



Chairman
Bruce Garstka

TOWN OF LEDYARD CONNECTICUT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Agricultural Commission

~ AGENDA ~

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex-Hybrid Format

REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION

Meeting ID: 871 9606 8117

Passcode: 695579

Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87196068117?pwd=azJxWDBCN0lhTGlycTE0dkozQU13UT09>

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,87196068117#,,,,*695579# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. CITIZENS COMMENTS

IV. COMMENTS OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

V. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

VI. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE Regular Meeting minutes from April 18, 2023, as written.

Attachments: [AG minutes 4-18-23](#)

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

1. CT Farm Bureau April Newsletter.

Attachments: [CT Farm Bureau April newsletter](#)

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Any Other Old Business to come before the Commission

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Assess what the Commission has already done and where to go in the future.
2. Any Other New Business to come before the Commission

X. ADJOURNMENT

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 23-1613

Agenda Date: 5/16/2023

Agenda #:

MINUTES

Minutes:

Motion to APPROVE Regular Meeting minutes from April 18, 2023, as written.



Chairman
Bruce Garstka

TOWN OF LEDYARD

Agricultural Commission

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex-Hybrid Format

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Garstka called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Community-at-Large Representative Michael E. Marelli
Farming Community Allyson Angelini
Chairman-Farming Community Bruce Garstka
Community-at-Large Representative Katie Yuhas
Farming Community Russell Holmberg
Excused Alternate Member- Community-at-Large William Thorne
Non-voting Alternate Member Steve Martic

Russell Holmberg was present via Zoom.
Town Councilor Naomi Rodriguez was also present.

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Ty and Jenny Lamb, 95 Lambtown Rd, brought up the following:

- 1) The Lambs established beekeeping on their farm and wanted to thank Chairman Marelli for volunteering his time to help them get started.
- 2) The Historic District Commission has been discussing community gardening at the Town level.
- 3) Suggested networking the Ledyard Agriscience Program with Clarke Farm to utilize the property. Also, asked about networking the schools with local farms.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Councilor Rodriguez brought copies of land deeds to address questions on restrictions from the last meeting:

State farm (1087) is deed restricted and should only be used for agricultural purposes.

Clarke Farm (1025) is not deed restricted. Chairman Marelli said a few groups are interested in the property such as Conservation. Councilor Rodriguez added that the Town may have an interest in the land in the future for something such as a new High School.

V. MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Angelini said she believes that a community garden is a major undertaking that should only be need based. Mr. Holmberg agreed with this statement and reiterated the importance of building a community garden only when there is a demonstrated need. He said the Town's liability also needs to be considered.

Mr. Holmberg said he believes there are liability umbrellas in place when an Agricultural Enterprise employs an Agri-science student.

VI. REPORTS**VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Motion to APPROVE Regular/Joint meeting minutes from March 21, 2023 as written.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Michael E. Marelli

SECONDER: Katie Yuhas

AYE 5 Marelli Angelini Garstka Yuhas Holmberg

EXCUSED 1 Thorne

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion of topics raised in the joint meeting.

Chairman Garstka thought the joint meeting went well and received some positive feedback. He would like to plan another joint meeting.

2. Any Other Old Business to come before the Commission

No update on the GIS overlays.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss next Joint Meeting time frame.

Chairman Garstka suggested scheduling another joint meeting for October 17, 2023, prior to the Agricultural Commission's Regular meeting.

2. Discussion of the email sent to the Mayor/Commissions.

No responses yet on the email sent regarding Clarke Farm. Councilor Rodriguez confirmed that

everyone has received the email. She noted that the Mayor Fred Allyn III was favorable in considering it. Chairman Garstka noted that it at least brought up the need to support agriculture in the Town.

3. Any Other New Business to come before the Commission
None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Bruce Garstka

SECONDER: Katie Yuhas

AYE 5 Marelli Angelini Garstka Yuhas Holmberg

EXCUSED 1 Thorne

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TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 23-1601

Agenda Date: 5/16/2023

Agenda #: 1.

AGENDA ITEM
CORRESPONDENCE

Subject:

CT Farm Bureau April Newsletter.

