

Hollis Agricultural Commission

Thursday, February 11th, 2021



NAMES OF ATTENDEES

M. Post, T. Hardy, D. Harmon, M. Madden, C. Husk.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:35pm.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. New Business

a. Woodmont Annual Review

- I. M. Post stated that a report was drafted by Nichols-Smith for guidelines on how to create a habitat for Grasshopper Sparrows. The report mentions specifics with regard to crops, etc. that are not feasible. The Lessee explained that he is currently executing on an NRCS water management plan in the area. According to M. Post, T. Dufresne suggested the water flow areas could be a potential designated habitat. M. Post stated that the habitat would then attract foot traffic. D. Harmon reiterated that Nichols-Smith is meant to be passive in regulation and not to be an actively involved in lease management; additionally, the Town is the one responsible for the requirements of the easement, not the Lessee. T. Hardy stated the Town should draft a letter stating that it is they who manages the lease, this is outside the bounds of the lease, and to discontinue pursuit of the habitat plan. In addition, control of people on agricultural land owned by the Town needs to be addressed. This initiative should include ensuring all town operations (plowing of common use parking, etc.) are on the same page as to what is considered allowable access vs. not.

- II. T. Hardy again suggested the potential of logging an area which could allow for a bird habitat. T. Hardy proposed consulting D. Petry and informing him that the Ag Com would like the Town to send a letter to Nichols-Smith stating any concerns with the land should be addressed to the Town, not Lessee. The Ag Com also reiterated that the intent of the leased land is agriculture first, and conservation will follow. With that said, because of good practices and stewardship the sparrows have found a good home. The white barn is not currently being utilized. If the Lessee does not want the building, then perhaps it should be removed from the lease. M. Post asked around informally and no one is expressing interest in using the structure. The electrical system is in disrepair. M. Post suggested taking the responsibility off of the Lessee. The Lessee responded with the preference of having 6 months to make a decision. T. Dufresne queried the state about pumping water out of Silver Lake for irrigation.

- b. Stefanowicz: T. Dufresne and the Lessee walked property in preparation of determining logging, forest management, wildlife habitat, etc. The proposal, which entails an NRCS funded management plan, may include a forest management plan for the whole property that will be reviewed with the Conservation Commission. The Lessee will go forward developing the plan, which the NRCS will have ready in approximately 4 months.

II. Unfinished Business

a. Current Use Assessment Reporting

- I. Meeting tentatively scheduled for February 15th with the Assessor. M. Madden suggested consulting state guidance on different tax rate tiers. T. Hardy questioned whether it would be possible to convey those tiers back to the land owner. Perhaps neighboring towns such as Londonderry, Litchfield, or Hooksett may have some ideas.

b. Living With Agriculture

- I. There is still the intent to publish a story, A suggested topic could include the fact that no federal dollars were used to purchase Stefanowicz, but perhaps funding for NRCS mgmt. plan in a series of contracts would be a good topic to pursue. M. Post will contact the potential writer.

c. Recruiting

- I. M. Post has made some calls, but no leads.

Dan Harmon left at 830pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M. Post motioned to amend the previously approved public minutes from December 12th to include the statement of entering and exit of a non-public session. The non-public minutes were previously approved and filed, but the session had not been documented in the public minutes. T. Hardy Second, motion passed 4-0-0

M. Post motioned to accept the public minutes for the commission meeting on January 14th, 2021, as edited. D. Harmon second, motioned passed 4-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

M. Post motioned to adjourn at 910pm, C. Husk second, motion passed 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted by M. Madden, Secretary