



**TOWN OF FRANKLIN
AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION [AgCon]**

**FRANKLIN TOWN HALL
7 Meetinghouse Hill Rd.
Franklin, CT 06254**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 16, 2020
7:30 p.m.**

1. Call to Order: Chairperson Susan Allen called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

Members Present: Chairperson Susan Allen, Vice Chair Alan Holmberg, Gail Miller. **Members Absent:** Craig Staebner. **Alternate Member Present:** Roland Mihok. **Alternate Members Absent:** Chester Rynaski. Roland Mihok was seated as a voting member.

2. Recognition of Visitors and Initial Inquiries: N/A

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. November 21, 2019:

MOTION #1 (01.16.20): made by Gail Miller SECONDED BY Roland Mihok that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission approve the Minutes of November 21, 2019 as amended:

1. Approval of Minutes: June 20, 2019 should be **"October 17, 2019"**
 2. Agenda Item 7a: should be **"7d"**

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

4. Call for Additional Agenda Item: N/A

5. Correspondence:

- a. **Sprague - Notification to Abutting Towns:** Sprague is performing activity with a well located in close proximity to a nearby river and within 500 feet of the Franklin border. Sprague is obligated to notice abutting towns within 500 ft. A map was provided for review.

6. Old Business:

- a. **POLICY FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENT INSPECTION:** The Town of Franklin owns a conservation area off of Hide Park Development & Pleasure Hill of approximately 3.10 acres. Ag-Con is considering developing a policy related to inspections (site/walks) of property owned by the Town of Franklin designated as conservation areas. This would ensure property is well protected, taken care of, and that there are no unwanted activities on such property.
 - b. **STONE CHAMBER IN FRANKLIN:** Susan Allen informed the Commission of her recent visit to a stone chamber located on Hill Top Road in Franklin. The year 1858 was etched on a rock near the entrance. The chamber was about 3 to 4 feet wide and 23 feet long. It is thought these chambers were made by Native Americans and/or Colonial People. This is interesting to Ag-Con due to the conservative nature of these sites and that artifacts may be involved. Susan Allen had attended the Windham County Conservation Consortium Meeting in October of last year and a topic of discussion was stone chambers in the State of Connecticut.

7. New Business:

- a. **APPOINTMENT LETTERS:** The Board of Selectmen are in the process of appointing all members of all boards and commissions.
 - b. **FARM BUREAU:** The County Legislative Dinner is scheduled for February 2, 2020. Agendas for the upcoming CT Session will be presented that evening. Topics may include the CT Farm Winery Act addressing the need for a 25% increase of growth grapes in CT; science is being used regarding the need to develop pesticide use that does not involve organic phosphates in the State of Connecticut; and CT permits allowing hemp growth and how regulations do not address this type of agricultural activity.
 - c. **LAND CONSERVATION EFFORTS:** Peltier Grant funds have been awarded. The Project Agreement, Federal Certificates, IRS Determination Letter and Conservation Plan area being finalized. Phil Chester recently completed the Town of Lebanon Plan of Conservation and Development.
 - d. **SPRAGUE LAND PRESERVE:**
 - i. Yellow Trail is complete.
 - ii. Hartford Current had an article referencing the Sprague Land Preserve waterfall and showed a picture of one of the bridges built by the Boy Scouts near the Scotland Dam. Other pictures were highlighted as well.
 - e. **NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION ACADEMY:** This program is hosted by UCONN and provides for high school students to be matched-up with environmental conscious people to work in communities on projects such as GPS mapping, signage, and trail building. The project is intended to begin fall 2020.
 - f. **BALD EAGLE SURVEY:** There were no sightings at the Konow Camp.
8. **GENERAL COMMENTS:** Susan Allen talked about a coordinated effort by Columbia and Lebanon about raising funds for the purchase of approximately 1,000 acres associated to the Mono Pond State Park. The Town of Lebanon Conservation owns a couple pieces of property including Five Mile Rock. Lebanon Conservation and Agriculture Commission released a recent newsletter showcasing beautiful pictures of farms and areas in Columbia and Lebanon.

9. Public Comment: None

10. Adjournment:

MOTION #2 (01.16.20): made by made by Roland Mihok SECONDED BY Alan Holmberg that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

Respectfully submitted, Sherry Pollard