

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
APPROVED MINUTES
JANUARY 11, 2012**

John Lastowka called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Present were John, Bob McCabe, Allen Lindahl, Karen Swenson, Cindy Warhola, Bess Parks, and Eber Currier.

New Business:

Danielle Morano, a 4H leader in Merrimack told of the many activities her members take part in during the year. They participate in conferences, the Hillsborough County Fair, the Farm & Forest Expo at the Radisson up in Manchester in February. There is also a dog clinic every year. Caring for animals is not the only available training course. They have fashion design, Marketing You, and obviously, they have all learned this well as all four of the members who spoke, did so with confidence and pride and enthusiasm. They also have training and judging at the County, State, and National level. At the Big E Fair in Springfield, MA. In addition, they participate in the Sheep Program, Lamb Show, the Goat Clinic, and the Horse Shows.

Ronnie Miner spoke first. He has sheep, pigs, and chickens and cares for them all himself. He goes up to the Hillsborough County Fair in September to show them and to help wherever he is needed up there.

Lisa Morano goes to all general and annual horse shows and got a chance to judge showing of horses in Kentucky. She has been judged 1st in the County, 2nd in the State and she will be showing at the Farm & Forest Expo.

Emma Miner has goats; she passed around pictures for everyone to see and told of her experience at the Hillsboro County Fair with her goats.

Alicia Parker goes over to Wasserman Park to work with people who have Norwegian Elkhounds, as she does not have one of her own yet. She would like to do therapy training at Senior Assisted Living Homes. She will be going to the Big E also.

4H meets twice a month, usually at somebody's barn. Anyone interested must be between the ages of 8 to 19. Jolee Chase the UNH Cooperative Extension, Hillsboro County educator is the person to contact if you would like to participate.

Karen Swenson and Cindy Warhola, who are both on the sub-committee for the Farmer's Market told the 4H members and leader they would be welcome for a space if they wanted to present anything at the Farmer's Market at Tractor Supply parking lot from the end of May to the end of September on Wednesday's from 3:30 to 6:30.

Bob McCabe moved to make a donation of \$200 for a scholarship fund to the 4H Club otherwise known as the Silver Stirrups. Allen seconded- everyone agreed. Vote was 6-0-0.

Karen Swenson reported on the Community Garden. On the Town website, you can go to Merrimack www.merrimackcommunitygarden.posterous.com and get information on registering for a garden plot. Registration will be March 15, 2012. John will be meeting next Wednesday with water district officials at Wasserman Park to talk about getting better distribution of

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water this year – maybe frost free piping, etc. They will also be looking into having a meeting of interested gardeners and a master gardener to help them with ideas for their spring plantings – maybe at Merrimack Garden Club meeting or at the library.

They definitely want to try a few large pumpkins and a seed swap. Bess Parks has seasoned horse manure for anyone who wants it.

Bess gave the treasurer's report. We have \$2,345.00 in the Farmer's Market account and \$990 in the Community Garden's account.

John reported on our new Farmer's Market Manager, Tom Hanlon. Tom is enthusiastic about helping out. He was at the sub-committee meeting tonight just before this meeting and will be at their next one at 6:30 p.m. on February 8, 2012 again just before our next meeting at 7 p.m.

Bob McCabe received the soil sample results from Extension Service so he knows what the soil needs so he has been making garden preps. He is servicing all his equipment and putting linseed oil on the wooden handles on his garden tools preparing for spring.

Eber talked about insurance for farmers. There is a meeting up in Goffstown tomorrow at the Extension office regarding the apple and peach crops.

There is a pruning demonstration at Lastowka's Maple Gate Farm & Vineyard on March 31' 2012 from 9a.m. to 3p.m. They will be pruning fruit trees at Horse Hill Nature Preserve. Extension specialists George Hamilton and John Nute will be showing everyone how to do it.

Minutes of December 14, 2011 were read. Bob McCabe moved to accept them and Allen Lindahl seconded. Vote was 6-0-0.

John will be going up to Concord to the Farm Bureau Office on January 17th for a meeting of the State Agricultural Commissions to plan for a meeting for everyone to go to at the Farm and Forest Expo on February 3rd and 4th.

Allen moved to adjourn and Cindy seconded. 6-0-0. Adjourned at 8:44.

Respectfully submitted,
Trudy Currier