

Town of Northfield Public Meeting – Minutes

  
3/12/24  
approved

**Name of the board, committee, or commission:** Northfield Agricultural Commission

**Location of meeting (physical address):** Northfield Town Hall 69 Main Street, Northfield MA 01360

**Date and time the meeting convened:** 1/23/24 at 7pm

**Members present:** 1) Jose Madiedo (JM) - Chair; 2) Kristy Norwood (KN) – Vice Chair; 3) Don Baker (DB) – Treasurer; 4) Bill Llewelyn (BL) via “FaceTime” 5) Jesse Robertson-Dubois (JRD); and 6) Debbie Frechette (DF).

**Members absent:** None

**Others in attendance:** 1) Stacy Bond (SB), Ag Com Secretary; and 2) Elspeth Robertson-Dubois

**Name and contact info of the person filling out this form:** Stacy Bond, stacyelizabethbond@yahoo.com

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- 1) Call to Order (7:09pm) and determine quorum
    - a. Committee has quorum.
  - 2) Citizen Input/Guests
    - a. None
  - 3) Review and approval of minutes from 11/14/23
    - a. Motion to approve by JRD, 2<sup>nd</sup> by DF. Approved unanimously via roll call: JM – aye, KN – aye, DB – aye, BL – aye, JRD – aye, and DF – aye.
  - 4) Potential new committee members
    - a. Debbie Frechette is now officially a member of the Ag Com! Welcome!
    - b. Still need one additional member to have the full 7 members needed. Also have spots open for alternates. JRD said he would try to become liason for Open Space Committee.
  - 5) Discuss Pine Meadow Solar Arrays
    - a. JRD updated us that the three arrays on Pine Meadow Rd are going to begin going in this year. Wearing his other hat as an employee of Blue Wave Solar, he would like community support for improvements made to original design of two of the arrays that are beneficial from an agricultural standpoint, specifically:
      - i. Array “C”, the smallest array, could be converted from a conventional array to an agricultural array, but would need re-permitting.
      - ii. Array “B”, across from the Brewery at Four Star Farms, is currently not parallel to the road and would need a minor revision/amendment to make it more parallel.
    - b. Would the Ag Com support the changes and confirm that they are a benefit to farming? Also, would the Ag Com be willing to host or announce a community forum on these changes being better options?
    - c. Having the most farming experience, BL could confirm that those two changes would be a benefit agriculturally, and made a motion to support those two changes to the solar array configurations in order to enhance agriculture outcomes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by KN. Approved

unanimously via roll call with one abstention by JRD: JM – aye, KN – aye, DB – aye, BL – aye, and DF – aye.

- d. Regarding a community forum, SB said she would first speak with the Town Administrator about this idea before proceeding.
- 6) Update of Agricultural Map
  - a. KN reports that she spoke with Jerry Wagener about the current map set-up and feels that it would be easier to do a map using GIS data since it would be much easier to maintain. QGIS offers free software and anyone can use it. JRD offered to help KN with the initial set up.
  - b. BL spoke with Al Stone and he is willing to help us with the updates as well. (Note: when updating, make sure people want to be listed).
  - c. Discussed instead of mailing them to all the residents, with GIS it can be viewed online, but we can make hard copies and put them at Town Hall, Mims, IGA and the Library.
- 7) Chairs report
  - a. None
- 8) Topics not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours in advance
  - a. There is an upcoming regional Ag Com meeting Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>. JM and JRD expressed interest in going. BL reminded people to let them know if you plan on attending.
- 9) Schedule next meeting
  - a. Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7pm at Town Hall
- 10) Adjourn
  - a. Motion made by JRD to adjourn at 8:20pm, 2nd by DB. Approved unanimously via roll call: JM – aye, KN – aye, DB – aye, BL – aye, JRD – aye, and DF – aye.