

AGRICULTURE COMMISSION MINUTES (NOT YET APPROVED)

Town Office Annex
June 19, 2017 7:00 P.M

1. **Call to Order:** Ron Gross, Chair: 7:03 pm Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance:

Members Present: Ron Gross, Chair; Marianne Halpin; Tanya Bourgoin; Peter Dean; Kevin Staehly

Guests: Emmett Lyman; Kitty Flannery; Charlotte Gelston

2. **Approval of Agenda:**

Mr. Dean made a motion to approve the agenda of the June 19, 2017 meeting.
Mr. Staehly seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. **Discussion of Budget Proposal:**

Mr. Gross presented copies of the correspondence Mr. Staehly sent to the Tri-Board on June 12, 2017 via Linda Ziemenski, administrative secretary for the First Selectman, regarding the 2017–2018 town budget. Mr. Gross expressed his displeasure that Mr. Staehly had not brought the matter to this commission for discussion and review prior to submitting the correspondence to the First Selectman's office. Mr. Staehly explained that due to the timeline of the budget meetings and the constraints of FOIA regulations, he was unable to present his recommendation to the commission. Additionally, Mr. Staehly stated that this was his personal opinion and that it was made clear in his correspondence that he was not acting on behalf of the commission. A heated discussion and debate of an individual citizen's right to free speech followed.

Mr. Dean made a motion to give \$850 from the AgComm's 2017–2018 budget back to the Board of Finance to do with what they may. Mr. Staehly seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Discussion of Livestock Complaint on Cherry Swamp Road:**

Mr. Gross reported that he had spoken to Mike Olzacki, EH Animal Control and Jim Ventres, EH Planning & Zoning about this matter. Both parties said that they had investigated and no abuse was found. Mr. Ventres confirmed that there is no zoning ordinance that specifies how many large animals may be housed in one area.

Kitty Flannery of Cherry Swamp Road requested that an ordinance addressing population density of livestock be written and adopted.

Charlotte Gelston spoke in favor of a zoning ordinance of at least 1/2 acre of dedicated penned space per large animal.

Ms. Bourgoin agreed to collaborate with Ms. Flannery and Ms. Gelston on creating a draft of said ordinance to be submitted to the commission at the August meeting.

5. **Adjournment:** Time 7:52 pm

Mr. Dean made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Gross seconded.

The next meeting of the Agriculture will be held: July 10, 2017

Respectfully submitted,
Tanya Bourgoin, Acting Secretary