

Merrimack Agricultural Commission Minutes of March 12, 2014

Chairman Bob McCabe called the meeting to order at 7:24 p.m. Present were Pete Gagnon, Cindy Warhola, Eber Currier and Bess Parks.

- a) **Farmer's Market Update.** We have currently sent out approximately 100 applications to Vendors. The fish vendor (Tilapia) has not filed yet so Bob will check to see if he plans to come back this year. The updated rules for the Farmer's Market were reviewed. Cindy moved to accept them, Bess seconded. Vote was 5-0-0.
- b) **Market Manager Position.** Bob spoke to Paul Micali about hiring a market manager. Rather than having to do extra paperwork for a 1099 employee, the town suggested that the manager be paid an hourly fee of \$10.00 per hour and still be covered by the town's insurance. Paul will have to confer with the town attorney first. Also, Paul will speak to the owners of Shaw's parking lot about using space on site for the market this year. Bob will talk to Nada Haddad about hiring a market manager at an hourly rate as it is advertised at UNH campus. She is the Extension Agent (Marketing, Education) who helped us originally to create ideas for our Farmer's Market.
- c) **Community Garden Meeting.** Bob McCabe led the discussion in the Klump Room on March 11, 2014 at the Merrimack Library. Cindy Warhola, Tom Hanlon and Wendy McShane were all in attendance to answer any questions along with Bob. There were 30 people in attendance. Any interested gardeners can call Bob at 759-2737. He will be glad to send you an application to secure a garden plot at Wasserman Park for this upcoming season.
- d) **UNH Bug Alert.** Emerald Ash Borer did not all die during the freezing this winter. We are always looking out for Asian Longhorn Beetles which New Hampshire does not have yet.
- e) **Education classes.** There are many classes available. Bob has listed them so people should be able to watch the meeting on the local TV to find that list.
- f) **Membership Drive.** We are always looking for volunteers to share their time and experiences with the Agricultural Commission.
- g) **Advertising Information.** Plans are underway for the coming season.
- h) **Treasurer's Report.** Bess Parks had there figures: Farmer's Market - \$2,296.63; and Community Garden - \$1,347.25; for a total of \$3,643.88
- i) **4-HContribution.** This is the third year the Agricultural Commission has made a donation to these future farmers. Bess moved to donate \$200.00, Cindy seconded. Vote was 5-0-0.
- j) **Draft minutes from February 12, 2014.** Minutes were read, Cindy moved to accept, Bess seconded. Vote was 5-0-0.

Eber moved to make \$1,000.00 available to Bob to help buy supplies he has been providing on his own to set up and prepare the Community Gardens. Cindy seconded. Vote was 5-0-0.

Comments from the Commissioners. Bess brought up the subject of the Horse Council in Connecticut. Debating with a judge who says all horses are vicious. Horse farmers need to put a liability sign on their property to protect themselves. She also brought in articles that have appeared in the Telegraph about CSA trying to start new farms.

Pete gave us lots of information about greenhouse gardening. He will be planting tomatoes on March 24 and peppers on March 30. You need to use clean and sterilized soil in a heated greenhouse. Squash vine borer can be eradicated very carefully by cutting the infected section out.

Bob McCabe made a request to join the New Hampshire Farmers' Market Association for a \$25.00 annual fee. Vote was 5-0-0 in favor.

Cindy moved to adjourn, Bess seconded. Vote was 5-0-0. Adjourned at 8:23 p.m. Next meeting on April 9, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Currier (Acting Secretary)