Correspondence List:

(type text here)



April, 2023

Roxanne Maher
741 Colonel Ledyard Hwy
Ledyard, CT 06339

**Will you help fight legislation
that hurts Connecticut farms
with a gift of \$50?**

Dear Ms. Maher:

We're fighting an uphill battle....and we need you with us. Let me share some examples of legislation that has been proposed this year and in past years that irreparably harms Connecticut farms....

Providing Legal Representation to Farm Animals – This year we fought against a bill that would provide legal representation to animals through a court appointed attorney. It would not take long for this type of proposal, if implemented, to put most farms with livestock or horses out of business.

Modifications to PA 490 – Periodically when the legislature is under pressure from municipalities, they consider modifying Public Act 490 which allows municipalities to tax farmland and open space at lower rates. Many farms would be put out of business if their property was assessed at commercial or residential rates.

Elimination of the Farmer's Tax Exemption Permit – This important exemption for farmers is often targeted as a way to increase tax revenue when the state's finances are tight. Ending this benefit would add to farmers' already high input costs.

Will you join with us to fight these proposals that hurt Connecticut agriculture by making a gift of \$50?

This year's legislative session is upon us and with it comes a triple challenge:

- **Defeating** legislation that negatively impacts farming;
- **Educating** newly elected legislators about the reality of farming in Connecticut;
- **Advancing** legislation to help Connecticut farms.

Every legislative session here in Connecticut is an opportunity to create a climate and environment that supports and promotes agriculture.

Yet, this year we face two threats.....

First, we are working furiously to defeat and block legislation that hurts Connecticut agriculture.

Many initiatives are brought forward with good intentions but with little thought for the impact on agriculture. And this impact can be considerable....

Secondly, we are facing a significant challenge this legislative session with 36 new legislators seated. These 36 people have never served in the general assembly and few, if any, have little to no experience with agriculture.

Will you help block legislation that hurts Connecticut farms with a gift of \$50?

Legislators Lack Hands on Farming Experience

For many rural Connecticut families, farming is a tradition passed down through many generations.

As you know, many Connecticut farms have been family businesses for decades if not centuries with children, siblings, uncles & aunts, cousins, in-laws and more participating in the farm operations especially during harvest season.

Because almost all Connecticut farms are run by families, many Connecticut residents have had experience in the past working or helping out on farms.

Maybe they helped with haying or apple picking at the height of the season
 ...maybe they hoed rows of vegetables mid-summer
 ...maybe they worked at the retail farmstand on weekends
 ...maybe they picked strawberries at the beginning of the growing season

No matter the role that they played, they learned about farming.

They learned about the hard work, the long hours and commitment required to keep a farm profitable and functioning. They also learned about the beauty of a sunset over cornfield, the incredible taste of home-grown blueberries and the satisfaction of raising an animal from birth.

What came from this experience is often a hard-won appreciation for the challenges of farming – bad weather, pests, droughts, trouble finding farm help and more.

As the number of Connecticut farms has decreased, the number of residents who experience farming in any kind of way, has decreased as well.

Consequently, current state elected officials also have little to no experience with farms. They don't understand how food is grown, how challenging weather conditions can be, and how much time is required.

And these are just the basics – never mind an understanding of input costs, an awareness of market demands, developing new markets, knowledge of the myriad of state, federal and local regulations covering farming.

So when legislation affecting farms is raised, our legislators often lack a basic understanding of farming and agriculture. While their initiatives are frequently well-intentioned, the outcomes can be harmful to farms.

Will you help us reach legislators who have little farming experience? **Will you help us educate legislators about modern farming with a gift of \$50?**

Newly Elected Legislators – Learning to Govern and Learning About Farming

To further complicate matters, this legislative session includes 36 new legislators who have never served as state legislators before. So not only are they learning

the legislative process, developing relationships with staff and colleagues, developing their priorities and initiatives but they are also getting up to speed on a myriad of public policies that affect their constituents such as public health, transportation, housing issues, etc.

They need time to learn about these complex issues including agriculture and its importance in our state. CFBA is taking time to educate each and every state leader about the impact of these bills on Connecticut farms.

Will you help us educate new legislators on Connecticut agriculture with a gift of \$50?

Defeating Legislation That Harms Connecticut's Working Farms

Every legislative session brings often well-intentioned initiatives that negatively impact farms.

This year we saw a proposal to assign attorneys to represent animals in state court cases. In prior years, we have seen PA 490 under the chopping block. Even the farmers tax exempt permit has come under scrutiny.

