

Franklin Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes from March 27, 2023
(Hybrid Meeting)

In Attendance: Members Present: *Roger Trahan, Marian Szymanski, Nick Capoccia, Dan Morse, CJ Koshivas, and Linda Noel.* Also present: *Mel Hamblen, Ed Szymanski, Pam Gianetti, Alli Coakly, Alison Dempsey, Margaret Perkins, Ashleigh Bemis, Tiffany Henault, and Paul Atwood.*

1. Opening:

- A. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm pm by Roger Trahan.
- B. Roll Call:** Six members of the Franklin Agricultural Commission were present. Five members of the Medway Agricultural Commission

2. New Business:

A. Meeting with Medway Agricultural Commission: Members of the Medway Agricultural Commission stated that their group has been focused on the following actions: Passing the “Right to Farm” by-law, organizing and promoting their “Harvest Hop”, Increasing their followers on Facebook, assisting the current 5 farms in Medway, assisting with the Medway Community Farm, promoting their work on Facebook, and working with the Medway Board of health and the Medway Zoning Board to make it easier for Medway residents to engage in agricultural activities. Both the Franklin Agricultural Commission and the Medway Agricultural Commission agree that educating the residents and organizations in their towns are the true work Agricultural Commissions. A suggestion was made that the Franklin Agricultural Commission should become a Right-to-Farm community by making it a ballot question in the Spring of 2024. This will require a year of canvassing and public education.

It was also suggested that, perhaps, the town of Franklin is moving towards becoming more of a city rather than a town and thus, we should move in an Urban Farm direction. This would necessitate less land be required in order to be considered a “farm”. A member of the Franklin Agricultural Commission suggested that the Commission needs to encourage more urban farmers, urban agricultural projects, and community gardens.

B. Helping Franklin Farms- Roger asked the farmers attending the meeting, “What can the Franklin Agricultural Commission do to help you and your business? The responses were:

1. Change the existing laws that require 5 acres of land in order to be considered a “farm”. The town of Franklin no longer has many large parcels of land available.
2. Promote the local farms – especially their Agrotourism events and children’s programs.
3. Towns could put up signs that feature the names of each farm and their products on: Highways, in front of each farm, and on the roads that lead to each farm.
4. Franklin could host a “Farm Hop”.

C. Important Dates:

1. June 2nd, 2023 – First Franklin Farmer’s Market
 - a. Planting zucchini and pumpkin seeds.
 - b. Tractor will be available for the children to explore.
2. August 18, 2023 – Zucchini Races
3. October 27th, 2023- Last Farmer’s Market
 - a. Pumpkin weighing

The meeting was adjourned by CJ Koshivas and Marian Szymanski at 8:02pm.

Minutes submitted by Marian Szymanski