

MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2018

Meeting called to order by President Bob McCabe at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Don Miner, Ron Miner III, Bess Parks

Absent: Paul Drone

No Comments from the Press or Public

New Business:

- a. WINTER MARKET UPDATE: Don reported that there were fewer vendor setups, along with diminished customer traffic throughout the holiday season with the poor weather conditions a contributing factor as well. The anticipation of several new vendors, including a baker, with increased advertising should help renew the public interest in buying fresh and local.
- b. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORT: The Board reviewed a copy of the Commission's report for the Town of Merrimack's Annual Report. With the inclusion of Don Miner's brief on the winter market, reference to support of the Joppa Hill Educational Farm and 4 H projects support, the report was accepted as read by Don, Ron seconded., motion carried 4-0-0.
- c. WORKSHOPS: See attached.
- d. BUG REPORT: Sub-zero weather may have an impact on the tick population in the coming spring, summer and fall months. It has been introduced as a potential preventive method for tick control by stuffing cardboard tubes with cotton balls soaked in pyrethrin and place around foundations and other areas where ticks seem to harbor.
- e. HORSE SENSE: Bess mentioned that owners of senior horses need to be more vigilant in their equines over all condition during the winter months. Blanketing may be needed to help keep the senior horse warm during severe inclement weather. Not only does blanketing help with warmth, your senior horse isn't spending valuable calories trying to stay warm, burning off energy and their weight. Old or young, it is also important to provide fresh clean water, good forage and a dry, protective shelter.
- f. THE AG. REPORT: Ron gave a brief report on the USDA 2018 Beef Production forecast. Twenty three percent growth in U.S. beef production in 2018 is based on the larger 2016 and 2017 calf crops. Marketing of fed cattle are expected to be higher during 2018, supporting higher slaughter during the year with carcass weights expected to increase, with no expected beef shortage for the consumer.
- g. TREASURERS REPORT: As of December 31, 2017, the Summer Farmer's market fund account was \$4,170.87. The Community Garden account is \$2,526.50, with a combined total of \$6,697.37. The Winter Market account is \$760.00.

- h. MINUTES: With the correction of Changing (November 8 to November 8, 2017), the December 13, 2017 minutes were read and accepted by Don, Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

No Comments from the Press or Public

Comments from the Commission: With the recent cold temperatures the Message Board batteries are low and need to be recharged.

The annual Community Garden Information/seed swap program was discussed, and the decision was made to have the event during the day at the Winter Market either March 7 or the 14, 2018 between 3-6pm. It is hoped that the earlier daylight hours would encourage more to attend, along with introducing those unfamiliar with the winter market.

Bob presented the updated vendor list and letter to be approved. The Board was encouraged to add vendors to the list; Don made a motion to accept the letter as written by Bob, Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

Bess made the motion to adjourn, Don seconded., motion carried 4-0-0

The next meeting will be February 14, 2018, 7 p.m. Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks
Acting Secretary