

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**AGRICULTURE COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, October 11, 2017**

**3:30 pm**

**City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**Conference Room**

**Members Present:**

Sarah Wilton, Chair  
Charles Daloz, Vice Chair  
Bettina A. Chadbourne, Councilor  
Aaron Moody, Member  
Mark Florenz, Member  
David Souther, Guest  
Catherine Souther, Guest

**Staff Present:**

Michele Chalice, Planner

**Members not present:**

**1) Call to order**

Chair Shedd called meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

**2) Approve August 9, 2017 minutes**

Councilor Chadbourne motioned to approve the August 9 minutes, Mr. Daloz seconded and it was passed by unanimous vote.

**3) Monadnock Region Agriculture Commissioner/Policy Advocacy Training – Debrief**

Chair Shedd announced that she and Mr. Daloz and Mr. Florenz attended the Monadnock Region Agriculture Commissioner/Policy Advocacy Training. He said there were three presentations from the seacoast region and they were promoting agriculture within Lee, Durham and Rye. He said that the Town of Lee was looking at the agricultural ordinances and that is something AGC should pursue as well. Ms. Chalice said that there is a Land Use Code update just getting started but ordinances are different. She said zoning is a better place to start and Ms. Tara Kessler is project lead with the former City Manager, Medard Kopczynski, as the consultant, and they will probably be hearing more about their project as they go out to community to talk about what community would like to see changed about the land use code. She said it will be a fabulous opportunity for AGC to have their input heard. Mr. Daloz said the Land Use Code has great agricultural potential.

Ms. Chalice asked if Mr. Florenz had any reflections on the training. He explained that he is having a structure put up on his farm and he is encountering a lot of red tape with the City as there is no

consideration that he is putting up an agricultural building to house livestock and not a building for people. He said the process is costing a lot of money and there are ways to make the process less burdensome for agricultural buildings because they present a different set of considerations. Chair Shedd asked him to explain what a hoop structure is. Mr. Florenz explained that a hoop structure is a three-sided metal truss that provides shelter from the elements in the winter for livestock. Chair Shedd asked what animals they are housing and Mr. Florenz said his structure will house pigs, but other farms build hoop structures for other livestock as they present a more efficient alternative to a barn in terms of managing livestock. Mr. Florenz said the City has no objection it is just a tedious process that is lengthy and expensive. He said he understands the regulations but there should perhaps be exceptions to streamline the process for agricultural properties. Mr. Daloz said Stonewall has had similar problems. Mr. Florenz said he had to pay over \$500 for a building survey and over \$500 for a site plan review for a structure that will house pigs. Chair Shedd asked how that related to the advocacy training they attended. Mr. Florenz said they discussed the site plan review and code and ways to have AGC write language into the regulations to make the process easier for agricultural review. Chair Shedd said she did not hear an example of interfacing with farmers at the training and she felt there needed to be more interfacing between rural and urban agriculture, for example, making a City or yard bee-friendly.

Mr. Florenz said there were three agricultural commissions represented and each had a different flavor. He said Durham, which is a college town, had more incentive because perhaps they do not have a lot of agriculture as opposed to Lee and other areas where there is more agriculture and more focused on real problems farms are experiencing. He said it is up to Keene to determine where their interests fall. Councilor Chadbourne asked how AGC would bring this forward to make it more visible. Ms. Chalice said she brought a recommendation for an adjustment to the building and that involved Ms. Chalice making a draft and AGC making modifications to the document and the change being put forth to that regulatory body. She said in Mr. Florenz' case she brought it to Mr. Lamb at the Planning board and said there are currently no exclusions for agricultural buildings. She said perhaps AGC can take a look at the language for the construction for new buildings.

She said if AGC would like her to bring Planning Board standards to AGC she can do that or they could be part of the broader land use update which will happen over more years, but will have broader, long-term impacts. She said Mr. Florenz is talking about a very specific agricultural construction project that exceeded certain standards and required a site plan review. Chair Shedd said she would like to see the standards. Councilor Chadbourne said she would like to request that they put it on the agenda as a separate item. Mr. Florenz said that some agricultural commissions had been able to put forth agricultural-specific language into the planning and site plan review process that made it easier for farmers to accomplish projects. He suggested that they motion that AGC look into the language in Keene. Mr. Florenz said that the State leaves site plan review, code and zoning to the municipalities Councilor Chadbourne motioned to ask Ms. Chalice to bring forth information of the City's planning standards for AGC to review, it was seconded by Mr. Daloz and passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Florenz said that they can also add discussion to the agenda for next month.

Ms. Souther and committee members introduced themselves. She said she is in the process of getting approval to become a member.

