

Ipswich Agricultural Commission

Approved Minutes of the Meeting of January 13, 2021

Conducted on-line via Zoom

Members participating: Shendel Bakal, Royce Knowlton, Jay Stanbury, Charlotte Kahn and Brian Curley (associate members)

Members not present: Eric Galicki, Norm Swanson

Non-members participating: Beth O'Connor

Minutes: The Commission voted to approve the draft minutes from the meeting of December 16, 2020.

Citizens' queries: None.

Discussion:

Public workshop series (continued from December meeting):

- After consideration of restrictions to public gatherings due to Covid, and the potential scheduling constraints on the use of the Town's Zoom account, the Commission identified two preferred dates for workshops during the Spring of 2021. These are March 25 and April 29.
- The subjects for the workshops will be garden planning and planting at the March 25 workshop, and integrated pest management (IPM) at the April 29 workshop.
- The Commission discussed possible locations for in-person workshops when these become feasible. These might include either town-owned properties or properties owned by interested private or non-profit organizations.
- Brian Curley will contact a potential speaker for the April IPM program.

Budget issues:

- Beth O'Connor noted that the Commission has a balance of \$1,200 in its budget for FY 2021, and the sum of \$365 available from the sale of tote bags.
- The Commission discussed possible uses of these funds. These might include supporting the workshop series, or grants to suitable applicants to promote agriculture and local food.

Other matters:

- It was noted that the Town recently decided to purchase land on Pineswamp Road that has been the location of a community garden. Depending on what the Town decides to do with the property, it may not be available for a community garden in the future. The Commission

discussed ways to find alternative locations for a community garden. Jay Stanbury will contact staff at the Essex County Greenbelt Association to see if they might be in a position to help.

- The Commission discussed a number of actions that could be taken to promote local farms. These might include regular notices on the Commission's page of the Town website announcing the availability of seasonal produce. Other possibilities include on-line social media and announcements in The Localne.ws.

The next Agricultural Commission meeting was scheduled for February 10.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jay Stanbury, Chair, Town of Ipswich Agricultural Commission