Brooklyn Agriculture Commission

Tuesday November 25, 2014

7:00 PM

Town Hall

Present: Lou Brodeur, Sandra Brodeur, Charles Langevin, and Joyce Meader

Guest: Sally Timmons

C. Langevin ***motioned*** to approve the October 28, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. S. Brodeur ***seconded. All in favor; motion carried.***

Public Participation: None

Old Business:

Brooklyn Farmers Brochure: S. Timmons reported that no one from AgVocate recalls who printed the brochure. They do remember that the printer is in Newington. S. Timmons will check with Newington printers. J. Meader will ask Jennifer if she knows who the printer is. L. Brodeur noted that it is important not to exclude anyone if the commission reprints the brochure. J. Meader will check town records.

USDA Food Safety Program: S. Brodeur has not had an opportunity to check on availability for Memorial Day or the Brooklyn Fair.

Committee report for “History of Agriculture in Brooklyn”: S. Karro was not present.

Topics and Speakers for 2015 programs: L. Brodeur announced that a joint meeting will be held in January or February between Killingly High School Agriculture and the agriculture commissions of the sending towns. S. Timmons is uncertain whether she should represent NRCS or the Town of Brooklyn. S. Timmons believes they are requesting that each sending town send two members from that town’s agriculture commission. S. Timmons heard they have to be appointed by the Board of Education.

With regard to topics, J. Meader suggested the transition from one generation to the next and the communication of farm goals. The commission discussed various venues where a speaker might be appropriate, including the commission’s regular meetings, the Guilford quarterly meeting and the quarterly regional meeting in Canterbury. If the goal is to get farmers to attend, these meetings must be held in the winter close to home. S. Timmons noted that speakers from NRCS might be available. S. Timmons noted that if the commission invites someone to speak at a regular meeting, the commission could invite other agriculture commissions to attend. J. Meader noted that the commission has a mailing list. S. Timmons suggested doing direct mail to get farmers to attend speaking events. S. Brodeur noted that the new town website has an e-subscriber notification system that could be used to promote speaking events. C. Langevin does not think that people will use it. S. Timmons noted that it would be the responsibility of other agriculture commissions to promote any speaking events to their own farmers. L. Brodeur noted the difficulty of finding speakers, especially for free.

Mission Statement: J. Meader provided a draft of the mission statement. S. Timmons suggested deleting the following sentence: *The Commission will promote the buying of food, fiber, and forest products from local farms, businesses, Farmers Markets, and farm stands.* She proposed to replace it with following sentence: *The Commission will encourage citizens to support farms by purchasing locally grown food, fiber, and forest products. This will be accomplished by communicating the benefits of local agriculture, supporting land preservation activities, and supporting agricultural businesses and Farmers Markets.* C. Langevin suggested that *Farmers Markets* be replaced with *farmers’ markets* and that the word *goal* be inserted after the word *This.* C. Langevin proposed that the order of *municipal officers* and *agricultural producers* be reversed in the first sentence. C. Langevin ***motioned*** to accept the mission statement as amended. S. Brodeur ***seconded. All in favor; motion carried***.

Meeting with Jana on silo heights: Mr. Regis was able to build his 42 foot silo. Jana determined that silos or antennae can be higher than 35 feet provided the area of the structure is less than 25% of the area of the building to which it is attached.

Timmon’s Facebook Page: S. Timmons announced that the commission’s Facebook page is up and running. It is called Brooklyn Agriculture Commission.

New Business:

J. Meader noted for the record that Austin Tanner’s barn burned down. He lost hay but no animals were harmed. J. Meader also noted that milk prices are dropping.

S. Brodeur stated that now is the time for the commission to be thinking about any capital items, such as technology, it would like to propose to the Capital Committee for the next budget. S. Timmons stated that a tablet mounted on a stand would be better than a kiosk. A flat screen monitor could be used to display a PowerPoint presentation. S Timmons suggested waiting to see where the technology goes. S. Brodeur would prefer to talk about it now to have a placeholder in the budget. S. Timmons noted that whatever technology the commission adopts, it must allow the commission to control the content easily.

The commission briefly discussed the possibility of offering travel stipends for speakers.

C. Langevin ***motioned*** to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm. S. Brodeur ***seconded. All in favor; motion carried.***

Next meeting December 23, 2014

Sincerely,

Shelley Hopkins, Recording Secretary