

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
MARCH 9, 2016**

Chairman Bob McCabe called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were Don Miner, Eber Currier, Bess Parks, and Pete Gagnon.

Gina Rosati was present as a member of the public who is very interested in joining the Agriculture Commission and wants to see what goes on at the meetings.

New Business:

- (a) **Farmer's Market update:** So far there are 20 vendors are signed up for the Summer Market. New set-up at Vault Motors will allow for 40 vendors plus parking.
- (b) **Winter Farmer's Market:** There are 7 to 9 vendors right now. Regulars coming in to buy. Looks like it is going to take off so Don can look forward to running it every winter.
- (c) **Community Garden update:** Had the open house at the Town Library on March 1, 2016. With a seedswap and several of those in attendance brought some of their seeds to swap with others. Librarian told Bob McCabe that the Agriculture Commission could use a shelf for a display of the Commission's news. That should be ready in a couple of weeks. Bob needs to get flags and bailing twine for this year's plots. Bess moved to advance Bob \$100 for these purchases, Pete seconded. Vote was 5-0-0.
- (d) **UNH Extension classes:** Rachel Massini will be giving information on private or commercial pesticide licenses – test date will be on April 5, 2016. If you do sell your products to the public, you must have a license and you must keep a record of the chemicals used and what dates they were applied. March 17, 2016 Mary West will have a beginner's class for those interested in making Maple Syrup. On March 11, 2016 and April 2, 2016, Nada Hadad will have classes on berries in Brentwood. Raspberry School. Charge of \$30.00. 4 and a half credits for this class. March 26, 2016 will be pruning and maintenance classes at Maple Gate Farm in Merrimack. Apples, peaches, pears, and cherries and blueberries in a.m. and grapes in p.m. \$5.00 fee. Brookdale Farms will have a twilight meeting on grapevines on April 1, 2016 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. There is also a meeting on March 26 by a Master Gardiner at 2 p.m. Any information about any of these meetings can be found on <http://extension.unh.edu/Agriculture> or by calling Bob McCabe at 759-2737. There is another meeting in Alton at Prospect Mountain High School on April 9. Cost is \$60 a day. At 10:15, topic is agri-tourism. 1:00 to 2:15 is Keeping Farmland practical for Farmer's. If you need more information on this one, call Eber at 881-8864.

- (e) **Bug Alert:** The Emerald Ash Borer is destroying many of the Ash trees in the state. The New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of New Hampshire have been doing some experiments and believe that the wasp called the Smokey Winged Beetle Bandit may be much more effective in monitoring the spread of the EAB than standard traps. It may not eliminate the pest entirely but may enable the state to keep it contained within certain areas. They are continuing to work on a solution for this major problem. If you sell firewood containing Ash, it must only be sold and burned within this state.
- (f) **Horse Sense:** Time for Spring shots from your veterinary and health certificates are necessary if you take your horses away from home. If you are traveling you must be on time and get your release form to the organizer of the group. Always pass on left, no tailgating, walk by horses – no trotting, be cautious in passing, share the road with others, and thank the drive organizer when leaving. Thanks to Bess Parks for sharing all the information she has learned in her life of being a horsewoman.
- (g) **Kinder-Morgan Update:** Local residents are not giving them permission to come onto their land to survey but they are persistent and are trying to work on big energy firms to convince the citizens that we need the pipeline. Keep plugging away!
- (h) **Treasurer's report:** Farmer's Market \$4,383.18, Community Garden \$2,896.66, making a total (as of March 3, 2016) of \$7,279.84. Winter Farmer's Market (as of 2-29-2016) total of \$30. Don deposited \$465 as of March 8, 2016.
- (i) **Minutes:** Review of draft minutes of February 10, 2016. Don moved to accept with changes, Bess seconded. Vote was 5-0-0.

Pete Gagnon handed out publications of laws concerning farming that he and Nancy had picked up at the Chappell Professional Center in Milford. There is much information there concerning farming and it is free. Up on the second floor. We will have more discussions about this information in future meetings.

Don Miner moved to adjourn, Bess Parks seconded. Vote was 5-0-0. Adjourned at 8:24 p.m. Next meeting on April 13, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Currier