

**Town of Brattleboro**  
**Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes**  
**May 18, 2015**

Committee Members Present: Jay Bailey, Caitlin Burlett, Stu Thurber, Drew Adam, Charles Robb, Jr., Karen Robb, Charles Robb, Sr.

Public: Janet Bailey, Erica Breen (for Earth Bridge Community Land Trust) sweetrockpoet@gmail.com

Staff: Sue Fillion, Peter Elwell, Rood Francis

**A. Call to Order**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

**B. Announcements**

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No announcements.

**C. Approval of Minutes**

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C. Burlett moved to approve the March 20, 2014 minutes as written; seconded by D. Adam. Pass 7-0.

**D. New Business**

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1. Farmland Tax Stabilization Program

The Committee reviewed proposed changes to the Farmland Tax Stabilization Policy.

- The Commission discussed a proposed change that would give the Selectboard longer than 30 days to provide written consent to any material changes to the ownership, occupancy or operation of the farm. P. Elwell explained that this is because 30 days is not a realistic timeframe. He also added the contracts can be assigned.
- The Commission reviewed proposed changes that allow a waiver to the 2/3 income requirement. The proposed change established a review panel in the event that a farmer's income is less than 2/3 from farming. The panel will make a recommendation to the full Selectboard who would have the authority to grant waivers.
- The Commission reviewed the proposal to change acreage eligibility requirement to 10 acres. P. Elwell advised that we are proposing changes. Staff noted that for some time now, the contracts have been written for 10 acres despite the policy reading 25 acres. There was support for this change given that it makes the contracts and policy consistent and allows opportunities for new farms given the trends in smaller farms.

C. Robb moved that the Agricultural Advisory Committee support the updated Tax Stabilization Procedure and recommend to the Select Board to accept these changes. C. Robb, Jr. seconded.

P. Elwell clarified language changes to 2C to read "any material changes in the ownership, occupancy or operation of the farm will require the farmer to inform the town." and include the 4 provisions of how the farmer would notify the town. The Agricultural Advisory Committee accepted the language as part of the motion.

Pass 7-0.

P. Elwell will present the proposal to the Selectboard on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

**E. Adjourn**

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The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM on a motion by C. Robb; seconded by C. Burlett. Pass 7-0

DRAFT