

Stockbridge Agricultural and Forestry Commission Meeting

October 3, 2022 Minutes

Present

Agricultural and Forestry Commission	Guests
Mathieu Boudreau, chair Lisa Bozzuto Abigail Fredsall Shelby Marshall Erik Rasmussen	Chuck Cardillo Michael Canales David Moreno Mateos

1. Matt called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.
 - a. Matt made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of August 29.
Motion approved unanimously.
2. **Update:** Farmers Market
 - a. Matt attended a recent Select Board meeting. The SB was in favor of putting money aside to hire a coordinator. Looking at \$5,000 for the remainder of this year, and \$5,000 for next year.
 - b. From what Matt has learned, the typical pay rate is \$20/hour.
 - c. This winter the AFC will step up to help get it going.
 - d. Matt will coordinate with Michael Canales to write and distribute the job description.
 - e. The coordinator will attend AFC meetings.
3. **Discussion:** Soil Sampling of Ice Glen
 - a. Guest: David Moreno Mateos from Harvard Graduate School of Design
 - b. Ecologists at Harvard. Trying to find out how forests in recovery increase biodiversity. They focus mainly on microorganisms in the soil.
 - c. Assumption: when forests are degraded, the interactions between soil organisms are reduced and the forest becomes less resilient. Hypothesis: recovery increases soil organism biodiversity, which results in increased resilience. Study old-growth forests to find out which organisms are there. They will conduct DNA sequencing of the microbes to find out exactly which ones are present, and determine which ones are present in old-growth forests. Ultimately, they hope to be able to determine which microbes to introduce to the soil in recovering forests to increase their resilience.
 - d. Working with Bob Leverett, they've chosen Ice Glen, Bryant Homestead, and one other old-growth forest.
 - e. Goal is to take samples a few times this year and next from the roots of 3 trees of each species: hemlocks, red oaks, white ash. These are the dominant species. They are also going to sample leaves.
4. **Discussion:** AFC Philosophy
 - a. Managing for Old-Growth characteristics in forests: AFC will encourage and support efforts in Stockbridge to increase climate resilience and forest biodiversity. Our goal is to ensure healthy, sustainable forests for the long term. We will seek expert input in order to advise the Town and private landowners about best practices.
 - b. We want the UMass foresters whose online presentation we've watched to come to a meeting, and also to walk our properties with us.
 - c. We also want to walk the watershed and Stockbridge Mountain properties with the Water and Sewer Dept. and its forester.

- d. We will also invite the Conservation Commission to attend a meeting, to discuss our philosophy.
 - e. Re: open meeting requirements, on a site visit, we can discuss but not make decisions. Wait until the next regular meeting to vote on motions.
5. **Adjournment:** Confirm next meeting date and time
- a. Next meeting is Monday, November 7, at 6:30.
 - b. At 7:40 pm Matt made a motion to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

To Do:

- **Matt** will work with Mike to put out a job description for the farmers market coordinator.
- **Mike** will send us the name and contact info of the forester who works for the Water and Sewer Dept.
 - **Shelby** will reach out to him to schedule a walk on Stockbridge Mtn and the watershed, including Mike Buffoni. Sunday mornings are best.
- **Lisa** will write a first draft of a philosophy / mission statement.