



Ag Committee Minutes for May 11, 2023 Meeting via Zoom

Attendees:

Melissa Maxwell, co-chair, Barrett's Mill Farm
Liza Bemis, co-chair, Hutchins Farm
Steve Verrill, member, Verrill Farm
Grace Scimone, associate member, Scimone Farm
Happy Goethert, member, Scimone Farm
Joe Rogers, clerk, associate member
Dan Schmid, member, Walden Woods Farm
Lois Suarez, pollinator committee

Meeting chaired by Liza, meeting called to order at 7:04 PM

Review Minutes: Steve motioned to accept minutes as written, Joe seconded the motion.

News about Concord Farms and Farmers: Steve's workers have arrived and are living in the new housing that he built in Sudbury. Odd warm winter with cold snaps has thrown off the timing of plants. Grace reported their tulips probably peaked a bit too early before the customers were thinking about pick your own flowers. Customers plant tomatoes now at own risk. Steve covered his strawberries from frost. Liza now picking asparagus. spinach soon. Farmer's markets are beginning. Steve reported Dominic Inferrara is discussing his wetlands with the town NRC.

Spring Forum Recap: Generally got good reviews. Successful event with about 60 people in attendance. It will be posted online by Minuteman Media on their YouTube page soon and Liza will post the link to the Ag Day website. Steve noted that difficulties with no-till were not much discussed. Others agreed. He recently experimented with seeding a pasture using minimum till (just harrow) and was disappointed in the result. Got weeds but little clover and had to re-do with deeper till. Dan reports being very happy with a new sprinkler system in his greenhouse that mists everything at once. Grace says the system is a game changer for her hanging plants. Steve's greenhouses have plants with a variety of water needs so he can't use a single sprinkler system. He and Liza water by hand. Dan: His soil does not absorb water well. Soil he uses forms hard crust when it dries making it hard to take water. Steve agrees says he has to keep the soil moist. Dan's observes Steve's soil appears to have more organic matter. Liza asks if anyone uses NOFA to test farm soils. Grace has testing done in November by CaroVail where she buys fertilizer and is very happy with the information they provide. Just \$5 per test. Liza sends soils to UMASS for testing. Steve just tests the PH and NPK.

Ag Day Update: Discussion of how to select which non-profits should participate. Joe moved that Liza and Melissa work on a draft proposal to guide this. Graced seconded the motion. Garden clubs are obvious non profits to be included, but others less so. Town approvals for AG day are on track. All agreed that the veggie racer signage and advertisement language should acknowledge Scimone farm.

Marshall Farm Tour: Marshall farm is giving to give a tour. Steve will confer with Ricky about logistics.

Other Business: Scimone farm will be the next Minuteman Video with Tori in June. Minuteman National Park is busy with fresh funding and many projects, suggested that we reach out to superintended to attend an Ag Committee Meeting for an update in the future, Liza said she would reach out. 250 anniversary ideas? Steve suggests maybe horse plowing demonstrations. Positive response from other members. Maybe the Concord Museum would be a resource? Liza will reach out to Jennifer. Liza is asking the town if the AG committee logo (with pitchfork) can be used again, or how we would need to modify it. Happy will work on AG day banner and poster design.

Public Comment: Lois reports the legislature committee has been meeting on the subject of pesticides and pollination and there have been lots of contentious discussions.

Next meeting June 8th on Zoom: Next meeting set for June 8th on zoom.

Melissa moves to adjourn the meeting. Second by Dan.

Adjourned 8:04PM