

**Agricultural Commission
November 16, 2010**



Meeting in room 104, 2 Jabish St., Lawrence Memorial Hall

Member present: Grace Adzima, Hope Guardenier, Alan Page, Will Shattuck

Associate Members: Dan Beaudette, Matt Kotowski

Absent Members: Mike Austin, Sue Gay, Judy Gillan

Also attending: Meg Lanphear, Sentinel Farm

G. Adzima brought the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Reviewed letter to present to the Board of Selectmen to ask for ballot question to repeal the animal excise tax. The Article shall read " Shall the Town of Belchertown cease assessing the excise tax imposed under General Laws Chapter 59, Section 8A on farm animals, machinery and equipment owned by individuals and non-corporate entities engaged in agriculture? Yes___ NO___ "

Grace will contact the Board of Selectmen for a meeting time.

January Farmer's meeting – selected Saturday, January 22nd. Still discussing topics to present.

250th Anniversary - Grace did some historical research of the first farmers settled in Belchertown. Names include Samuel Stebbins, Samuel Bascom, William Hannum, Ebenezer Bridgman and Jonathan Graves. The five farms of the early settlers have largely been developed. While we had hoped to showcase some of the early farms, we will now contact the Historical Society for a possible joint project.

New Business, The Belchertown Chapter of the Granby Regional Horse Council is holding a Poinsettia Ball at the VFW on December 4th. Dinner and dancing with prizes as a fundraiser for local charities. Note- The AgCommission helped to formulate this group by bringing Belchertown horse owners together in 2008.

The State is starting the Mass Association of Agricultural Commissions to support local AgComs. No dues are required for 2011 for membership. It was voted to join the Association by Allen, Will, Grace and Hope. The Association is accepting applications to appoint 14 Board Director positions. Dan will consider applying.

Meg Lamphear talked about the Farmer's Market. They feel that business was down this year and that they were not well supported by the Town's people. How do we get people educated to support the Market?

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Minutes submitted by G Adzima