to spray. But EEE is too rare for this to be effective.

Con Comm

Mohammed Hannan is forming a CSA at the Rickey fields near Hanscom. He has asked Con Comm whether he can transport his harvest to the Umbrello field which has a well and electricity. He would like to set up a washing station, walk-in cooler, and a farm stand. The farm stand could potentially be shared with other farms in town. Most of the Umbrello field has been licensed to Drumlin.

Con Comm's Ag sub-committee, following up on a suggestion from Sara Mattes, is working on using the accumulated licensing fees (currently about \$40K) to fund creation of infrastructure on licensed land. A farmer could apply for a grant to build facilities that would ideally be helpful to both the current farmer and future farmers of the land or other current farmers.

Collaboration with Garden Club

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Stacy to follow up on arrangements for Sacred Cow talk

Barns of Lincoln

The question was raised as to the current status, goals, and plans for this effort -- will this be a book or something else, audience, projected costs, benefit to Lincoln, collaboration with Historical Society, use of existing photographs, progress of photographer hired last year, etc.

Nancy said photographer Rick Mandelkorn (<https://www.richardmandelkorn.com>) has come to Flint Farm to take some pictures and that he planned to take pictures in different seasons. [Is this correct [Nancy, does he definitely plan to do seasonal photographs or is this just a maybe?]

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Louise to contact Lynne to ask where things stand with efforts on the Barns of Lincoln project -- what the photographer has done, and the plan for the future – and report at the next meeting.

Donation to local farms to obtain food for the Lincoln Food Pantry

We discussed whether we should again approach local farms re: their providing food to the Food Pantry. In 2020, the funding and amounts of food provided were:

- \$3000 to Food Project – 1207 lbs of produce
- \$2000 to Drumlin -- ?? lbs [received additional funds [how much?] from Ogden Codman Trust) [How much food did Codman provide?]
- \$750 Kanner – 700 lbs of fruit at \$1/lb
- No funds were given to Flint Farm but they donated corn

Corey may see if he can raise enough produce to donate some to the Food Pantry? [Where is he growing this food?]

**** 3/9/2021 Action item** – Stacy to send contact info for Karen Boyce (Food Pantry) to Corey to enable him to coordinate with her on delivery of his food donations.

Minutes

February (2/9/2021) minutes – approved unanimously subject to including Louise Bergeron's edits.

Old Action Items

**** 11/8/2017 Action item** – Karen to check the Food Corps website and see if perhaps they could help with promoting more education about farming in the Lincoln schools. For example, would they be able/willing to help establish and care for a garden in Lincoln's school(s).

**** 1-16-2018 Action item** -- Lynne to add link on Ag Comm web page for New Entry Farming Project.

** 1-16-2018 Action item – Stacy to investigate whether Ag Comm funds can be used for Mini-grants

** 2-14-2018 Action item – Karen to get information on organizations that provide workshops, resources, etc. to schools to teach about farming.

** 11/13/2018 Action item – Lynne to see if she still has a copy of the film on the history of Lincoln farming (Janet Boynton) and if she does to post it on the Lincoln Ag Comm web page.

** 12/11/2018 Action Item -- Ari to find out the name of the artist and obtain permission to reprint the Lincoln Review's drawings of barns.

** 12/11/2018 Action Item -- Ari to contact Diane Augur (Friends for Tomorrow at Berryfield Farm) re: Ag Comm membership

** 2/12/2019 Action item – Need volunteer to send a message to Lincoln Talk to recruit members. Task would consist of writing and sending a message to Lincoln talk using the AgCom email address and in then following up with responses.

** 2/12/2019 Action item – Stacy to check on whether if we create a pamphlet listing all of the agricultural books, this pamphlet could be made accessible at the library and on the library's web site.

** 2/12/2019 Action item – Need someone to take the responsibility to write up and distribute the agricultural tip messages at the appropriate dates and follow up on responses.

