

Lebanon Conservation and Agriculture Commission
Regular Meeting, 1/8/18
Lebanon Town Hall, 579 Exeter Road

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Jan Fitter (Vice Chair), Emery Gluck, Keith LaPorte, Emery Gluck,
Jon Slate, Ethan Stearns, Paul Trubey, Toni Willard
Members absent: Marc Lang (Chair), Alton Blodgett, Bradley Wieczorek
Also present: Town Planner Philip Chester

Meeting called to order at 4:36 p.m. by Jan Fitter. Paul Trubey and Ethan Sterns are voting alternates.

Motion by Keith LaPorte, seconded by Jan Fitter, to approve the 12/4/17 meeting minutes. Motion unanimously approved.

Christian Joseph from Prides Corner Farms presented the 2017 water quality sampling results for Pease and Hoxie Brooks conducted by Milone & MacBroom. The report concludes that:

“Concentrations of various parameters were generally consistent with the Connecticut Water Quality Standards for Class A surface watercourses. Some of the water quality results from 2017 indicate that Prides Corner Farms should continue monitoring and use best management practices to control runoff. However, based on monitoring from 2012 to 2017, long term trends of negative water quality are not emerging.”

The Department of Agriculture has awarded Lebanon with a \$39,000 Farm Viability Grant to pay for the ConsAg newsletter, new greenhouse at the Middle School, partial farmers’ market advertising, and farmland preservation property appraisals or surveys.

Mr. Chester updated the Commission on the Bender, Geer, Leone, McCall, and Wolf farmland preservation projects. At the next Town Meeting residents will be asked to release \$75,000 for open space soft costs (appraisals, surveys, and related legal expenses) and funding for the Bender (\$18,750) and McCall (\$25,000) preservation projects from the Open Space Account. The majority of funds for the Bender and McCall projects will come from the USDA, with the McCall project also receiving Connecticut Farmland Trust funds.

Motion by Jan Fitter, seconded by John Slate, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that \$7,000 be allocated toward the purchase of a conservation easement on the 145+/- acre Wolf (REW) farm and that a survey be conducted; funds to come from the Open Space Account. Motion unanimously approved.

The Commission discussed co-sponsoring an education workshop for farmers interested in incorporating or creating an LLC to include tax consequences and general business planning with the Franklin and Bozrah Ag Commissions in late February.

Motion by Jan Fitter, seconded by Paul Trubey, to co-sponsor the education workshop. Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Chester will submit an article for the February edition of Lebanon Life on the education workshop, DoAg Farm Transition Grant opportunities, the 2018 Farmers Market, and farmland preservation.

Motion by Emery Gluck, seconded by Ethan Sterns, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that Marc Lang, Keith LaPorte, Paul Trubey and Alton Blodgett be reappointed to their respective terms on the Commission. Motion unanimously approved.

The Commission adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Philip Chester, Town Planner
January 9, 2018