**Franklin Agricultural Commission**

 **Meeting Minutes from July 31, 2023**

 **(Hybrid Meeting)**

 ***In Attendance:*** *Members Present****:*** *Roger Trahan, Marian Szymanski, Dan Morse, and C.J. Koshivas, and Nick Capoccia. Also present: Ed Szymanski and Alan Earls.*

 1. **Opening:**

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm pm by Roger Trahan.
2. Roll Call: Five members of the Franklin Agricultural Commission were present.
3. The Minutes of our April 24th Meeting were approved.

 2. **New Business:**

 A. Schmidt Farm: it was noticed that the land, known as Schmidt’s Farm, is in need of mowing/haying. This is important as the Agricultural Commission would like to see the land remain in agricultural use. We were informed that the property is scheduled to be mowed soon.

 B. Town of Franklin “Master Plan”- A meeting to discuss this plan will be held on 8/8/2023. The Commission is considering the possibility of working to make Franklin a “Right to Farm” town. We will all research this designation and we will generate a Pro/Con list at our August meeting.

 C. Agricultural Commission Members: There have been some membership changes in the Commission. Nick Hoffman and Linda Noel have resigned. Nick Capoccia is now a member and Dan Morse is now an Associate Member.

 D. Stormwater Utility Fee: In April 2023, The Town implemented a Stormwater Utility fee for all Franklin property owners. ($18.66 per 1,000ft of impermeable surfaces/areas). Farms usually have a number of structures that are considered impervious: greenhouses, hoop houses, barns, animal housing, etc. The Commission will connect with SEMAP and MDAR to look into the possibility of an exemption or reduced fee for farms.

 3. **Old Business:**

 **A.** Franklin Summer Farmer’s Market:

1. The annual zucchini race will be held at the Farmer’s Market in 8/18/1961. Mel Hamblin will run this event, with help from the AgCom. Marian will set-up an informational table at this event featuring information about the Commission and information about local farms and farm products.

2. Roger asked the farmers present at the meeting, “How many farmers (selling their products at the Farmer’s Market) is too many? At what point does competition become a limiting factor? The farmers present at this meeting responded that, currently, each farm tries to showcase their specialty products and the Farmer’s Market is working well for everyone.

 B. Important Dates:

 August 18, 2023 – Zucchini Races.

 October 27th, 2023- Last Farmer’s Market and annual Pumpkin Weighing event.

The meeting was adjourned by Dan Morse and Marian Szymanski at 7:40pm. Minutes submitted by Marian Szymanski