

**MEETING MINUTES
EAST AMWELL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MARCH 22, 2018; EAST AMWELL MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1070 ROUTE 202, RINGOES, NJ**

CALL TO ORDER & OPEN PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

The meeting of the East Amwell Agricultural Advisory Committee began at 7:30PM. Notice of this meeting was filed in the Township Clerk’s Office, sent to the Hunterdon County Democrat, and the agenda was posted on the municipal bulletin board.

2018 ATTENDANCE

Agricultural Advisory Committee Member	1/15/18	2/19/18	3/22/18	4/16/18	5/21/18	6/18/18	7/16/18	8/20/18	9/17/18	10/15/18	11/19/18	12/17/18
Kit Crisafulli	X	X										
Ann DelCampo	X		X									
Rob Garrett	X	X	X									
John Perehinys												
Candice Wiggum	X	X	X									

Others present: Sharon Brighthaupt as recording secretary David Wang-Iverson, Township Committee Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

Candice Wiggum made a motion to open to the public Rob Garrett seconded. Attending the meeting are Francis Gavigan acting as liaison from the Recreation Committee and Alison Wright Castellano. Candice Wiggum recognized Francis Gavigan. They had a discussion at the Recreation Committee meeting and decided to come to the Agriculture Advisory Committee to propose support for a local farmers market. They propose it could take place at the parking lot near the soccer fields when sporting events are taking place on the weekend days. Ann DelCampo replied that she thinks it is a good idea but speaking as a farmer she confirmed she is already committed and would not be able to participate. Rob Garrett explained this idea has been brought up in the recent past and there was little or no interest from the local farmers to participate. He also mentioned several other local markets taking place and it drew very little interest in recent years. Candice Wiggum offered to place a notice in the VIP and on the bulletin board to see if there is any interest among the locals.

Alison Wright Castellano mentioned there is a new website being built and thought should be given to what will be posted by the committee. Rob Garrett asked if the new site will have the ability to do interactive communication with the public. Alison Wright Castellano explained the public will be able to subscribe to it and if they do so they will receive communications. The new site will take some time to be built. She hopes it will be more user friendly. The Color Run will take place on September 29, 2018 at the same time as Green Fest. It is a one-mile run/walk or a 5K and along the route the students throw colored powder on the runners. A number of vendors attend and it is expected to be even bigger this year. Candice Wiggum made a motion to close to the public and Rob Garrett seconded. All in favor.

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PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes from the February 19, 2018 meeting were presented. Candice Wiggum made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Rob Garrett seconded. All in favor.

DEER MANAGEMENT

Candice Wiggum has been contacted by a number of hunters who describe themselves as management hunters. She is collecting their contact information to pass along to the deer management committee.

Rob Garrett mentioned the idea of hunting safety courses be offered to high school age students. Perhaps if the NRA offers safety courses it would make sense to get in touch with them to see if there is interest in doing it locally. Ann Del Campo suggested it would also be beneficial to make bike safety classes available also.

Candice Wiggum reported on the Deer Management Symposium. It was successful and will continue to move forward on the projects. John Nance and Bill DuFosse are organizing a deer drive and are in the process of obtaining the licenses, and there was further discussion about how the committee might go about communicating to the public and encouraging them to help by not feeding the deer and supporting the pilot projects.

The census started this past Monday night and is underway. Currently Jody Powers and Mike Van Clef are the only ones trained to do the count. Rob Garrett suggested they will not be able to continue to do it all on their own and going forward we need to have others skilled in continuing the annual census in order to benchmark. Then in the future we will be able to measure if the efforts are having an impact on the population.

After discussion about the destruction in the forest, Ann DelCampo offered to put together a tripod to place in the township building during tax season to show the damage the deer are doing to the native habitat and to show that at their current population they are a destructive pest. It should contain bullet points, be easy to understand and show what a healthy forest looks like as compared to the current situation in the Sourlands. Also, a study in Lebanon showed contamination of the waterways from their excrement.

Candice Wiggum suggested it is a good time to schedule another AdHoc Committee Meeting. She will schedule it after the census is complete.

OLD BUSINESS UPDATE

REPORT ON AGRICULTURE IN THE TOWNSHIP

Rob Garrett is trying to obtain the new data from the tax assessor to use to update and help with identifying trends in agriculture in East Amwell.

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There was some discussion about how the updated data might be obtained. Candice Wiggum expects to have more data from the township in another week or so.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ann DelCampo wanted to bring up the subject of the chemicals being used to kill the weeds. They are being introduced to the land and the feed and the animals are eating it and it ends up in the humans. It is another subject that needs to be communicated to the general public.

Discussion about the committee participating in Community Day on June 2. It was decided the committee would like to do so if the township is participating as a part of that group, but not on our own as it would be more successful as a group. It might be another place where the deer management information can be communicated.

The Farm Bureau did recommend the Bee Keeping Rules get scrapped.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION

No public present at this time. Motions were heard from Candice Wiggum to open and close to the public, seconded by Rob Garrett and all in favor.

At this time Rob Garrett made a motion to adjourn seconded by Candice Wiggum. All in favor. The meeting ended at approximately 9:00PM. The next meeting will be April 16, 2018 at 7:30 PM .

/s/ Sharon L. Brighthaupt

Sharon L. Brighthaupt, Recording Secretary