

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2019**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bob McCabe at 6:57 p.m.

Present: Don Miner, Paul Drone, Ron Miner III, Bess Parks

No Comment from the Press or Public

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **ANNUAL REPORT DUE January 14.** Bob inquired if any of the board members had information to include in the Annual Town Report and asked each member to provide their comments by the due date. The report is due January 14, 2019.
- b. **SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS:** Bob filled out the necessary paperwork and submitted to the Merrimack Finance Department and the Merrimack High School Guidance Department for the \$500 scholarships being presented to the four Merrimack High School students furthering their career in an agricultural related field upon their 2019 graduation.
- c. **SUMMER FARMER'S MARKET:** In preparation of the upcoming summer farmers market, Bob has set the start date as June 12, 2019, with the last market day October 10th, 2019.
- d. **QUESTIONS/ANSWERS:** Bob received from Eileen Cabanel, Town Manager some answers to the list of questions forwarded to her regarding the display sign the Commission uses for advertising at the Summer and Winter Farmer's markets. See Attached for the list of questions and those highlighted that were answered. The Commission will continue discussion and open communication with the town manager on the questions needing answers.
- e. **WINTER FARMER'S MARKET:** Where the commission is part of the town of Merrimack, it is important to keep all records up to date for both the Summer and Winter Farmer's Markets. Copies of vendor lists, including application, insurance information and attendance sheets shall be given to the Chairman in a timely manner to maintain accurate records. Any changes or concerns should also be brought to the Chairman's attention. It was brought to the Commission's attention that the vendor fee had been changed from \$15.00 per market to \$10.00 as an incentive for vendor loyalty throughout the winter months without any prior approval of the Commission. Don mentioned that customer traffic has increased steadily, along with a nice variety of products available each week and feels confident that the market will have another successful season. The market status will be reassessed at the February 13, 2019 meeting.
- f. **HORSE SENSE:** Consider age before beauty when buying your child's first horse. A child's first horse should be safe, trustworthy, patient, and dependable, which means that a young, untrained, or inexperienced horse probably isn't the best choice. Instead, it's better and safer, to pair an inexperienced child with a kind, wise, older horse that won't be alarmed by the child's mistakes. The horse's temperament and history are important; you don't want a skittish horse that's nervous because of bad handling, or one that bites, kicks, bucks or other

behaviors that could be dangerous for a child. The ideal first horse is an older, well-trained, sound animal with a good disposition.

- g. NEW IDEAS FOR 2019: Bob is developing a postal size card with basic information about the Merrimack Agricultural Commission to be left at various locations for public awareness. Paul suggested that the commission offer a seminar on container gardening as more and more residents are living on smaller properties, or condo/town houses and apartments. More information forthcoming on this event at a future meeting.
- h. WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS: See attached.
- i. TREASURERS REPORT: As of December 31, 2018, the Agriculture Commission Summer Market Account Fund is \$ 4,749.88. The Community Garden Fund Account is \$ 1,975.22, with a combined total of \$ 6,725.10. The Winter Farmer's Market Fund Account is \$ 208.34.
- j. MINUTES: The December 12, 2018 minutes were read with Paul making the motion to accept, Don seconded, motion carried 4-0-0. Ron abstained, as he was not in attendance at the December 12th, 2018 meeting.

No Comments from the Press or Public.

Comments from the Commission: Bug Alert: The Asian Long Horned tick is an invasive tick species that has recently spread to eight states across the United States and threatens to transmit several serious diseases to people. This warning comes from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). This "red" tick was discovered recently on a dog who had been in New York. Discovered in New Jersey in 2017, the tick is also known as a bush tick or cattle tick. As with any species of tick, tick bite prevention is something that people should take seriously, including their pets or livestock.

Motion to Adjourn: Don made the motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m., Paul seconded, motion carried 5-0-0.

The next meeting will be held February 13, 2019 at 7:00 pm, in the Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks
Acting Secretary