

MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
MAY 9, 2018

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bob McCabe at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Don Miner, Ron Miner III, Bess Parks

Absent: Paul Drone

No Comments from the Press or Public.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. COMMUNITY GARDEN: On April 23, Bob with Ron's assistance, rototilled the garden area. The next day, Ron, Paul and Bob, flagged and staked out the 10 x 10 plots. The Merrimack Water District has also hooked up the water meter for the season. The gardens are now ready for the gardeners to start planting the cooler weather crops. Spinach, broccoli, and peas are just a few vegetables that prefer cooler temperatures, with warmer weather vegetables planted by Memorial Day weekend. Only half of the plots are sold to date. Anyone wishing to rent a plot may contact Bob at merrimackgardens@gmail.com.
- b. SUMMER MARKET: Bob mentioned that half the post cards have been sent, with eight confirmed vendors responding for the summer market opening June 13, 2018 from 3:00-6:00 p.m. The Morgan family again, have welcomed the market at their Vault Storage location, 526 Daniel Webster Highway North in Merrimack. Ron will assist Bob in hanging the market sign on June 11 or 12.
- c. WORKSHOPS: See Attached.
- d. COMMUNITY GARDEN FILM: Ron has video-taped the various tasks in preparing the garden for the upcoming planting season, and will continue throughout the growing season, along with filming other activities of the Agricultural Commission for public viewing on local social media.
- e. BUG ALERT: Tick season has arrived in force. All precautionary measures should be taken by people and for pets to prevent Lyme disease. Also, Pine Borers are in evidence in the bark of White Pine trees only, and can be recognized by the random pattern of holes in the bark. They can be distinguished from those produced by feeding woodpeckers, and sapsuckers which make holes in a straight line. As a group, borers are most successful when they attack a tree that is stressed due to lack of water or that is planted under too much shade. When a Borer attacks a vigorously growing conifer (like pine), the tree can physically pitch the Borer out of the trunk in a flow of sap. Under full sun conditions, healthy trees have enough energy reserves to produce toxins naturally that can kill many of the infectious diseases that can be spread by borers. Trees that are planted properly in the correct location and provided water during drought are most capable of defending themselves.
- f. HORSE SENSE: Managing pastures to reduce the chance of laminitis. Laminitis is a painful, disabling, common and costly disease of the horse and pony that has many causes. Annual incidence of laminitis in the U.S. is reported to be 2% but rises to about 5% in the spring and summer. Nearly half of all reported cases in the U.S. occur in animals at pasture. During

photosynthesis, green plants produce simple sugars. When sugars are produced more than the energy requirement of the plant for growth and development, they are converted into storage, or “reserve” carbohydrates. Storage of carbohydrates is commonly seen during the rapid growth of spring. Seasonal variations in pasture carbohydrates are well documented, with fructan concentrations highest in the spring, lowest in summer, and intermediate in the fall. Because horses are selective grazers and are known to find feedstuffs with elevated sugar content highly palatable; avoiding or restricting grazing in the early spring can reduce the chance of rapid nonstructural carbohydrates (NSC) intake and laminitis.

- g. TREASURER’S REPORT: As of April 30, 2018, the Agricultural Commission Summer Farmer’s Market Fund Account is \$4,630.03. The Community Garden Fund Account is \$2, 516.41, with a combined total of \$7,146.44. The Winter Farmer’s Market Account is \$856.25.
- h. MINUTES: The April 11, 2018 minutes were read, with Don making a motion to delete the paragraph starting with (The Board) to the end, under New Business, item a. Winter Farmer’s Market Update: Updated information received by the Board would not make bill board advertising for the Summer or Winter Farmer’s Market a feasible option at this time. With this correction, the minutes were accepted as read. Don made a motion, Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

No Comments from the Press or Public.

No Comment from the Board.

Don made the motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m., Ron seconded., motion carried 4-0-0

The next meeting will be held June 13, 2018, at 7:00 p.m., in the Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks
Acting Secretary