** 3/12/2019 Action Item -- Margie to ask Andy Payne (developer of the “shopping cart”) for ideas to promote buying local produce and meat

** 3/12/2019 Action Item -- Ari to talk to Jennifer Burney re: promoting buying local produce and meat.

** 3/12/2019 Action Item -- Lynne to talk to Patrice about creating a central link “Buy Local”

** 4/9/2019 Action item – Waiting on Codman to notify Ag Comm on when the memorial bench for Beth Taylor can be delivered.

** 4/9/2019 Action Item -- Lynne to put the list of agricultural books on the Ag Comm web site.

** 5/15/2019 Action Item -- Stacy and Lynne to work on public outreach to gather information on Lincoln barns. This will be done via messages to be sent to Lincoln Talk, Lincoln Journal and the Squirrel.

**7/9/2019 Action Item -- Margie to see if she can get access to information from the 1986 barn tour – try contacting Suze Craig (Westport), Sally Hodges (college student), Peg Marsh (NH)

** 11/12/2019 Action Item – Ari to discuss with Con Comm board possibly requiring participation by those licensing land to participate in Ag Comm meetings and support AgComm efforts/activities.

** 11/12/2019 Action Item – Karen to follow up on a lead for a possible new Ag Comm member.

** 2-11-2020 Action item -- Stacy to distribute farm brochures to Lincoln realtors and Lincoln town clerk for inclusion in the Welcome to Lincoln book

** 2-11-2020 Action item – Karen to continue to participate in the LCG's Conservation and Environment committee meetings.

** 2-11-2020 Action item -- Lynne to talk with Sara Mattes (President of the Lincoln Historical Society) about having the Historical Society provide sample write ups on the history of 3 barns (300-500 words each).

** 3-10-2020 Action item – Karen and Lynne to think about taking on the role of program chair.

** 4-21-2020 Action item -- Sarah to circulate a draft on the need for the Ag Comm to take a pro-active role in ensuring that Lincoln's land and water use are looked at from the viewpoint of supporting agriculture. All to provide feedback.

** 4-28-2020 Action item – Ari to provide pointers to sources of information re: organic pesticides/herbicides

** 4-28-2020 Action item – Karen to talk with Belinda Gingrich (Garden Club) about whether the Garden Club has any information on backyard produce gardening

** 4-28-2020 Action item -- Ari to talk to Peter Von Merton re: what they did for their commemorative bench(es) – costs, who did the work, etc.

** 4-28-2020 Action item -- Ari to put this topic (what to do with Lincoln's land resources with regard to supporting agriculture) on the agenda for the next meeting.

** 7-14-2020 Action item -- Ari to check with the Food Project on how things are going.

** 7-14-2020 Action item -- Ari to ask all 3 farms to provide the Ag Comm with records of what they deliver to the Food Pantry.

- ** 7-14-2020 Action item -- All to review latest Ag Comm document on Home Gardening.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item -- Lynne to work on fixing problems with access to Ag Comm email.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item -- Lynne to re-send Ag Comm members the password and UserID for the Ag Comm email account.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Louise to talk to Michelle Barnes re: clarification of the message she posted on Lincoln Talk re:water use restrictions confirmation that agriculture as defined by Lincoln’s Right to Farm by-law is exempt from these restrictions.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Stacy to research prices for a bronze plaque for the memorial bench for Beth Taylor
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Lynn has the bench and will deliver it for installation in the Codman Farm flower garden. She’ll contact Nancy Fleming to coordinate the delivery.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Stacy to draft text for plaque for memorial bench for Beth Taylor. Candidates include:
In loving memory of Beth Taylor who loved gardens
In memory of her love of all things growing
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Lynne to contact Nancy Bergen and the photographer (has received a retainer of \$2K+) to arrange for pictures of Flint farm. It would be nice if there could be pictures from all seasons.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Louise to draft a vision statement for the Lincoln barn book.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Lynne to talk to Sara to get her input and that of the Lincoln Historical Society on the Lincoln barn book.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Nancy to invite Cory Flint to the next zoom meeting of the Ag Comm.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Ari to investigate how to change the mandated composition of the Ag Comm (5 Voting, 3 Alternate voting, 1 non-voting) to all or mostly voting.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Lynne to add a link to The American Chestnut Foundation to the Ag Comm web page
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Lynne to add a link to the video “The Chestnut Tree: Bringing Back and American Icon – William Powell” to the Ag Comm web page.
- ** 7-14-2020 Action item – Lynne to ask Mark Meehl for his thoughts on a possible speaker for a fall talk in Lincoln on the American Chestnut restoration efforts.

