

## **Auburn Natural Products and Agriculture Working Group**

Minutes: 5 31 22 Approved: 6 28 22

**Location:** Auburn Hall Community Room

**Recorder:** Dave Griswold

**Staff attending:** None

**Attending:** Dave Griswold, Bill Sylvester, Kathy Shaw, Chris Carson, Pam Rousseau, David Bell, Ed Michaud, Katie Boss

**Excused:** Joe Gray

**Absent:** None

**Guests:** Matt Manson, Chris Piercey, Paul Peters

**Call to Order:** 6:10 pm

**Public Participation:** None

1. **Approval of Minutes:** 4 26 22 Minutes approved.
2. **Discussion with Matt Manson, Blackies, and Chris Peircey, Auburn Schools Nutrition Director:** Discussion centered on work being done to get local produce into school lunch program. Crops availability doesn't always line up with school schedule. Whole foods are not convenient for schools due to preparation requirements and staff limitations. Auburn serves about 1500 lunches a day. State reimburses 33% of cost of up to \$5500 a year for local products. Farmers need access to processing and packing capability to get product into schools. There have been discussions about putting a commercial kitchen at Pettengill Park. Katie will check on where that project is. Another possibility is to get a grant for a flash freezer and storage capacity. Local food use is currently about 3% in Auburn schools. Staff is a limiting factor. Blackies is exploring a grant for warehouse and processing capacity.
3. **Discussion with Paul Peters, Ag Consultant, on PFAS:** Paul said there is not a lot of knowledge about PFAS impact at this point, either the extent of a health threat or future impact on soils and agriculture. The State is aggressively studying these issues, measuring and monitoring PFAS levels. U Maine is also conducting research. State dollars are available to help farmers.
4. **Speakers:** Pam is working on a speaker on Crazy Worms for the next meeting.

**New Business:** None

**Action Items:**

1. Katie will review draft work plan and linkage to NR&Ag WG ordinance
2. Joe will follow up with Rosemary Mosher on the GIS project
3. Katie will check on Pettengill Park Commercial Kitchen possibilities.

**Next meetings:** June 28, 6:30 location Senior Center

**Pending agenda items:**

1. Work Plan Review for 2022
2. GIS Project
3. Royal River Land Trust designation of key areas in Auburn
4. Craft a vision for agriculture in Auburn and share with community
5. Producer survey- Farmed acres and value of product
6. Food Sovereignty Law
7. Good Food Council of L-A to discuss urban agriculture opportunities.
8. Maine Farmland Trust Easement presentation

**Adjourned:** 7:57 PM