

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
**DECEMBER 13, 2017**

Meeting called to order by President Bob McCabe at 7:10pm

Present: Don Miner, Ron Miner III, Bess Parks

Absent: Paul Drone

No Comments from the Press or Public

New Business:

- a. WINTER MARKET UPDATE: Vendor participation and customer traffic remain steady. More vendors expected In January 2018. Don continues to post updated market information on the face book page, along with giving free samples of products to valued and new customers.
- b. MESSAGE BOARD: Bob received the bill of sale and codes to operate the message board panel recently purchased by Bob. Discussion pursued on the best visible location near the John O'Leary Senior Center and the library. The question also arose on whether the commission should purchase or rent the board, and who would be responsible for maintenance. Agriculture or municipal license plate and insurance coverage was also discussed. The decision was made to table the information presented until the January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting.
- c. DISCUSSION and REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORT: Bob asked the board to provide bullet points of the board members contributions to the commission by January 1<sup>st</sup>. 2018.
- d. WORKSHOPS: See attached
- e. BUG ALERT: Most species inactive during the winter months. Lady bugs however seem to thrive inside, especially around sunny window sills.
- f. HORSE SENSE: Bess gave a brief report on the nutritional needs of the older equine. As the older equine digestive system ages, the ability to digest and absorb nutrients is more of a challenge than in earlier years. Nutrients are needed in different ratios to support the aging body. Higher levels of quality amino acids are required to maintain muscle mass, and there are feeds specially formulated to provide these needs. Many varieties of senior feeds are considered "complete" meeting the higher levels of fiber, providing an alternative to forage, thereby making it easier for the senior horse to get the nutrients needed.
- g. THE AG REPORT: Ron related an interesting article involving an Idaho FFA student Anna Peterson, who proposes mandating that students complete at least two agriculture courses to receive a high school diploma. The general lack of knowledge about agriculture common in the city serves to create a rural-urban divide. Even in rural areas most Americans are two or more generations removed from the farm. Interest groups have been asking for years how they can bridge the information gap. Peterson who is a 17-year-old high school student will propose the bill at the 2018 legislative session. She has already written to every member of the Idaho legislature with a briefing of her plan.

- h. TREASURERS REPORT: As of November 11/30/17, the Summer Market account balance is \$4,070.87. The Community Garden account balance is \$2,526.50, with a combined total of \$6,597.37. The Winter Market account balance is \$1,172.50.
- i. MINUTES: The November 8 minutes were reviewed, with motion made to accept by Ron, seconded by Don, motion carried 4-0-0.

No comments from the Press or Public

Comments from the Commission: The Commission received a check from the "Hannaford Helps" reusable Bag Program for \$11.00 dollars. Every purchase of a reusable bag, Hannaford donates \$1 to a local community nonprofit. Each month a new nonprofit is selected. Bob mentioned he was revising the vendor list before mailing to avoid duplication of products at the markets i.e. honey and maple.

Don made the motion to adjourn at 7:58pm, Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0

The Next meeting will be January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 7:00pm, Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks  
Acting Secretary