

Present: Audrey Prior (Chair), Joan Ganotis (Vice Chair), Dieter Ebert, Pollyanna Ford (alternate), Cheryl Kasztejna (alternate), Rowan Perkins (alternate)

Absent: Hank Brandt, Phil Thayer

1. Opened meeting at 7:04 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: To approve the minutes from 12/18/2023 as written.

1st: P. Ford

2nd: J. Ganotis

Motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

3a. Re-appointments: The followings members have terms expiring this year: Joan Ganotis (regular member), Pollyanna Ford (alternate member), Cheryl Kasztejna (alternate member), and Rowan Perkins (alternate member). All four members expressed interest in continuing to serve on the Agricultural Commission for another term. Regular members serve three-year terms and alternates serve one-year terms.

Motion: To recommend the following four re-appointments to the Select Board.

Joan Ganotis, Regular Member, 3-year term

Pollyanna Ford, Alternate Member, 1-year term

Cheryl Kasztejna, Alternate Member, 1-year term

Rowan Perkins, Alternate Member, 1-year term

1st: A. Prior

2nd: D. Ebert

Motion passed unanimously.

3b. Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair: J. Ganotis expressed willingness to continue as Vice Chair as long as A. Prior continued as Chair. A. Prior said that she would continue as Chair for one more year.

Motion: To nominate Audrey Prior as Chair and Joan Ganotis as Vice Chair.

1st: R. Perkins

2nd: P. Ford

Motion passed unanimously

3c. Goals for 2024: The commission discussed what projects it may want to take on in 2024. A. Prior said that the Agricultural Commission was approved for a \$2000 budget for FY2025. Commission members shared a number of ideas. The Community Garden is an ongoing project and commission members expressed a desire to finalize plans for improvements to be made at the garden. The commission has talked for several years about wanting to hold more public events such as hosting speakers on various agricultural topics. One topic that was mentioned in the past was finding a speaker to do a talk on predators and how people can protect their livestock, including backyard chickens. This is something that the Agricultural Commission could partner with the North Hampton Public Library to put on, as has been done in the past with speakers on other topics. Another idea that was discussed was to partner with Governor Dale Farmer to host some sort of speaker or event.

Commission members also brought up the idea of coming up with some way to participate in Old Home Day. A variety of options were mentioned including handing out seeds in the spring and then holding some sort of contest, for example "best plant", where people could bring the plant that they grew from the seed to be judged and prizes would be

awarded. Seeds could be random/unidentified such that people won't know what seed they're getting until they open the packet, or one type of seed could be chosen and given out to everyone. Other ideas brought up were a pig scramble, which several members expressed concerns over for liability purposes and due to recent bad press, and a cow pie toss or cow pie bingo. There were some hygiene concerns expressed regarding the cow pie toss, so more research would need to be done if the commission decided to pursue this as a possible event.

Another idea suggested was to set up a seed exchange. This idea has been discussed in the past but concrete plans have never been made. The Agricultural Commission also wants to think about possible opportunities to partner with the NHS Greenhouse, and/or the Ag in the Classroom program. Commission members also expressed a desire to come up with ways to support local agricultural businesses. Edible landscaping is a goal in the Agriculture chapter of the Master Plan, and the commission did attempt to do some edible landscaping several years ago by planting blueberry bushes at Dearborn Park. In the end, this proved unsuccessful as the edible plantings required more maintenance than the commission was able to provide.

4. Old Business

4a. Community Newsletter: A. Prior received communication from the Friends of the North Hampton Public Library that there was to be no Winter edition of the Community Newsletter due to lack of funding. A. Prior is holding on to the prepared article and will submit it for the next published newsletter.

4b. Community Garden: A. Prior has reached out to the gardeners from last year and has heard back from all but one person. Several people on the waitlist were able to get plots. There are still three full plots available. A. Prior will hold sign up days next week on Tuesday and Saturday for gardeners to turn in waivers and payment. The town is also accepting mailed in or dropped off payments and waivers. A. Prior received no replies to the email sent out to all the gardeners requesting volunteers for the position of Community Garden Steward. A. Prior will send out another email and see if anyone is willing to take on this leadership role at the garden. Allyson Ryder is not returning to the North Hampton Community Garden this year, so there is currently no Community Garden Liaison either.

5. Adjournment:

Motion: Adjourn at 8:01pm.

1st: R. Perkins

2nd: J. Ganotis

Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Audrey Prior. Next meeting: April 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the North Hampton Town Clerk's Office, 237 Atlantic Ave, North Hampton, NH 03862.