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Robert M. Wilson

Killingly Agriculture Commission
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2017

Regular Meeting
7:00 pm

Killingly Town Hall
172 Main Street, Killingly, CT

ROOM 102

MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order and Roll Call** - Frank Anastasio called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Roll call: Frank Anastasio, Byron Martin, Christel Shaw, Virginia Keith (arrived at 7:09 PM). Christine Salisbury was absent with notice. Others present: Adam Griffiths, council liaison; Eric Rumsey, Jonathan Blake, staff liaisons. **Attendees from the Killingly Community Garden**; Wayland Leonard, Samantha Abbamonte, and Brittany Evans. Frank noted that Jim and Tina Stevens had sent a memo stating that they are resigning from the Agriculture Commission effective immediately due to health concerns.
- II. **Agenda Addendum – N/A**
- III. **Public Hearings (as called) – N/A**
- IV. **Citizens Participation – None present.**
- V. **Adoption of Minutes – review / discussion / action**
 - A) Regular Meeting of April 12, 2017 – Minutes to be approved at the September regular meeting.
 - B) Regular Meeting of July 12, 2017 – Minutes to be approved at the September regular meeting.
- VI. **General Business – review / discussion / action**
 - A) **2017 Event Planning – Activities, ETC.**
 - 1) Classes – Adam reported that Jim and Tina had planned on holding a raising pigs class. Frank will check with Jim and Tina on the status of this class. Virginia and Keri (of the KCG) will be holding a canning class in the fall. Virginia will also have a “low tunnel” class at the community garden this fall.
 - 2) Other Events – N/A
 - B) **Open Space Land Acquisition Committee / Farmland Inventory – N/A**
 - C) **Mother Nature’s Garden – meeting / progress report –** Chris reported that Mother Nature’s Garden is working on the Veterans Garden and will be holding a tea cup raffle at the Tomato Festival.
 - D) **Killingly Community Garden – meeting / review / discussion / action**

(*) SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING WITH KCG MEMBERS – Garden Update(s)/Grant Update(s)/Garden Planning & Goals/Progress, etc. – Virginia made a motion to suspend the rules, Chris second, all approved. The Killingly Community Garden (KCG) members gave the commission an update on progress of the garden. Wayland reported that Jess is working with a

designer on the garden moving forward. His work will be paid for from the Elks Grant of 2017. The KCG reported that the garden is non-GMO and that the garden members handle all the planting of seeds in order to insure that the garden does stay non-GMO. Questions were raised about the viability of this in the long run. They have held two work days that were very successful in weeding the garden areas, spreading mulch, and generally cleaning the site. There are additional work days proposed as well as a harvest day planned for the early fall. The KCG has once again received a grant from the Elks in the amount of \$2000. The grant funds are proposed to be utilized to fund their website hosting, some much needed tools, a watering tank, garden design work, and plants. Concern was raised regarding the appearance of the garden. It is evident that the gardens are in much better shape than they were before the work day there was still quite a bit of work to be done to beautify the garden. Concern was also raised about the apparent lack of community volunteer involvement in keeping the garden weeded, clean, and watered. It was suggested that a deposit be required before anyone be given a plot in an effort to have the individual(s) renting the plot have some "skin in the game". As is, there is concern that if there is not any necessary involvement in the garden, people will be lazy and allow their garden plot to be fallow. The KCG was questioned about the yield of the garden since the first planting in 2014 as well as the amount of food donated to the Friends of Assisi and the number of people fed since then. The KCG did not have answers to these questions; however, they would be looking into this and would report to the Agriculture Commission at a future meeting. Virginia stated that when she donated to the Friends of Assisi she had to log what type of food was donated as well as the amount. Eric stated that should the KCG wish to apply for grants in the future this information may be vital in order for the grant to be approved. He also suggested that a spreadsheet detailing the amount of food and weight be made available to staff as well as placed in a folder in the shed at the garden. It was also suggested that an inventory of the items within the shed be conducted and a spreadsheet be housed in the shed as well as with town staff. There should also be a sign-out sheet with who is using the equipment and at what time. Having a paid manager of the garden was discussed, with the thought that paying someone to care for the garden weekly during the growing season could be done at very little cost. Virginia made a motion to utilize \$599 of the Ag Commission funds to hire a garden manager. Byron seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding the amount the individual could be paid, and if now is the appropriate time to hire someone. Research needs to be done and a conversation with the Town Manager needs to take place prior to the issuance of funds for a garden manager. Virginia withdrew her motion. The KCG is promoting the garden through Facebook, the Turnpike Buyer, as well as through the new website that Wayland is working on. It was reported that the KCG is working on a series of goals for the next five years. Eric and Jon will review these goals and will work with the KCG on a manageable set of goals yearly as well as a timetable of deadlines to meet these goals.

E) **Tomato Festival** – meeting / progress report – Nothing new to report at this time.

F) **Green News Newsletter** – meeting / progress report – Chris sent out the latest edition of the newsletter. The next publication will be sent out in late August. There are over 130 subscribers to the newsletter.

VII. **Regulations – review / revisions / discussion / action**
To be discussed at next meeting – September 13, 2017.

VIII. **Other Discussion Items – review / discussion / action**

IX. **Next Meeting - Wednesday, September 13, 2017**

X. **Adjournment** – Byron motion to adjourn at 9:05 PM, Chris seconded; all approved.