** 8-11-2020 Action item – All to propose knowledgeable presenters who could present on insect control for agriculture as well as adverse effects of mosquito spraying.

** 8-11-2020 Action item – All to review “The Sacred Cow” to make sure that the content is in agreement with the AgCom mission.

** 8-11-2020 Action item – Lynne will contact Sara about the financial commitment required.

** 8-11-2020 Action item – Louise will find out what chemicals is used for EEE and report back

** 8-11-2020 Action item – All to send substantiated adverse effects of mosquitoes and tick spraying on agriculture to Louise who will relay the AgCom point of view to LLCT/BOH.

** 8-11-2020 Action item – Louise to contact Michelle to inquire about the policy amendment

** 9-15-2020 Action item – Sarah to contact Pete Lowey and Diana Rogers about being part of a public round table discussion on restorative agriculture.

** 9-15-2020 Action item – Stacy to investigate costs to publish a book on Lincoln barns in order to determine what is feasible and reasonable in terms of number and quality of pictures.

** 9-15-2020 Action item – Louise to send link to the rest of the Ag Com for the next meeting of the Task Force on mosquito control.

** 9-15-2020 Action item – Louise to draft a letter inviting Cory Nimmer to join the Ag Comm.

** 9-15-2020 Action item – Ari to get in touch with Steve Kanner re: status of providing apples to the Food Pantry.

** 9-15-2020 Action item – Stacy to write a short article about the Ag Comm’s funding of local farms to provide food for the Lincoln Food Pantry – a short one for the Lincoln Talk and a longer one for the Chipmunk (formerly Lincoln Review). Write ups should:

- Include other Ag Comm charitable efforts -- Nancy Bergen’s corn, Ari’s land for Food for Free
- Be posted on the Ag Comm web site
- Publicize Ag Comm’s efforts

** 10-13-2020 Action item – Stacy and Sara to form a subcommittee to draft a proposed plan for providing the town with information on land restoration through agriculture. This will be presented at the next Ag Comm meeting.

** 10-13-2020 Action item – Stacy to find out what the Food Pantry plans to do this winter and for the Holidays to see if there might be a need that the local farms could help meet.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Louise to tell Sara about Margie Brown’s availability to speak on use of livestock for agricultural land restoration.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Ari to tell Sara about a speaker whom he knows, who could talk about food security.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Karen to report on the history of what efforts have already been made to publicize Lincoln’s Right to Farm bylaw.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Stacy and Nancy to head up a sub-committee to figure out how to better communicate the right to farm bylaw to current and prospective residents, e.g., tax bill enclosure, signs, etc.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Ari to follow up with Mark Meehl re: transgenic chestnut tree, to keep Louise in the loop, and to report back to Ag Comm.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Ari to contact Charlotte Trim about possible participation in an event on pruning/restoring fruit trees.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Karen to talk further to Belinda Gingrich re: how Ag Comm might collaborate with the Lincoln Garden Club on event re: pruning/restoring fruit trees and environmentally sound pesticide/herbicide use.

** 11-10-2020 Action item – Louise to have a list of plants toxic to livestock posted on the Ag Comm web page.

** 12-8-2020 Action item – Corey to draft up some background and post Lincoln’s Right to Farm bylaw on the Lincoln Squirrel

** 2/9/2021 Action item – Corey to ask a relative to help with agricultural videos.

** 2/9/2021 Action item – Lynne to put together a list of “potential” agriculture activities that could be filmed for educational purposes.

** 2/9/2021 Action item – Lynne to introduce Corey to Heather Murray re: supporting the Ag Comm Instagram account.

** 2/9/2021 Action item – All to send Corey the names of any plants they know of in Lincoln that are poisonous to livestock and to ask other people if they know of additional plants.

9:03pm – Meeting adjourned.

Appendix A – 2020 to 2021 Town Funding for Agriculture Commission

TO BE INSERTED HERE.