

Egremont Agricultural Commission (EAC)

April 28 2016

Attending: **Carla Turner, Andre Vankov, Peter Maggio, Jennifer Brown**

Meeting begins at 7:05PM.

1. Meeting minutes from October 2015 approved.
2. Carla suggested in order to make a quorum it may be better to do 3 meetings a year instead of 4. In case of urgent issues extra meetings could be called.
3. It was brought up that EAC could consider a merger with Conservation Committee Group; however this possibility was unanimously rejected.
4. Budget for 2016 was decreased from \$300 to \$100. It was approved. The town board stated that if there is a need for extra money it can be always reviewed and considered.
5. Newsletter of Jennifer's daughter Willa Brown will spend summer with a renowned Equestrian Susie Beale. This is a notable achievement for a young Egremonter. Jennifer will prepare a paragraph. Carla will add announcement about farmers markets in the area.
6. Carla attended Ag meeting in Pittsfield in April. It was held from 9am to 2pm. In that meeting the following was discussed:
 - Issue with having too many animals in too little land, specifically Lanesboro person had 150 chickens on ½ acre of discussion about Egremont proposing a bilaw or not? As a group AgComm decided not to go ahead with a bilaw and in case of a problem to deal with it case by case basis.
 - Mass Food Plan was discussed in Pittsfield.
 - The MA Governor addressed labeling issues of instead of locally grown since the term was highjacked by dishonest corporations, labeling has to be more specific, for example "Berkshire Grown".
 - Debate "Organic will not feed the World". Should there be a compromise between commercial and organic producers? Monsanto now sells organic seeds. MA Ag Community organic and commercial people should work together and find compromises.
7. The "food security" issue of example: Walmart offered to buy from a small farmer honey for \$1 per lbs and when the farmer refused due to low price Walmart suggested to him adding cane sugar of hence the issue with "food security". Turner Maple Syrup now offers honey in the shack along with maple syrup. The honey comes from a local farmer and it is an example of honest product and fair price.
8. New Business of Bee Pollinator Initiative in MA of grants are available to bring bees to MA of MDAR Seeks Public Comment on the State Pollinator Protection Plan. Details are here:
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/farmproducts/docs/mdar-pollinator-plan-final-draft.pdf>
9. Next meeting will be Thursday July 21, 2016 7PM

Meeting adjourned at 8:05PM.