

# Knox Agricultural Advisory Committee

Meeting of May 15, 2019

Knox Town Hall

Meeting Summary

Committee members present: Jay Francis, Brian Wilson, Betty Ketcham, Gary Kleppel, Ken Saddlemire

Committee members absent: Jessica Gaige, Joshua Rockwood

7:00 Convene

Old business

AAC page on Knox website/

Community Bulletin Board

Gary Kleppel

Knox Farm Day Event

Amy Pokorny & Josh Rockwood

Farm Transition

Fall workshop & individual meetings

Gary Kleppel & Ken Saddlemire

New business

Attracting young farmers to Knox

Discussion & Comments

9:00 Adjourn

## **Old business**

***AAC page on Knox website/Community Bulletin Board*** – Gary Kleppel announced The Knox AAC webpage is up and will be improved and modified during the next few months.

We need a permanent banner and hope that AAC and community members are encouraged to send photos to Gary; we will evaluate them at the next meeting and select a permanent banner

We will also select a featured farm each season, selected by lot; we will upload 4-6 photos from that farm and change farms with the change of seasons

The Community Bulletin Board is ready to go. Please send one or two items that you would like to list (sell) on the Bulletin Board.

***Farm Day*** – Amy Pokorny noted that the Helderberg Hilltowns Farm Day is on for Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. Emily Vincent, intends to host the event at Two Rock Ranch. We encourage Knox's farmers to participate and to help make Farm Day a success. Emily will need a lot of help. Please consider volunteering some time. The AAC should consider contributing some sort of display. The Hilltowns Farm and Artisans tour is on for Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. We hope our farmers will participate in one or both events.

***Farm transition*** – The committee agreed that a farm transition workshop will be held in the fall. The workshop will consist of two groups of sessions – one for established farmers who are interested in transitioning the mission or ownership of their farms, the other for young and beginning farmers interested in establishing farms in Knox. Sessions will be led by experts from State agencies and advocacy organizations who will describe tools available for transitioning out of or into a farm or changing the farming operation in some way. A date and speakers for the meeting must be determined. We also discussed sponsoring follow-up sessions during the winter of 2020. These meetings will allow

individual farmers/families to meet with an attorney or financial advisor to help organize their transition. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, individuals must have attended the fall meeting. The AAC organized two subcommittees – One focused on Transitioning Out (Older farmers); the other on Transitioning In (Younger Farmers):

Transitioning Out Sub-Committee: Ken Saddlemire; Jay Francis; Gary & Pam Kleppel

Transitioning In Sub-Committee: Jessica Gage (proposed); Brian Wilson; Joshua Rockwood (proposed); Evan & Maggie Taylor

### **New business**

***Attracting young farmers to Knox*** – The committee considered the fact that 58% of the 6718 farmers under 35 in NY, are not principals (i.e., they probably don't own their own farms). That means that some portion of more than 3000 young farmers may be looking for farms in the near future. Knox is well-positioned to take advantage of this and to attract young farm families to our community. Ken Saddlemire emphasized the importance of local knowledge in making for successful farming operations – he suggested that we organized round tables and pasture walks to transfer this knowledge. Holding round tables and pasture walks should help attract young people to our town.

### **Discussion and comments**

***American farmers in trouble*** – participants were asked to consider what we might be able to do to help farmers in the heartland who are hurting as a result of storms, flooding and tariffs.

***Save the Date: Knox Historical Society*** – Jay Francis announced that the KHS will be conducting a session focusing on his family's genealogy. The event takes place on Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm at the Saddlemire Homestead in Knox. Please consider attending; it should be very interesting

***Pork regulations*** – Maggie Taylor pointed out that Knox has very restrictive regulations on pork production. Betty Ketcham will check this out and we will move this to the Planning Board. In the meantime, the ZBA will be notified and we will work to get pork farmers special use permits until the Planning and Town Boards can act

Submitted on June 6, 2019 by Gary Kleppel