

Sheffield Agricultural Commission
June 9, 2017 – Approved

Present: Jim Kelly, Amelia Conklin, Kathy Orlando

Attending from the community were Erna Lampman and Anna Houston.

The minutes from the last meeting, 5/17/17, were approved as amended.

Farm brochure:

Erna will provide an invoice to the Ag Com for \$400 for her work on the farmer survey. Kathy will check in with town staff about mailing the survey. The survey needs to be edited and the farmer list needs to be reviewed and finalized. The Ag Com identified the following farm brochure goals:

June 20: Kathy will send first draft of survey and list of names to Ag Com members.

June 30: Ag Com members will reply with feedback.

July 15: Provide the final copy of the survey and list to the town for mailing.

August 30: Deadline to return the survey.

September 30: Erna's target date to have responses collected and compiled.

FFA support:

The \$100 to support the Mt. Everett Future Farmers of America (FFA) program will be allocated toward general expenses of the program.

Expenses:

Jim K. will process the invoices and payments as discussed at the previous meeting.

Anna Houston, poultry processing:

Anna attended the meeting to speak with the Ag Com regarding her proposal to build a local poultry processing facility. The facility would be brick and mortar (not mobile) and USDA-certified. She was aware that Sheffield is a farm-friendly community so she came to the Ag Com to discuss concerns, questions, and suggestions for the facility's location. The commission suggested potential locations: Ashley Falls business park, Mt. Everett Regional High School, plots near Custom Extrusion, and plots near Covestro. The former Kolburne (New Marlborough) and Eagleton (Monterey) properties were also mentioned. Jim K. raised the concerns of waste management, electric power infrastructure needs, and speculated about the possibility of using a biodigester to process waste. Kathy suggested that Anna visit successful examples of poultry slaughterhouses in our region to get a sense of what is required. Anna is only interested in moving forward with the project if it is community supported, as she would eventually like to hand off the business once it's fully operational.

Biosolids as fertilizer:

Jim K. shared information he found on guidelines and regulations for the use of biosolids as fertilizer from various departments:

Massachusetts Department of Environment Protection

Environmental Protection Agency

Umass Extension

Massachusetts Department of Agriculture

Required protocols include nutrient management plan, soil testing, and water supply considerations. The Ag Com will continue discussion and study of the information at the next meeting after Jim K. has met with Larkin Farm.

Respectfully submitted,
Amelia Conklin