

201409081055M



**Town of Sherman  
Board of Selectman  
Special Meeting  
September 8, 2014  
6:30 p.m.  
Mallory Town Hall**

**FINAL**

**Members Present:** First Selectman, C. Cope, Selectman B. Ostrosky and Selectman A. O'Connor

**Invited & Guests:** J. Motzinger, A. Manzares, J. Lescynski, D. Ball, C. Shulman, K. Clark, B. McCann, T. Pease, C. Jellen, and V. Shere (Citizen News)

**First Selectman C. Cope Called the Meeting to Order** at 6:31 p.m.

**Purpose:** To interview tenant farmers applicants for Happy Acres Farm

**I- Full Circle Farming, LLC-** John Motzinger and Adam Manzares

**Proposed Use:** Cattle, retail grass fed beef , farm stand and diversified agriculture.

**Lease Proposal:** \$15,040.00 annually for the farm, equipment and home.

Proposing to "rent" the existing heard, while over time implementing diversified agricultural strategies such as duck, lamb, goats, chickens, turkeys, rabbits, eggs, and a variety of vegetables. Proposing implementation of rotational grazing, which is grouping the animals into sections of the pastures and moving the groups around to graze on vegetation. The pastures will yield natural plantings and grasses for grazing, the grasses will be allowed to grow somewhat taller than what is presently in the pastures. This will give the fields and pastures a natural look, slightly less manicured. Chickens would be placed on the recently occupied areas to clean up the soil from waste and insects, by depositing their own waste, will add nutrients back to the soils. The intention is to use as little chemical fertilization and pesticides as possible. There is plenty of fertility created by rotational grazing without the need for chemicals. Both families plan to occupy the home, and are relying on additional funds received from sub-letting the apartment to skilled laborers. There will be very few modifications to exterior appearance, proposing a change of use for an existing outbuilding to be used as a farm stand, adding interior refrigerators/ coolers; no additional permanent structures. May implement raised beds for vegetables depending on the soil quality. The existing silage will be utilized however once it is gone, the intention is to move toward grass fed. Would like to offer opportunities for, 4H, local schools, adult agricultural programs such as self sustainability and composting classes, community garden space, farm tours, as well as reach out to the Community for ideas.

**Selectman B. Ostrosky Moved to Recess the meeting at 7:20 p.m.**

**First Selectman C. Cope Resumed the Special Meeting at 7:25 p.m.**

## **II- Rosie's Dairy- Desiree Ball**

**Proposed Use: Dairy, and farm stand for diversified meat/ dairy products.**

**Lease Proposal: Five year proposal of 10% profits up to \$25,000.00 to the Town annually. Requesting the Town maintain mowing the property edges along roadsides and fencing.**

The applicant has secured an investment loan of \$ 72,000.00 from a private backer. Proposing to retrofit the existing barn with dairy milking equipment, at a cost of approximately \$57,000.00. Gurnsey cows will cost approximately \$ 40,000.00 to \$70,000.00. A raw milk bottling operation will cost approximately \$12,600.00. The applicant plans to raise funding for the dairy cows, already securing financial commitments from twenty residents of Sherman. The retrofit of the barn will take approximately one month to install, she says the real challenge is finding the specific breed of cows she is seeking. Ms. Ball is a Cornell graduate, bringing with her over twenty years experience. She will work jointly with partner, Mr. Ken Gladding who brings with him over fifty years of agricultural experience. Ms. Ball presented an anticipated financial projection report to the BoS. There are also many grant opportunities for agriculture, Ms. Ball intends to seek grant funding, should the Town award the lease agreement on her behalf. Ms. Ball proposes she will occupy the home, Mr. Gladding the apartment and various bedrooms through-out the home will be offered to skilled laborers. The applicant does not wish to use or purchase the existing farm implements and equipment. The existing heard is recommended to be sold, as well as the remaining equipment not needed. The applicant agrees to maintain the character of the farm, however the milk house may be too small, if it needs to be enlarged the intention is to maintain the look of the existing buildings. The changes proposed will be the presence of hens, pigs and vegetables, all in keeping with general agricultural practices. Ms. Ball proposes Community involvement such as children's programming, adult classes and workshop opportunities; in addition she would like to offer to the community passive recreational activities, such as biking, birding, and cross country skiing. There were several objections to the terms of the lease, which will need to be clarified in time.

**Selectman A. O'Connor Moved to Recess the meeting at 8:20 p.m.**

**First Selectman C. Cope Resumed the Special Meeting at 8:30 p.m.**

## **III Lescynski Farm, LLC- Jeff & Peter Lescynski**

**Proposed Use: Cattle/ grass fed beef**

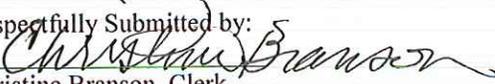
The applicants are currently managing the activities on the farm since January, and plan of continuing raising grass fed beef and increasing the heard. They too propose moving toward rotational grazing techniques and stepping up efforts to preserve the integrity of the soils. Mr. Lescynsky stated he does not plan on growing corn for feed, and will transition to grass/ hay fed cattle gradually. Willing to purchase heard outright. The crop fields most likely have poor quality soil from growing the same crops year after year. Manure will be removed from the pastures and will be worked into an eighteen acre area to revitalize the soils. The proposal does not include occupying the home, instead Mr. Lesynski is in agreement to for the Town to negotiate a separate lease agreement to offer the house and apartment for rent. They will use the existing equipment, and agree to assume financial responsibility for repairs on each piece of equipment up to \$1,500.00. Mr. Lescynski would like to offer Community engagement such as open farm days, children's educational programs, community gardens (maintained by Town and responsibility of insurance to the Town for that portion of the property). The applicants requested the Town allow a provision within the Lease Agreement if either party wanted to terminate the agreement at any time, Lescynski Farming, LLC would be allowed 90 days to vacate. The brothers bring with them a lifelong knowledge of cattle and general agriculture. It is the intention to maintain the current appearance of the farm. Applicant is requesting use of Cell Tower revenue to off-set cost of additional laborers.

**Adjournment:**

**Selectman A. O'Connor Adjourned the Meeting at 8:45 p.m.**

**The next Meeting is scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.**

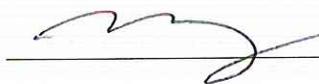
Respectfully Submitted by:

  
Christine Branson, Clerk  
September 15, 2014

\*Approved as written at the Regular Monthly Meeting of October 23, 2014



First Selectman C. Cope



Selectman B. Ostrosky



Selectman A. O'Connor