

MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

September 12, 2012

Approved Minutes

Chairman Lastowka called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Present were Allen Lindahl, Cynthia Warhola, Bob McCabe, Eber Currier, Bess Parks, and Allan Swenson.

Karen Labonte came to the meeting as a guest from the Dog Park Subcommittee to listen to and learn more about the Agriculture Commission.

John Lastowka and Bob McCabe updated the members on the Farm Mappings for the Master Plan Committee. Bob passed around a map for farmers to circle their farms.

When John Lastowka was a boy Merrimack, he stated that the town was 90 % farmland and it is now 10% farmland. Tim Tenhave has been working on a website for the Conservation Commission. To locate farms in Merrimack can go to that website and locate local farms in Merrimack.

Treasurer's report: Bess has no new figures at this time.

Bob and John talked about corn borers (a caterpillar). They lay their eggs at night in cornhusks and are born in the ear of corn creating much destruction to the sweet corn crop.

Sprays such as Sevin should be used during the egg laying cycle. John was involved with UNHCE Hillsborough two years ago and they were studying the corn borers. The borers over winter in corn silk that was left in the field so fields need to be cleaned up to prevent them from hatching.

Bob talked again about late blight on tomatoes.

Cindy put the ad in the Union Leader for our Farmer's Market for the month of September.

The Hillsborough Extension County Service will oversee scholarship fund money for the Merrimack, NH 4H club. Jolee Chase of UNHCE and the Merrimack Finance Department will be sending a check to UNHCE and a report back to John Lastowka.

Allen Lindahl and John Lastowka informed us about a new bug called Spotted Wing Drosophila(SWD), which has come in from the West Coast. They love blueberries, raspberries, peaches, grapes. Both Allen and John lost a thousand dollars in blueberries due to that insect. There is no known cure for them yet. They have sticky traps that look like a piece of flypaper to draw them in so they can count how many SWD's there are in the crops. They have tried cider vinegar and pheromone. George Hamilton and Bill Lord from Extension are working to find something with which to treat them.

Review of minutes of May 9, 2012. Cindy moved to accept and Bess seconded.

Vote was 6-0-0.

It was decided not to be present at the Business Expo on September 29th this year as we do not have enough volunteers who will be available.

Each of the members introduced themselves to Karen Labonte and explained their operation at their local farm.

Totes bags are all gone and the last two were given out at the last Farmer's Market.

Allen moved to adjourn and Bess seconded. Vote was unanimous to adjourn at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Currier (acting secretary)