

## **Rural Revival Meeting Minutes**

February 2, 2014

Regular Monthly meeting held at the Freeman Public Library and called to order by Dennis Lehman.

**Members Present:** Nathan Torberson, Dennis Lehmann, Todd Koerner, Glen Wollman, Lorraine Ensz (via Skype), Tim Eisenbeis, Larry Eisenbeis

**Board Members Absent:** Eian Schrag, Paul Ortman, John Koch, Nate Schrag, S. Roy Kaufman, Lyle Preheim

**Visitors:** Dennis Jurkovich and Patrick Hofer

Meeting began with introductions for the sake of the visitors.

### **Previous Meeting Minutes:**

Previous minutes read by secretary. Motion to accept by Larry Eisenbeis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Glen. Motion carried.

### **Jonathan Lundgren and USDA-ARS:**

Glen attended the Customer Focus Group Meeting at the USDA-ARS research center in Brookings on Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>, and said that there were about 25 in attendance. The meeting showcased the different research projects that the ARS is working on. One example Glen mentioned was the 50 or 60 cages, each containing 1000 rootworm beetles that are used for studying their life cycles with respect to variables such as predators and how to control these pests without using chemicals. Much more information can be found on their website at [www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov).

Glen also had a copy of the DVD entitled "Queen of the Sun: What Are the Bees Telling Us?" This is a documentary showing the detrimental effects that chemical use in agriculture has on the pollinators and how it threatens our food sources. An internet search of this title provides links to the website, and the movie trailer. It can also be purchased online.

### **John Koch reporting:**

Since John was absent, Dennis presented three pieces of information from John to the group.

The first was an invitation to attend an informational meeting on the Arts/Earth Center project to be held at the Freeman Library on Tuesday, February 11 at 5 PM. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

The second was an invitation to a program called "Economic Modeling for Stewardship Agriculture and Cultural Preservation" to be held at Salem Zion (North) Church in rural Freeman at 7 PM on Sunday, March 9. James Schwinn, the CEO of Boston and Western Corporation is the presenter.

Thirdly, SDSU extension is offering a Food Entrepreneurs Program in Mitchell on 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19. Topics include Food Safety and Processing for Farmer's Markets (2/5), Starting a Commercial Licensed Kitchen (2/12), and Enhancing Your Farmer's Market and CSA (2/19). John will be attending the class on 2/12. Anyone interested in attending and carpooling can contact him at 605-595-5609. Registration is required and there is a fee of \$15 per class. More info can be found at [www.igrow.org/events](http://www.igrow.org/events)

Dennis also said that he would contact the City Hall to find out the cost of renting the Freeman Community Center for a special event.

**Land Transfer Program Discussion:**

Glen, Todd and Lyle were to contact attorneys at Cutler and Donahoe, to discuss their participation in a public meeting on land transfer and estate planning to be tentatively held the end of March or early April. This has not happened yet. They are encouraged to make this meeting happen as soon as possible so that the decision can be made whether to go ahead with making plans for the public meeting. This group also will have the authority to set a date and make arrangements for the meeting.

**First Fruits Community Gardens:**

Todd will be surveying those who participate in the food pantry to get information to aid in planning for the spring. Freeman Academy 1-4 grades are planning on participating and are applying for a \$1000 grant through SDSU Extension to help with the costs. Todd is still looking for volunteers to serve on a board of directors.

Todd also read an essay by his daughter, Lilly, related to sustainable agriculture and our responsible stewardship of the land.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Nothing to report.

**Website:**

Nothing to report.

**Rural Revival User Group**

Rural Revival has a google group email listing that can be used by all members to contact all other members. The list is [rural-revival-admin@googlegroups.com](mailto:rural-revival-admin@googlegroups.com) . By simply typing this email address, your email will be sent to the rest of the group members. This is how the meeting minutes are distributed, so if you get the meeting minutes, you are a member of the group. We encourage members to use this method of contacting others with information that is appropriate and of concern to members within our group. Please use it, but exercise discretion as to what you are sending when using this group email.

**HB 1097**

Tim passed out some information on SD House Bill 1097. This is a bill supported by DRA that changes the requirements for agricultural zoning of land so that smaller parcels can be zoned as agricultural use. This is a benefit for smaller producers, especially those in niche markets or those starting out on a small scale. If interested, please contact your lawmakers to encourage support of this bill. More info can be found at <http://legis.sd.gov/> .

**SB 126**

Tim also passed out information on SD Senate Bill 126. This bill is proposed by DRA and Food Freedom to repeal some of the excessive regulations that the SD Dept of Ag put into place last year covering raw milk producers and provide reasonable and fair alternative regulations. **This bill has a hearing on Friday, February 7, at 10 AM. Please email or call your legislators today to ask them to support SB126.** This bill

is currently in the Health and Human Services Committee. Please contact them and urge them to pass this bill. Again, info can be found at <http://legis.sd.gov/> . Also, please see Tim with any questions or for updates on this bill.

Finally, Tim had an email that mentioned a family has about 400 acres near Olivet that they are looking to rent to someone who practices sustainable farming methods. See Tim for more info.

With no other new business, motion to adjourn by Todd.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Tim. Motion Carried.

Regular meeting adjourned. – Notes by Nathan Torberson

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