

Ag Advisory Committee Minutes for March 7, 2013

Meeting commenced at 7:02 pm with Chester Urbanski, Betty Jane Hunt, Greg Sappington, Bill Kirluk and Dave Miller present. Township liaison Tom Molnar was absent.

Minutes from the February 7, 2013 meeting were approved with no changes.

The next order of business was a statement read into the record by Chairman Chester Urbanski regarding farming the Municipal property. Discussion followed.

“On January 15, after the Township Planning Board meeting, Mayor Zach Rich approached me and asked that the Agricultural Advisory Committee try to find another farmer to farm the property. He assured me that the Township Committee would take no action until they had heard from the AAC.

On Friday, January 18, Mayor Rich came by my house around noon. He spoke with Cathy. Cathy told me that he told her that the AAC would be completely in charge of finding a farmer for the municipal property.

At the next AAC meeting, Thursday, February 7, I relayed this information to the Committee. I suggested we contact the SADC regarding their Farm Link program and supplied everyone with a draft proposal. In addition, Secretary Dave Miller said that he had seen an ad in the Hunterdon Observer by a farmer named Greg who was looking for hay fields to rent so that he could provide hay to his herd of beef cattle.

I called Greg the evening of February 11. He was interested and would look at the property.

On the morning of February 15, I called Greg Zdep, the young farmer I had spoken to earlier. He had looked at the fields and he was very interested in farming them. He said he would put about a ton of fertilizer on the fields hoping that this would help to improve the Orchard Grass present. He offered the Township a yearly rental fee of \$750 and said he would be willing to do additional maintenance of the property including mowing and brush hogging.

I called Mayor Rich the same morning, February 15, and told him about Greg’s proposal.

Mayor Rich then told me that The Township Committee had already made their decision. This decision had apparently been made at the January 23, 2013 Township Committee meeting”.

Marcia Karrow is planning to attend the March 27th Township Committee meeting to discuss the 300th anniversary of Hunterdon county. The AAC discussed what we thought we could do to celebrate the tri-centennial. We discussed a tri-centennial garden contest

between the adjoining municipalities with a variety of garden products grown in the era. Since the tri-centennial is in 2014 we have plenty of time for planning.

The AAC discussed Chester's correspondence with Bernard Isaacson, Agricultural Outreach Specialist, North Jersey Conservation and Development, concerning programs which provide financial support for agricultural conservation practices that improve water quality. This information was obtained on 2-14-13. No members expressed a desire to proceed with this program.

Chester informed the AAC members that he requested a \$500 .00 budget for 2013. We will know by the April meeting if this was accepted.

The AAC members then decided to change the meeting time to 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm. Next meeting scheduled for April 4, 2013. Minutes prepared by Dave Miller.