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NEWTON FARM COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
August 4, 2022

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Meeting opened at 7:06 p.m. with the following attendees

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Goldman, Jim Harper, Jeffrey Zabel, Cheryl Lappin, Patrick Costello, John Rice

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vaunita Schnell, Beth Wilkinson, and Lori Yarvis

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Sue Bottino (Executive Director), Paul Holt (Board President), Dede Vittori (Co-President)

STAFF: Brenda Belsanti, Planning & Development Department

• **Farm Operations and Q2 Financial Review**

- The hot weather has been a challenge for employees, so schedules are shifted, but some crops are doing well – tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, fruit trees. Others are suffering from sun scald.
- Summer CSA is good. Major number of tomatoes moved through this week
- Today was the last day of the first session of our four high school interns and they were great. Tuesday six new interns will start for four more weeks
- New Intern Supervisor, Satchel, this year that is a graduate student who has worked with farm crews for 10 years
- Farmers Market busier than ever and Farm Stand is picking up with tomatoes and corn available
- Produce donation in full swing with donations every Wednesday to the Newton Food Pantry with an increase this year to a value of \$14k in produce from \$12k last year
- Donation Sponsors this year – Cambridge Savings Bank, Pomeroy Foundation, Cambridge Trust, and Brookline Bank
- Secured \$5k grant for next year from the Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation
- Adding more culturally relevant food this year as requested by Newton Food Pantry
- New greenhouse is coming along and old greenhouse is being renovated. New electric and propane gas lines installed. Heater is up in new greenhouse and working to install in old greenhouse
- Volunteers for harvest have been great

- Seedling sale was incredibly successful – 70% was sold in the first hour or two.
 - Food share sign-up is active until August 19th – mostly apples, but have peaches and nectarines as well
 - Staff has been offered to enroll in the state 401k plan
 - Received \$1k grant for new farm sign to include name and history
 - Needham Bank gave an unrestricted grant
 - Received pandemic USDA grant of \$20k
 - New board members added
 - Developing a capital plan for financials in 2023
- **Summer Education Program**
 - Summer kid's classes at the farm. Increased to 2 ½ hours with younger kids in the morning and older kids in the afternoon. 76 slots are filled – less sign-ups than last year
 - Wegmans gave a \$5k donation to promote the class scholarship fund through advertising, social media, and networking. Seven students used full or partial scholarship totaling 14 weeks of classes
 - Middle school camp, Environmental Science Camp, and Boston Farms visited
 - Roslindale Farmers Market for composting
 - Matt, Education Director, started a Gardening Circle Skill Share program for once a month
 - The Education Director will be leaving in September
 - Brainstorming more educational and community engagement programs for the future
 - Fall updates – beekeeping class, flower arranging class, Halloween kids party, open house.
 - Received donation from Bard Family Environmental Education Fund for more programming concerning climate change
- **CPA Grant Update**
 - CPA will get billed directly and pay directly.
 - Target date of October to start project
- **Solar Installation Update**
 - Ace Solar from North Andover selected for the project and the first site visit is Monday
 - Battery back-up will be ordered by Ace Solar
- **Meeting Minutes from May 5, 2022**

A motion was made to approve of minutes by Cheryl Lappin. This motion was duly seconded by Patrick Costello. This motion passed 5-0.
- **Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Patrick Costello. This motion was duly seconded by Jim Harper. This motion passed 5-0.

Meeting adjourned 7:48 p.m.

Next meeting – **November 3, 2022.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Belsanti, Staff

