

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
APRIL 10, 2019**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bob McCabe at 7:05 pm

Present: Ron Miner III, Don Miner, Bess Parks

Absent: Paul Drone

No Comments from the Press or Public

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **SUMMER FARMERS MARKET:** Bob has received six vendor applications to date. The summer market opens Wednesday June 12th, 2019 from 3 to 6 pm at Vault Storage, Daniel Webster Highway North in Merrimack. Bob indicated that the sign for that location will be repainted and hung before opening day. Agricultural based businesses who would like to participate at the market, can contact Bob at (merrimackfarmersmarket@gmail.com).
- b. **WINTER FARMERS MARKET:** Don reports that vendor participation has averaged 5 to 6 per market the last few weeks but expects more to attend with improved weather conditions. Customer traffic has remained steady, with the fish monger a popular draw. It has been brought to the boards attention that in order to meet the financial obligations of the winter market, vendors fees will need to be increased to \$15.00 per week. Don will notify the vendors of this increase.
- c. **COMMUNITY GARDEN:** The garden area will soon be rototilled with stakes and flags in place on April 16th, with a rain date of April 18th, from 3-5pm. Ron and Don to assist Bob with this project. Forty plots have been sold to date, with more available. Plots are 10 x 10 at \$10.00 for Merrimack residents, and \$15.00 for out of town residents. For more information, or to secure a garden plot, Bob can be reached at (merrimackcommunitygarden@gmail.com)
- d. **CONTAINER GARDEN SEMINAR:** Reminder for the April 24th container garden seminar from 3-6pm at the at the John O'Leary Senior Center during the weekly farmers market. Paul will demonstrate the various ways to raise flowers or vegetables when land space is limited.
- e. **RENEWAL OF FARM BUREAU MEMBERSHIP/4- H PROJECTS:** The Farm Bureau Membership will be renewed at \$75.00 for a one-year membership. Bob spoke with Jolee Chase to inquire if there were any special projects planned that her 4-H group needed funding for this summer season. Jolee advised the commission that her 4-H group would again have a "Pickle Project", where various varieties of cucumbers would be grown; pickles or relishes would be canned and judged at the New Boston 4-H fair in September 2019. The cost of supplies to complete this project would be \$ 350.00. The \$500.00 toward the 4-H educational fund was tabled. Bob will speak with Jolee on the current account balance and the need for additional funds. Bob would also appreciate a report on how the funds have benefited her 4-H group for the previous year of 2018. Don made the motion to approve the \$350.00 for the 4-H "Pickle Project", Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0. Don also made

the motion to approve the \$75.00 Farm Bureau Membership renewal, Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

- f. **BUG ALERT:** Ticks are back, use appropriate precautions. If applying weed killers, it is advised, they should be applied before the Forsythia blooms. With backyard poultry raising on the rise, most owners in New Hampshire may not be aware of the regulations surrounding the acquisition, sale, and public display of poultry in New Hampshire. The regulatory framework is intended to protect both human (think avian influenza) (AI), Salmonella and the like that can infect people and other poultry and poultry businesses in our state. While the risk from certain infections may be low to the general public, it is not zero. Testing and documentation of freedom from AI and Salmonella are required prior to importing in or transferring poultry within NH. Regulation also requires documentation of disease freedom prior to bringing birds to an exhibition. Any entity that engages in the re-distribution of birds they have obtained, is required to be licensed as a poultry dealer – to assure record keeping, and disease control. Whether you have a small flock or large, deeper dives into biosecurity for your flock can be found at (<http://www.uspoultry.org/animalhusbandry/intro.cfm>) and (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth/-defendtheflock>)
- g. **UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS** – See Attached.
- h. **HORSE SENSE:** Horse Show Preparation: Six Tips for Success. Competing in horse shows can be a wonderful pastime, but as with any sport it is important to be prepared. The exact preparations you need to make depend on the type of horse show you will be attending; but there are some general rules and things you can do to get you and your horse ready for any horse show. 1. Always read the rule book carefully. 2. Try to attend a similar show as a spectator first if you are new to showing. 3. Get to know the plaiting, banding or braiding requirements for your class. 4. Clipping styles and clipping requirement for your class. 5. Always compile a horse show checklist. The last thing you want to do is arrive at your horse show without the equipment you need. 6. Finally and importantly... Always arrive early. It is always a good idea to arrive early on the day of the horse show. Your horse is competing in a strange environment, not what they are used to at home, and that can involve major adjustments and a lot of distractions. A. Your horse has a chance to warm up properly. B. You avoid any worries about time constraints, the number one factor that leads to nervousness and poor performance. C. You have plenty of time to plan your route to the ring, register, collect numbers and find a farrier if you need one, and replace or borrow forgotten items on your check list. Remember too, to practice at home the exercises you will performing at the horse show. Remember them and they should help make every horse show a success.
- i. **TREASURERS REPORT:** As of March 31, 2019, the Agricultural Commission Farmers Market Fund Account is \$ 4,934.88. The Community Garden Fund Account is \$1,975.22, with a combined total of \$6,910.10. The Winter Farmers Market Fund Account is \$177.09.
- j. **MINUTES:** The March 13, 2019 minutes were read with Ron making the motion to accept, Bess seconded, motion carried 3-0-0.

No comments from the Press or Public:

Comment from the Commission: A letter from Megan Donahue, Program Manager for the Shaw's "Give Back Where It Counts" bag purchases at the Shaw's store located at 570 Daniel Webster Highway, Merrimack, NH was received informing the Commission that during the

month of May, the Merrimack Community Garden at Wasserman Park will receive a \$1.00 donation. You can find the tan "Give Back Where It Counts" bag on the reusable bag rack at the store. The rack will have a sign that lets customers know the Community Garden is the beneficiary of the "Give Back Where It Counts" program for the month.

Bob reported that there was a need to re-vote the \$100.00 for postage stamps approved at the March 13, 2019 meeting. Bob also asked for the approval of \$3.74 to cover the cost of colored flyer copies for the container garden seminar. Don made the motion to approve the \$ 100.00 for Bob to purchase the stamps, including the \$3.74 for the colored copies. Ron seconded motion carried 4-0-0. Bob also mentioned there was a need to reimburse the finance department \$23.60 as the twine and flag purchase for the Community Garden was over the \$100.00 approved at the March 13, 2019 meeting. Don made the motion to reimburse the finance department \$23.60, Ron 2nd, e motion carried 4-0-0.

Motion to Adjourn: Don made the motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. Ron seconded; motion carried 4-0-0.

The next meeting will be held May 8, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks