



Ruthanne Fuller  
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Barney S. Heath  
Director

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**NEWTON FARM COMMISSION**  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 2, 2023.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Meeting opened at 7:04 p.m. with the following attendees

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michael Goldman, Jim Harper, Cheryl Lappin, Patrick Costello, Beth Wilkinson, John Rice, and Lori Yarvis

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Vaunita Schnell and Jeffrey Zabel

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

**STAFF:** Brenda Belsanti, Planning & Development Department

● **Financials 2022**

- Sue Bottino reviewed the financials of 2022 and fielded all questions.
- Michael Goldman commented that the fundraising programs have become stronger.

● **Business Plan for 2023**

- Sue Bottino reviewed the Business Plan for 2023 and fielded all questions.
- Sue Bottino reviewed the education program issues from 2022 discussed at the last meeting and plan moving forward to incorporate more opportunistic learning for all ages. Fill the need for volunteer projects for high schoolers and Bar/Bat Mitzvahs.
- Partnering with organizations to speak about the history of the land.
- Family contributed funds to use towards climate change and sustainable agriculture education.
- World renowned speaker is scheduled to speak on diet and how what you eat effects climate change.
- Community is looking to the farm as a gathering place and a place to learn, but not to commit to an everyday program. Full-time programming is very expensive.
- Community events for engagement.

● **Farm Operations**

- Incredibly busy with projects
- New Gene Rubin Greenhouse is up and inspected.

- Old greenhouse has been improved with active heat and ventilation using funds provided from the state Food Security Infrastructure Grant. Waiting on inspection
  - Hopefully Greenhouse dedication and spring kickoff to show-off greenhouses and solar will be in April.
  - New sign paid for by Newton and MA Cultural Councils giving history of the farm.
  - Hiring an Assistant Grower to hopefully come on in March.
  - Hiring a for the new Program Coordinator position.
  - Signups for summer CSA program has begun.
  - Approved in the fall to accept HIP (Healthy Incentives Program) to go with SNAP.
  - Ordered all the seeds, perennial herbs, and chicks and hoping to set up a live feed in the coop.
  - Working to get feedback from the City about the sign policy to see if we can do more signs.
  - Seedling sale May 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>.
- **CPC Project**
    - Installed new HVAC system with heat pumps (with dehumidifiers) in the farmhouse in December. Clean energy with AC.
    - Installed indoor French drain in the basement alleviate water in the basement, which was leading to mildew in the house.
    - Ceiling in the kitchen there is most likely asbestos. Even though the ceiling is bowing it is structurally sound so skipping that project.
    - Getting electrical up to code.
    - May have basement door replaced.
- **Solar Project Update**
    - The array should be installed February 15, 16, & 17 on the roof of the barn.
    - Contractor received the interconnection agreement permit, SMART incentives permit, and all City permits.
    - More to figure out with the battery and battery back-up issues.
    - Weekly status meetings with the project.
    - Permission to operate it must be up and running by June 30<sup>th</sup>, but for the seedlings to thrive it needs to be up and running by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Meeting Minutes from August 4, 2022**

A motion was made to approve of minutes by Patrick Costello. This motion was duly seconded by Jim Harper. This motion passed 7-0.
- **Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Lori Yarvis. This motion was duly seconded by Cheryl Lappin. This motion passed 7-0.

Meeting adjourned 7:59 p.m.

Next meeting – **May 4, 2023.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Belsanti, Staff