

Egremont Agricultural Commission (EAC)

September 2 2016

Attending: **Carla Turner, Andre Vankov, Elizabeth Keen, and Jennifer Brown for the first 30 minutes of the meeting**

Meeting begins at 7:03PM.

1. Meeting minutes from April 28 2016 approved with exception of one typo: it should have been "Conservation Commission" instead of "Conservation Committee".
2. EAC welcomed back Elizabeth Keen who spent good portion of the year with her family in Guatemala.

NEW BUSINESS:

3. EAC held a vote for a new President. Carla suggested considering Elizabeth. The Commission voted unanimously for Elizabeth. Elizabeth Keen assumed her new role and new responsibilities starting immediately.
4. Mary Brazie asked inquired if there is any interest for EAC to set up a table for October 16 on 2016, from 11am to 2pm. The Town is having an open house type of event for residents to say goodbye to the retiring employees, say hello to new employees, and have a meet and greet with other town officials. EAC welcomed Mary's inquiry and committed to have a table. The responsibilities as follows: Elizabeth will set up a table and will be on duty from 11 to 12. From 12 to 2 PM Andrei will take over. Elizabeth will bring the brochures "Egremont Right to Farm", Andrei take a picture and laminate the sign "Egremont Right to Farm".
5. Pollinator Initiative in MA 6 grants are available to bring bees to MA 6MDAR Seeks Public Comment on the State Pollinator Protection Plan. Details are here: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/farmproducts/docs/mdar-pollinator-plan-final-draft.pdf> What the initiative means any town in MA could become a "pollinator bee friendly". To do so a town must vote on the initiative in town's meeting as a certain level of liability would be assumed. Carla mentioned Great Barrington voted recently to be "a bee friendly". Elizabeth suggested reviewing Great Barrington proposal that should be available publicly to see the verbiage they use. Action: Carla to inquire for Great Barrington document on bee pollination bylaw.

What Andrei learned later on-line that is Great Barrington plus more than 25 other MA cities and municipalities have passed policies to regulate the use of neonics. More than 30 retailers in the U.S., including Home Depot, Lowe's and BJs, are taking steps to eliminate neonics from store shelves. Scientific evidence that neonics are a key factor in bee decline. Neonics is a class of insecticides fully called neonicotinoids. Neonicotinoids are a relatively new type of insecticide, used in the last 20 years to control a variety of pests, especially sap-feeding insects, such as aphids on cereals, and root-feeding grubs. Neonics are systemic pesticides. Unlike contact pesticides, which remain on the surface of the treated foliage, systemics are taken up by the plant and transported to all the tissues (leaves, flowers, roots and stems, as well as pollen and nectar).

Meeting adjourned at 7:53PM.

9. Next meeting will be Thursday December 1, 2016 7PM