Chair Shedd stated that other agriculture commissions at the training had brochures. She suggested that AGC could make a brochure similar to that with a map of all the farms and include their priority areas, agro business, liaison w farmers and environmental corridors. Ms. Chalice said she could

research some ideas and come up with an idea to be part of the next packet. Chair Shedd said it is consistent with their outreach goals they had set and that they can pass them out at the Farmer's Market. She asked members to motion to create an AGC brochure and put on the agenda for next meeting. Mr. Florenz motioned to create an AGC brochure, Mr. Daloz seconded and it passed by unanimous vote.

#### **4) Fall Festival Table – Debrief**

Chair Shedd said Fall Festival was rained out but one of the restaurant owners gave her access to an awning to keep dry. Chair Shedd and Mr. Daloz were also successful in recruiting a new member for AGC, Ms. Souther. Mr. Daloz said it was not as successful as they had hoped due to the rain, but it was a good trial run and that they hope to attend the Pumpkin Festival on Sunday, October 29. Ms. Chalice said they have to sign up to participate and she will look into it. Chair Shedd asked if they need to prepare for Pumpkin Festival and Ms. Chalice said she is not sure they can just show up and they likely will have to register first. Chair Shedd asked members about their thoughts on having a table at the Pumpkin Festival. Mr. Daloz said it would be good practice for getting out to Chamber or Practice and the Farm Bureau, etc. Ms. Chalice said she will send a registration form to members for Pumpkin Festival in order for them to attend. Members said they thought it might just be for children to carve pumpkins and might not be appropriate for tabling. Ms. Chalice said there will be all sorts of kid activities; they want to keep Keene festival local and are not permitting vendors. Ms. Sother added that AGC is not a vendor so it would not hurt to approach them about a table. Ms. Chalice said there is no contact information. Ms. Chalice said she is not sure if there is licensing and the Town Clerk would maybe have contact information. Mr. Florenz said he knows a person organizing the festival and he could send her an email. Ms. Chalice asked him to please email her the info when he gets a response and she will email it to the group. Mr. Daloz said he would reconsider his vote but Mr. Florenz said he thinks a table is still appropriate for the Keene community. Chair Shedd said in the future AGC's role could be greater involvement in the planning of these sorts of events. Ms. Chalice said someone would need to contact organizers quickly because the date is fast approaching. Ms. Chalice recommended that the committee makes a motion that they will be present at the Pumpkin Festival.

Mr. Florenz motioned that AGC pursues tabling at the Keene Pumpkin Festival, it was seconded by Ms. Chadbourne and was approved by unanimous vote. Chair Shedd said if they get a location she will pick up equipment on October 27 and will deliver equipment on Sunday, October 29. Ms. Chalice said the website is [pumpkinfestival.org](http://pumpkinfestival.org) and the title is Pumpkin Festival 2017. Ms. Chadbourne said SAU never was represented and the organizers are Let it Shine.

#### **5) Solicitation of Potential New Commission Members**

Chair Shedd introduced Ms. Southers again. Ms. Chalice said AGC still have room for one more commission member and one alternate. She said new members must be Keene residents and they must submit themselves for consideration. Chair Shedd said she would like to know the exact procedure for recruiting new members for next month. Mr. Daloz asked about what types of focus they will have, for example, big landowners. Ms. Chalice mentioned a Keen State College professor but Mr. Daloz said he does live in Keene. Councilor Chadbourne asked if they should assign tasks for finding additional members. She suggested colleges and Antioch University New England (AUNE). Mr. Daloz said there are a couple of African people from AUNE that may live in Keene. Chair Shedd said she is running for the Co-Op board so she will tap into that source as well. Councilor

Chadbourne said she would look into AUNE and KSC and Mr. Florenz said he would look into UNH extension. Councilor Chadbourne asked new member, Ms. Souther, if she would ask around at the Farmer's Market. She also asked about the high school. Mr. Daloz said he would speak to Mr. John Mitchell and look into the different landowners in the area. Mr. Florenz said he would ask people from Green Wagon Farm.

**6) New or Other Business**

Councilor Chadbourne said she had some questions about the chicken brochure, for example, the lack of information about anti-predator fencing. She said there are many predators that can dig and that fencing may need to be deeply set and to elaborate on housing. Mr. Florenz said he does not think that the brochure is supposed to be greatly details and that is why they provide links on additional information on keeping chickens. Chair Shedd said they will put an item on agenda for next month for revisions.

**7) Next Meeting – Wednesday, November 8 at 3:30PM**

**8) Adjournment**

Chair Shedd adjourned meeting at 4:34.

**REFERENCES:**

New Hampshire Farms Network - <http://newhampshirefarms.net/articles/monadnock-region>