All of these proposals would have a significant impact on the financial viability of many farms. They would impact every farm's input costs and profit margins.

We need your help to defeat legislations that hurts Connecticut farms. Will you join us with a gift of \$50?

Your Support is Needed Now

The session is in full swing with Committee hearings mostly concluded. As we write this letter, bills are being voted out of Committee and will next be debated on the floor of the House and Senate.

Our lobbyists from PennLincoln as well as our President Paul Larson and I are at the Capitol reading bills, speaking with legislators, meeting with leadership, educating legislators, testifying and more.

Your support today will make an impact on our ability to defeat legislation that hurts Connecticut farms. And just as importantly, your gift will help us advance legislation that helps Connecticut agriculture.

A Track Record of Success

Because of support from people like you, because of our reputation and because of our hard work, we have a strong track record at the Capitol. Some of our achievements have included:

- Passage of farm energy regulations that allow biogas from farm-based anaerobic digesters to be injected into natural gas pipelines;
- Expanding and amending PA 490 to include aquaculture land;
- Allocation of \$14 million for climate smart ag projects including \$7 million for farmland restoration.

When you support Connecticut Farm Bureau, your investment is in good hands.
Will you make a gift today of \$50 to support Connecticut farming?

Your Values are Our Values

I know you're someone who cares about agriculture. You care about Connecticut farming and Connecticut farm families.

You see the importance of agriculture and the impact it has on our state.

You have the insight to understand the impact the Connecticut legislature has on our farms. You understand the importance of building relationships with state legislators whose support is critical.

You understand the direct impact that the legislators can have on farming and the importance of education, farm tours, person to person conversations.

You see the value in developing long-term relationships with legislators at the Capitol and how that will benefit farmers.

Not everyone has this kind of sophisticated understanding of the legislature and its impact on agriculture the way you do.

You also understand that we are stronger together than we are apart. That the strength we have is in working together to promote agriculture.

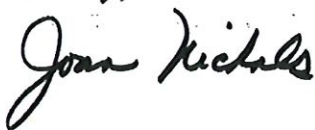
Will you join in support of farming by making a gift of \$50 today?

As farmers and supporters of agriculture, we face some significant challenges at the Capitol this year. Will you join with us to

- **Fight** against bills that harm agriculture;
- **Advance** legislation that helps Connecticut farms;
- **Educate** Connecticut legislators about farming?

We need your support so that Connecticut farms can continue to grow and thrive.
Will you help defeat legislation that harms Connecticut farms by making a gift of \$50?

Sincerely,



Joan Nichols
Executive Director

P.S. Will you help defeat bills at the Connecticut Legislature that hurt agriculture with a gift of \$50 today?



URGENT REQUEST

Will you be a voice for Connecticut agriculture at the state capitol?

We are facing two significant challenges during this year's 2023 legislative session.....

First, we are fighting back against legislation like a recent bill that would provide attorneys to farm animals. These proposals, if implemented, would put many farms out of business. Many of these bills would reduce your profits and increase your input costs.

Second, we face a legislative body with little to no understanding of farming including 36 newly elected members.

It's tough enough to defeat anti-farm legislation. It is further complicated by legislators' lack of ag knowledge.

As the legislature brings bills to the floor of the House and Senate, Connecticut Farm Bureau is working hard to make sure that farmers' interests are protected.

Will you help fight legislation that negatively impacts Connecticut farms with a gift of \$50?

☐ **Yes, I want Connecticut farms to operate in a favorable economic climate!**

Enclosed is my gift of:

☐ \$40 ☐ \$45 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$55 ☐ \$60 ☐ \$65 ☐ \$_____

Roxanne Maher
Ledyard Agricultural Commission
741 Colonel Ledyard Hwy
Ledyard, CT 06339

069109

Please return this form with any corrections and make check payable to CFBA. Please mail this form and your donation to CFBA, 78 Beaver Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109. For more information call 860-768-1100 or email traceym@cfba.org. You may also make a gift online at cfba.org.



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 23-1614

Agenda Date: 5/16/2023

Agenda #: 1.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Any Other Old Business to come before the Commission

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 23-1572

Agenda Date: 5/16/2023

Agenda #: 1.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Assess what the Commission has already done and where to go in the future.

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 23-1615

Agenda Date: 5/16/2023

Agenda #: 3.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Any Other New Business to come before the Commission

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)