

MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 8, 2014

Chairman Bob McCabe called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m. Present were Cindy Warhola, Bob McCabe, Eber Currier, and Bess Parks.

New Business

- a) **Farmer's Market Update:** At today's Market, there were 10 vendors and 180 visitors. Comments from the vendors on the new site – they appreciate the market being so close to the highway. More people are able to stop by. Although the noise from traffic passing by can be annoying.

Market Aide Christine Lavoie is using Face Book to keep people aware of the vendors' products available. In setting up, tents should be in a line so people can see down the line and show all the booths they can visit. Some Vendors would like to see the Market to be open until 6:30. Many people don't get home from work in time to stop and shop for fresh vegetables and meats, etc. These changes could be worked on over the winter. The vendors would like the signage to be twice as big and visible. Bob only spent \$60.00 on the new farmers' market sign. The remainder of the \$100.00 allotment was used to buy printer ink and extra keys. The Commission is thinking about raising the annual vendors' fee to \$100.00 for the 2015 season. Charlie Morgan from Vault Motor Storage agreed to host the Farmer's Market on his property for 2015 season.

- b) **Community Garden Update:** Bob sent out 3 e-mails to gardeners to please clean up their lots before October 13th as Bob will be cleaning up the whole garden on that date. He is going to buy two bags winter rye grass seed suspend available Nitrogen in the garden soil. Cindy moved to allow \$100.00 to Bob to reimburse him for these items, Bess seconded, vote was 4-0-0. Bob will also write a letter to Parks and Recreation with thanks for allowing the Agricultural Commission to use their land for the Community Gardens again this year. The town will shut off the water.
- c) **UNH Extension Classes:** A list of all opportunities for classes can be found at extension.unh.edu. There will be a 2 day trade show on the on October 29th and 30th in North Conway. There will be meetings on Pesticide training, Tick and Lyme disease, and the Emerald Ash Borer – firewood is quarantined within certain counties of New Hampshire because of the Emerald Ash Borer sightings in our Ash trees.
- d) **Bug Alert:** Horse people need to be aware that we have had a few cases of Triple E in the state.
- e) **Equine Dental:** Bess Parks provided information on the care of horse's teeth. When a horse is grazing all day, their jaw is working all the time but when they have limited grazing there is less jaw movement and stable horses do not use their incisors at all so their teeth grow too long. When they are over 20 years old those teeth are like hooks and can cause abscesses so then you must feed them chopped grass and it is important to have a veterinary dentist take proper care of them. Bess also read a very poignant poem about horses.
- f) **Treasurer's Report:** As of September 30, 2014, there is \$2,334.37 in the Farmer's Market account and \$2,109.26 in the Community Garden's account making a total of \$4,443.63.

g) **Minutes:** Review draft minutes from September 10, 2014. Cindy moved to accept the minutes as corrected, Bess seconded. Vote was 4-0-0.

Commissioners' Comments: Bob spoke of the necessity of getting new members. Eber will send letters to local farmers and Joleen – 4H leader in hopes that there might be some young 4H people looking for the experience of working with the Agricultural Commission. Eber also spoke of the smaller crop of apples this year in the state. The Department of Agriculture has declared a state of disaster in 9 of our ten counties. Which means that if any fruit growers need financial assistance, there will be a lower interest rate on loans. Information can be obtained at the State FSA office – Bill Wilson.

Next meeting will be November 12, 2014 – should have a draft of the Budget by then. Eber moved to adjourn, Bess seconded. Vote was 4-0-0. Adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trudy Currier