

MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

FINAL MINUTES

October 9, 2013

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob McCabe at 7:02 p.m. Present were Cindy Warhola, Bob McCabe, Eber Currier, Bess Parks, Pete Gagnon and John Lastowka.

- a. **Farmer's market update**: Today was the last day for the Market. Bob extended it for one more week at vendors' request. There were six vendors and not enough customer traffic for the last market but the Wednesday market prior was very busy. There was also a request for the market to open earlier next year for the opportunity for farmers to sell their spring products. Point for discussion this winter. Also to consider allowing other vendors besides farmers. Loretta Jackson did a great job writing up a news flash letting readers of the Merrimack Journal know about the two week extension of the Farmer's Market. She is also available to help and provide information to those who would like to become beekeepers.
- b. **Treasurer's report**: A financial intern, with Paul Macali's help, will be writing up a complete report so Bess should have a report to read by the next meeting.
- c. Bob is in the process of closing down the Community Garden. It actually closed on September 30, 2013. Tom Hanlon, Wendy McShane, Loretta Jackson and Bob McCabe bush hogged and cleaned up all the debris from those who did not leave their plots clean. Might need to make penalties for not abiding by the rules. He will be planting winter rye to improve the soil. John moved to have the Commission pay for the rye seed, Cindy seconded. Vote was 6-0-0.
- d. Bob talked about some of the things we should be considering for improvements to both the Market and the Gardens during our winter meetings. Bob will be sending out evaluation letters and a thank you to the Parks and Recreation Committee. We should also be working on the bylaws and get some input from our local farmers on their experiences over the past year.
- e. John reported on his crops. He had no blueberries at all this summer, but his grapes were excellent. A wine maker bought his whole crop of wine grapes and his table grapes sold well also. Eber had the best apple crop ever and a lot more customers. Pete (Willow Ponds Nursery) said they did well with their flowers – still have some mums left, which should last way into November.
- f. We will look at the timing of our annual 4-H Club scholarship this year.

g. Draft minutes of September 11, 2013 were read. John moved to accept. Bess seconded. Vote was 6-0-0.

Comments from the Commissioners: Eber spoke about Hillsborough County Farm Bureau's annual meeting on October 18, 2013 at Hitchener's Barn in Milford. The state annual meeting is in Durham on November 8, 2013. Also on November 2, 2013 there is the annual meeting of the Conservation Commission in Concord on farmland preservation. The cost is \$55 for non-members. It is an all-day meeting but the farmland protection class is from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. There is also information on wetlands. Eber moved to pay for a ticket if any of the commissioners would like to go. Cindy seconded. Vote was 6-0-0.

State Farm Bureau should be helpful in finding speakers for some of our meetings – such as kinds of farming.

John moved to adjourn, Bess seconded. Vote was 6-0-0. Adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Currier, Acting Secretary