

Town of Lunenburg

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
P.O. Box 135
Lunenburg, MA 01462-0135



Matthew Allison, Chair
Arthur Snow, Vice-Chair
Ryan Stober, Clerk
Jorge Marzuca, Member
Greg Burns, Member
-VACANCY-, Alternate
-VACANCY-, Alternate

Farmers Market Managers:
Yanina Fusaro
Mike Fontaine

Meeting Minutes
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
May 16, 2019
Ritter Memorial Building
960 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: M. Allison, A. Snow, R. Stober, G. Burns
Guests: M. Fontaine, Y. Fusaro, J. Chabot, W. Newcomb
Chair called the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

Jerry Lanni of Lanni Orchards was not able to attend, but did submit a letter, which was read to the commission. LCFM update was over 10 vendors were signed up, with over 30 no or no response. M. Fontaine presented new market sign design, the group liked it. R. Stober moved to approve \$200 for 20 new market signs, G. Burns 2nd, all aye. Mike also reported finding a grant for up to \$1,000 for farmers markets. G. Burns moved to approve application for the grant, R. Stober 2nd, all aye. Y. Fusaro reported that the scale we had was not for trade and another will be needed and certified for Cherry Hill to sell meat. Discussion of raffle basket, tickets given for purchases at vendor booths. Managers to draft letter to vendors and rules for next meeting. Remaining agenda items tabled to next meeting.

R. Stober moved to adjourn, A. Snow second, adjourned at 9:38pm.

Letter from Jerry Lanni:

From a Lanni Orchards stand point:

We are in the process of APR that should finish up in the next couple of months. Much like other wholesale commodity agriculture, wholesale apples is no longer a sustainable venture. We are planning on being 100% retail going forward-Pick Your Own, CSAs, Retail Farm stand, Farmers Markets, and Ag Entertainment.

In order to be competitive in this market with farms that are not in Lunenburg, we want to petition the town for public utility services on Chase Road.

This will allow for our growth and expansion of what we can offer to guests visiting our farm in terms of board of health regulation restrictions. We feel this will give us equal competitive footing with other farms in Massachusetts like Davis Farm and Bolton Orchards, and Wilson Farms.

There are many possibilities for expansion-ice cream, coffee, bakery, deli, concession foods, cider making (again), farm to table dinners, commercial kitchen, winery, and many others that I'm forgetting at the moment.

I'm not saying these are all definite things we are going to do, I'm saying that these would be possible with public utilities.

I have the support from the Sewer Commission, the Water Commission and from Senator Tran. They all believe it would be good for the town.

From a Town of Lunenburg/Other Lunenburg Farms and Businesses standpoint:

The Town of Lunenburg, and thus all of the businesses and farms in town are missing out on a huge market in the way of the Travel and Tourism industry in Massachusetts.

We have been involved with Visit North Central Massachusetts (formally the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association) for the last few years. We attend their annual Travel and Tourism Breakfast every year. A representative from MOTT has spoken every year we have gone and has great actual figures on the travel and tourism industry in Massachusetts. It's a 23 Billion dollar industry. He also had figures for tax revenue that that resulted in for the state as a whole and for some of the cities and towns individually. He had figures for Fitchburg and Gardner this year for local tax revenue generated by travelers from 2017.

Fitchburg 2017-\$935,444.39 in tax revenue from travel and tourism

Gardner 2017-\$240,228.05 in tax revenue from travel and tourism

One of the major draws that Massachusetts has in the travel and tourism sector is Agriculture. Lunenburg is blessed to have a tons of great farms that tourists would love to come and visit and spend their money at.

Not only would the farms benefit but the small shops, gas stations, restaurants, and everything else this town has to offer.

This would all translate into tax revenue for Lunenburg.

We need to encourage our Lunenburg representatives to get involved in the Travel and Tourism industry. No town officials from Lunenburg attend this tourism breakfast that was host by Visit North Central Mass.

On the contrary the Mayors of Fitchburg, Leominster, and Gardner were in attendance and countless representatives from other surrounding towns, pepperel, Groton, Harvard, Sterling,é .and many others.

Lanni Orchards want to become a larger family oriented tourist destination in the state. We feel that if we can get public utilities and become a destination for travelers it will benefit the entire Town of Lunenburg. We want to encourage people to take advantage of all the town has to offer and ALL of the farms in our town.

Sincerely,
Jerry Lanni
Lanni Orchards