

MANSFIELD AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
DRAFT Minutes of October 7, 2014 meeting
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building, Conference Room B, 7:30 p.m.

1. Chairman Cyr called the meeting to order at 7:35.

Present: Charlie Galgowski, Vicky Wetherell, Shep Stearns, Ed Hall, Kathleen Paterson, Jennifer Kaufman and Virginia Walton (staff).

2. The committee approved the minutes of the September 2, 2014 meeting and the September 7 special meeting.

New Business

3. The committee voted to discuss the Organic Landcare/Soil Health Workshops first with Virginia Walton. These workshops are presented annually in the spring. Virginia asked the committee to participate as one of the sponsors, which the committee agreed to do. Potential topics and speakers were discussed.

Old Business

3. *Mansfield Tomorrow* Jennifer updated the committee about the project.

4. *Hunting on Town Leased Agricultural Land* After discussion about deer as a universal problem, the committee decided that the Town should address this issue on a Town-wide basis. This recommendation will be forwarded to the Town Council so that DEEP can be approached about allowing more effective hunting regulations in the entire Town.

5. *Outreach Projects:*

A. *Fire department visits to farms.* Jennifer will send an email to the farm list informing farmers that the Fire Department is available and how to contact them for an appointment.

B. *Joint Meeting with Regional AgComms.* This meeting will be on November 7 at CLiCK.. AgComs from surrounding towns have been invited for a tour and discussion of possible cooperative projects.

C. *Farm Trail* The annual bike tour is not appropriate. Other options include a bike tour as a separate event, such as Walktober or a self-guided tour, potentially online.

D. *Farm to School/Farm to Chef.* The committee discussed promoting Farm to Chef connections during the Farm to Chef week in September, 2015, sponsored by the Dept. of Agriculture with a website for matching farmers and restaurants. The possibility of working with agricultural commission in nearby towns will be discussed at the CLiCK meeting.

New Business

6. *Hempel Property* The committee discussed potential lessees, and these names will be forwarded to the Hempels.

7. *Legislative Update*

A. *Personal Property Exemption for Horses and Ponies* Tabled.

B. *Municipal option to abate property taxes* The Ct. Farm Bureau is trying to add livestock to this category.

8. The meeting adjourned at 9:05. Next meeting will be on November 4, 2014.