

# Holliston Agricultural Commission

## MINUTES

28 Sep 2021 at 7pm

- **Call to order 7:08pm**
- **Roll call** Carrie, Evan, Cherie present
- **Approve minutes** August Minutes approved
- **Treasurer:** approve invoices 178.10 for farms day posters and flyers; approved. 2<sup>nd</sup> invoice is domain name renewal 2021-2022 \$17.99 approved; will be submitted to Town Hall for payment
- **Public Comment** None

### OLD Business

1. Transferring responsibility of the Community Garden plots. Ongoing conversations with town admin and SB, as the garden plots are inconsistent with the AgCom role to promote commercial farming. Discussion followed about dividing resources between commercial farming and private gardens. It was moved and seconded that “effective immediately, the AgCom will no longer be responsible for maintaining and managing the Community Gardens.”

It was moved and seconded to amend the motion to read “the AgCom will no longer be responsible for maintaining and managing the Community Gardens once a new party can be found to take it over.” The amendment was defeated 3 – 0.

The original motion passed 3 – 0.

Adam and Carrie will meet with Town Administrator. Debbie Moore has also expressed interest in participating in the transition.

2. Potential new AgCom members. The AgCom is a 5 full member commission with 2 Associates positions.

- a) Evan talked with AJ at Outpost? No.
- b) Adam Taylor withdrew his application.
- c) Vicky Keller – of Peas, Love & Parsley applied to be an Associate.
- d) Claire Toohey of Peas, Love & Parsley applied to be a member.
- e) Andy Reseeka – Boston Honey applied to be an Associate.

Vicky, Claire, Andy applications approved 3 – 0.

3. Carrie reached out to Liz (Clerk) and Karen Sherman about connecting with contact cannabis growers establishing in Holliston? This was redirected to Travis; there are 7 in town but not all fully approved as yet. Carrie will draft an AgCom introduction letter to new farms moving into Holliston.
4. Carrie presenting survey results to Select Board? On hold until more info on signage.

5. MAAC AgCom updates: decision on pushing to farmers? Most commercial farmers subscribe to these updates, but AgCom may resend important info as a reminder. Notices will be considered on case-by-case basis.

6. Drip-marketing campaign on hold off until there is a discussion about the new business.

7. Select Board liaison Ben, about signage

Invite farming community to AgCom meeting to give input on farming-related signage and improvements. AgCom sent email asking farmers what farming signs needing repair and received one response about a: horse crossing sign with graffiti. Tina Hein received and it's been logged.

While the current request was only for existing signage, a top request from the survey was for improved signs. AgCom discussed sending another email asking for input on the kind of signs commercial farmers are wanting: Directional? Crossings? At major intersections there are signs but they are not consistent, homemade, and in disrepair. Are there funds for developing this signage?

Evan noted there is no Boston honeys Company sign because to put it on route 16 the request must go through the state.

Carrie will send the email asking for input on the signs, then will meet with SB to go over survey results, the current signs, and the suggestions for improvement. Asking town for funding would need to wait for Spring meeting as the warrant has already been completed for the fall meeting.

Does the state subsidize town signage?

## **NEW Business**

1. Farms Day recap Reports of good community interactions, good turnout. Broadhill Lavender Farm sold out of product. August Farm (pony rides) was packed the entire day. AgCom discussed having a punch card so visitors who stop at all farms in one day receive a gift. Also suggested: a game? A scavenger hunt?

2. Represent AgCom at other events throughout the year? One suggestion was to revive the event "Is it Spring yet?" Combine with seedling sale. People are ready to get out of their homes and into the garden.

There is no Holiday Stroll this year. AgCom discussed space next year to display holiday items from each farm, such as planters from PLP, riding lessons gift certificates—a sampling of what farms have to offer during the Holiday Stroll in 2022.

a. Celebrate Holliston enjoyed a good turnout; discussed an AgCom booth with flyers and postcards, ways to inform and educate.

b. First Night has traditionally included an AgCom booth with 30 or 40 gallons of hot mulled apple cider. Carrie baked 16 dozen lavender cookies that were quickly gone.

AgCom agreed that promoting local farms at local events is an appropriate activity, encouraging shop local, buy local.

3. Invitation to visit farms/meet with business owners: email to farms. Can the AgCom get a detailed tour and get to know the farmers more? Cherie will follow up on the Open Meeting requirements of having AgCom members “meet” at local farms.
4. Banner over Washington Street “right to farm” and other suggestions: reminders that Holliston is a right-to-farm community. AgCom will first define message and objective.
5. New Farm: location of previous Braintree hill country store/antiques (369 Concord St.) Realtor said this farm would be selling meats, eggs, etc. and has a location established in Framingham. AgCom agreed to send the AgCom letter of introduction

**Next Meeting Date TBD**

**Adjournment 8:22pm adjourn**

**TBD agenda items**

George Fiske and sharing mutual Sherborn/Holliston AgCom interests

*Approved at Nov 2021 meeting*