

Volunteer Coordinating Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 05, 2024

7:00PM

Via Zoom Conference Call <https://zoom.us/j/87454124171>

Present: Gregory Hutchins, Hart Millett, Fang Yang and Jim Snyder-Grant

Absent: None

Virtual Meeting Coordinator: Fang Yang

1. Opening

Chair Hutchins opened the meeting at 7:29PM.

2. Regular Business

A. Public Comments/citizens concerns

None

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – The meeting minutes on September 05, 2024 were reviewed. Mr. Millett moved to approve the meeting minutes and Mr. Hutchins seconded. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Hutchins – aye; Mr. Millett – aye; and Mr. Yang – aye.

C. Next Meeting – TBD.

3. New/Special Business

Discussion on Application by Megha Patil for Economic Development Committee (EDC)

- Ms. Patil started her e-commerce of clothing business last year. She got in touch with a lot of store owners and started creating small events at Bogi boutique, and gathered a lot of crowd over there. She was able to provide a small amount of clothes made in India to some shops so that they do not need to carry large inventory. During her collaborations with other small business owners, she was intrigued in knowing more about EDC. Then she knew Julie Pierce and KJ Herther at EDC events. KJ introduced her to EDC.
- Ms. Patil has lived in Acton since 2020. She is the treasurer for Acton PIP STEAM. She is a part of the Women's Business League in Boston where she introduces them to the businesses in Acton.
- Ms. Patil keeps up with town affairs through participating and helping events that happen around her in the town. And KJ also keeps her updated because they talk on regular basis. She has attended the virtual town meeting, but not in person ones.
- Ms. Patil reported that she has attended one EDC meeting, and a few EDC events such as Holiday stroll, Energize Acton, Opening of Marzae wine, Bogi events, and Anita's shoe boutique event.
- Ms. Patil reported no conflict of interest.

Mr. Millett moved to forward Megha Patil's name to the Select Board for further consideration to appoint as a member of the EDC. Mr. Hutchins seconded. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Yang – aye; Mr. Millett – aye; and Mr. Hutchins – aye.

Discussion on Application by Kate Despres for Agricultural Commission (AgCom)

- Ms. Despres runs Daisy Hill Farm, a backyard farm on roughly 1/4 of her 1 acre property. She mainly grows organic seedlings (over 300 varieties this year) and sells them in Acton and neighboring communities. She attended an AgCom meeting a couple of years ago. She also has a plot at Morrison Farm. Conservation has always been a passion of her. Encouraging agriculture in the town, big or small, is really important to her, as well as to the community, as she gets to know so many people who want to grow good plants. She thinks that agriculture/gardening is part of our history and culture, and it is a good way to connect to one's property in Acton.
- Ms. Despres has a B.A. from Wesleyan University, Major: Science in Society, and a M. Ed. from Harvard School of Education. She has lived in Acton for 9 years. She helped co-found and run a monthly meeting of the Acton Chapter of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gay), a support group of parents with gay and lesbian children.
- Ms. Despres reported no conflict of interest.
- Ms. Despres reported that she would be able to attend future meetings regularly.

Mr. Yang moved to forward Kate Despres's name to the Select Board for further consideration to appoint as a member of the AgCom. Mr. Millett seconded. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Yang – aye; Mr. Millett – aye; and Mr. Hutchins – aye.

Discussion on Application by Bill Alstrom for AgCom

- Mr. Alstrom has made friends with Morene Bodner that started with her deliveries of compost to Morrison Farm. He had several conversations with her about AgCom. He got quite interested in the fact that Acton does have much farmland. He is emotionally involved with Morrison Farm. He has lived in Acton for 10 years and has had a garden plot there for all those 10 years. He grows a lot of food and give away about 80% of it. He is very connected to growing food and protecting open space. Before he moved to Acton, he operated his farm of 9 acres in western Massachusetts which provided organic vegetables for his family.
- Mr. Alstrom saw the opening of AgCom though reading a feature in Acton Exchange with Ian Bergemann. He also met with Heidi Porten and got some background information from her.
- Mr. Alstrom is the president of his condo HOA board of trustees, and has been on the board for about 10 years. He was a member of the Acton Dog Park Committee until 2017.
- Mr. Alstrom reported no conflict of interest.
- Mr. Alstrom reported that he would be able to attend future meetings regularly.

Mr. Millett moved to forward Bill Alstrom's name to the Select Board for further consideration to appoint as a member of the AgCom. Mr. Hutchins seconded. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Yang – aye; Mr. Millett – aye; and Mr. Hutchins – aye.

Discussion on Waiving Interview for Bettina Abe for her Application on the AgCom

Based on her long time services in the town and her current membership on the Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) and the Open Space Committee. Mr. Yang moved to waive interview for Bettina Abe. Mr. Millett seconded. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Yang – aye; Mr. Millett – aye; and Mr. Hutchins – aye.

Discussion on Application by Bettina Abe for AgCom

Based on what Ms. Abe has done in the town, on the LSC and on the Arboretum, the VCC agrees that Ms. Abe could be a fantastic addition to the AgCom and to recommend her without reservation to the Select Board.

Mr. Yang moved to forward Bettina Abe's name to the Select Board for further consideration to appoint as a member of the AgCom. Mr. Millett seconded. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Yang – aye; Mr. Millett – aye; and Mr. Hutchins – aye.

Discussion on recruiting for the VCC

Select Board Liaison Jim Snyder-Grant attended the meeting and discussed how the Select Board can help VCC to recruit new members. Currently, the VCC only has the minimum number for a quorum.

Technical glitch of Zoom

Mr. Yang was unable to start the Zoom meeting using the normal meeting link after a Zoom software update. He used a temporary Meeting ID: 811 9013 4324 and the Pass Code: 110126. The VCC meeting was conducted at 7:29pm and recorded online as usual. The issue will be resolved before the next meeting.

4. Adjournment

At 8:50PM

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Chair Hutchins called roll:

Mr. Millett – aye; Mr. Yang – aye; and Mr. Hutchins – aye.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Meeting minutes of September 05, 2024.
- Volunteer Application by Megha Patil.
- Volunteer Application by Kate Despres.
- Volunteer Application and resume by Bill Alstrom.
- Volunteer Application by Bettina Abe.