

MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
December 10, 2014

Chairman Bob McCabe called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were Bob McCabe, Pete Gagnon, Eber Currier, and Bess Parks.

- a) **Farmer's Market Update:** The Commission voted to renew our membership in the Farm Bureau and the Farmer's Market Association of New Hampshire. Christine Lavoie will work on assembling the Farmers' Market notebooks with information for the vendors. Bob asked the Commission to purchase new plywood signs and ink for copying purposes. Bess moved to approve and Pete seconded. Vote was 4-0-0.
- b) **Community Garden Update:** Only one gardener did not clean up his plot, as agreed on. There will be a meeting at the Klump Room at the Merrimack Library at 7 p.m. on March 9, 2015 for any interested gardeners. In addition, there will be a seed swap plus information on the 2015 Community Garden. Eber moved to send soil samples to the University of New Hampshire for the Community Garden for 2015. Bess seconded. Vote was 4-0-0.
- c) **Review of 2014 Annual Report:** Bob will e-mail his report to all commissioners for changes or additions before delivering it to the Town Hall for publication.
- d) **Merrimack farmer's mailing for potential members update:** Eber did send out letters to interested parties about joining the Agricultural Commission. Only two parties responded saying they are too busy right now to join but would like to see the Agricultural Commission continue and may join in the future. Eber read the letter he sent out. He indicated that he would inquire with the town legal counsel as to whether we could allow property owners to join even though they don't reside in town.
- e) **UNH Extension classes:** There are about a dozen different classes pertaining to farming going on around the state in January. Some of these subjects are Quickbooks for farmers, soil management, Income taxes , Advanced farm Management, Landscaping, two meetings on raising hens, and a Mediation Board Program, which will try and help you solve any problems farm problems – this is free-there is a phone number to call for information. It is 1-800-511-2213.
- f) **Bug Alert:** The Emerald Ash Borer is in a few places in New Hampshire already have a quarantine on their Ash logs, which means logs and/or firewood must stay in its quarantined county.
- g) **Winter Horse Care:** Bess Parks presented some quality information about how to care for your horses in the winter months. If you're trailering them, the trailer must be properly ventilated and the horses must be hydrated – they require a lot of water. They may need their legs wrapped and a blanket on – or only a light sheet if it's not too cold. Do not let them sweat too much. The truck itself must have emergency equipment for repairs and the tire pressure must be watched so the trailer cannot tip. They need all their shots as Tetanus, West Nile, Rabies, and Coggins. A big box stall is needed so you can carry enough hay for the whole trip- directly to destination is better for horse if possible.

- h) **Treasurer's report:** Bess reports Farmer's Market has \$2,086.01, Community Garden has \$2,049.28, making a total of \$4,135.29.
- i) **Minutes:** Review draft minutes from November 12, 2014. Eber moved to accept and Bess seconded. Vote was 4-0-0.

Commissioner's comments: Pete said he and Nancy are going up to the meeting in Concord on Landscaping on January 13, 2015. If anyone would like to carpool and go with them, just call him at 424-5171. Eber said it's not necessary to be a farmer to join the Agricultural Commission – just the desire to keep farming and green space in Merrimack.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Next meeting will be January 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Currier, Acting Secretary