

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
MARCH 13, 2019**

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

Present: Paul Drone, Ron Miner III, Bess Parks

Absent: Don Miner

No Comment from the Press or Public:

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. SUMMER MARKET: Bob reports he is receiving vendor applications for the upcoming Summer Farmer's Market season at Vault Storage, Daniel Webster Highway North in Merrimack. Advertising in the Union Leader on every other week basis was discussed. Bob was informed that the rates for advertising in the Union Leader have increased from \$25.00. to \$30.00 per ad. It was recommended, that to maximize visibility, the format of the newspaper ad should focus on the market name and location, rather than on a long list of items offered. Further discussion with decision will be later.
- b. WINTER MARKET: (Vendor participation, new customers, rent, social media). Don was unable to attend the meeting. Line items to be discussed at the April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting.
- c. TRI-FOLD/VOLUNTEER INFORMATION: Bob feels a heavier weight paper would work best for the Tri-Fold. He asked for the appropriation of \$100 to purchase the necessary paper and ink for printing. Paul made the motion to approve the \$100.00 request for the paper purchase and printer ink cartridge to complete the project. Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.  
The Commission continues to seek volunteers to assist at the Summer Farmers Market or serve on the Board.
- d. 4-H DONATIONS FOR 2019: Bob has placed a call to 4-H manager Jolee Chase to inquire if her group would need funding for any special projects planned for the summer season. This would be in addition to the \$500.00 to their general education fund, and the \$550.00 toward the gift certificates awarded at the Hillsborough County Fair. Ron will assist Bob with this endeavor.
- e. BUG ALERT: Honey Bees: The loss of Bee Hives is at a critical level. The NH Honeybee Diagnostic Network is primarily looking at the fungal pathogen, Nosema, and the relative infection level per hive. When bees are infected with a high level of Nosema ceranea, they can become lethargic, exhibit cessation of feeding behavior and might continue to rear brood into winter. When we experience such

catastrophic hive loss throughout the state, as high as 65% in 2016-2017, we need better tools to help us manage against such losses. Testing for Nosema is one such tool that can be employed to better inform the individual beekeeper as to the health of their hive. Results from the NHBA hive loss survey has shown that many beekeepers do not know why their hive died. This is a problem the NH Diagnostic Network hopes to address through empowering beekeepers to become more informed on the relative disease load in their bees. All beekeepers, regardless of location are encouraged to participate in the diagnostic network. Samples can be mailed in or submitted through your local bee club. There are volunteers throughout the state ready to look at your bees under the microscope free of charge. The Diagnostic Network's website is ([www.nh-honeybee-health.com](http://www.nh-honeybee-health.com)) and includes information on how to collect and submit samples.

- f. WORKSHOPS: See Attached.
- g. HORSE SENSE: Vaccinations for all horses. Between March and May, most horse owners have made an appointment with their veterinarians to give their horse(s) the recommended CORE vaccinations horses need to stay healthy. These include 1. Tetanus (bacteria carried in most soils and other surfaces. Horses are highly susceptible. 2. Eastern/Western encephalitis (sleeping sickness). 3. West Nile (both E/W and West Nile carried and spread by mosquitos. 4. Rabies, carried by susceptible animals, such as bats, skunks, raccoons primarily. There is no cure and considered fatal. A Coggins test (equine infectious anemia) is also required for any horse traveling from the owner's property, including shows, other States or to other equine facilities. NON-CORE vaccinations include: 1. Equine Herpes virus/Rhinopneumonitis 2. Equine Influenza. 3. Potomac Horse Fever. 4. Lyme disease. 5. Rota Virus. 6. Equine Viral Arteritis. You should base the decision to vaccinate on 1. What does the horse do? 2. What are the other horses around him/her doing. 3. What are the risks. 4. Effectiveness of the vaccination protocol, 5. Consequences of the disease and 6. Potential for adverse effects. Consult your veterinarian for a vaccination schedule that is best for your horse and activities.
- h. TREASURERS REPORT: As of February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Agriculture Commission Summer Farmers Market Fund Account is \$ 4,684.88. The Community Garden Fund Account is \$ 1,975.22, with a combine total of \$6,660.10. The Winter Farmers Market Fund Account is \$177.09.
- i. MINUTES: The February minutes were read. Paul made to motion to accept, Ron seconded., motion carried 4-0-0.

No Comments from the Press or Public:

Comments from the Commission: Paul announced that the container gardening seminar will be held Wednesday, April 24, from 3 to 6 p.m. at the John O'Leary Senior Center during the weekly farmers market.

Bob mentioned that he will be preparing the community garden during the first or second week in April. He has requested \$100 to purchase the flags and string needed to prepare the garden plots. Paul made the motion to approve up to \$100 for the flags and string. Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Paul made the motion to adjourn at 7:43 p.m. Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

The next meeting will be held April 10, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks  
Acting Secretary