

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
MAY 8, 2019**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bob McCabe at 7:05 pm

Present: Paul Drone, Bess Parks

Absent: Don Miner, Ron Miner III

No Comments from the Press or Public

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **SUMMER FARMERS MARKET:** Bob reports nine vendors have signed up to date for the summer market opening Wednesday, June 12, at Vault Storage, Daniel Webster Highway North in Merrimack. The market hours remain 3-6 pm throughout the market season. Bob asked the board to approve \$35.00 for post card stamps to send out notices to vendors as needed. Paul made the motion to approval the \$35.00 stamp purchase, Bess seconded, motion carried 3-0-0. Bob can be reached at (merrimackfarmersmarket@gmail.com) for more market information or for agricultural based businesses who would like to participate.
- b. **WINTER MARKET:** The winter farmers market will end June 5th, 2019. The Commission wishes to thank those vendors participating throughout the 2018-2019 season, and the loyal customers who enjoyed the variety of produce, fish, baked good and other specialty items offered each week.
- c. **COMMUNITY GARDEN:** The Wasserman Park garden plots are now ready for gardeners to prepare for planting. The water will be turned on between May 13-17. Fifty-Sixty plots have been rented, with many plots still available. Contact Bob at (merrimackgardens@gmail.com).
- d. **CONTAINER GARDEN SEMINAR:** Paul reported that the container demonstration held April 24, 2019, at the John O'Leary Senior Center during the farmers market was a success. Several market customers stopping by to learn the benefit of container gardening in small spaces, leaving with helpful information. Another demonstration is planned for the spring of 2020.
- e. **BUG ALERT:** Caterpillar season will soon be upon us. Tent caterpillars attach themselves to cherry and ornamental trees. While they do not kill the tree, large colonies can significantly defoliate trees as they feed on leaves, leaving the trees susceptible to disease and other problems. Gypsy moths are one of North American's most devastating pests. They readily consume Oaks, Beech, Maples, Elms, Pine, Hemlock and Spruce. They do not feed on Ash, or Tulip Poplar. Gypsy moth's severe defoliation causes disease infestation and death of many

trees. Ticks are a continuous problem, use precautionary measures for both humans and pets.

- f. WORKSHOPS: See Attached.
- g. HORSE SENSE: Seven Things to Teach Your Trail Horse: 1. Teach your horse to Load Willingly. Loading into a trailer is basic to trail riding for those who attend organized trail rides, or other trail riding destinations. 2. Teach your horse to go where you point him. A good trail horse will go willingly over obstacles, around rocks, down canyons and especially through water. 3. Teach your horse to come back to neutral. A good trail horse will keep a cool head no matter what is happening around him. 4. Teach your horse to be careful about where he puts his feet. He has four of them, and he should know where they are, and where you want him to put them next. 5. Teach your horse to overcome his flight instinct. Of course, you can't expect that your trail horse will never spook, but you'll want to teach him not to overreact when he does. 6. Teach your horse to maintain his independence from other horses. If your horse is friendly with his herd mates, that is fine, but if he's glued to the tail of the horse in front of him, that is not. Exercises such as gradually lengthening the distance between you and other riders and keep the horse's attention on yourself. 7. Teach your horse to head out as eagerly as he heads home. A good trail horse must be able to go anywhere without issue. One last thing, a good trail horse needs is a good attitude. A good attitude means he's confident in his abilities as a trail horse and he's enjoying the ride to the extent that any horse can.
- h. TREASURER'S REPORT: As of April 30, 2019, the Agricultural Commission Farmers Market Fund Account is \$5,156.93. The Community Garden Fund Account is \$ 2,361.97, with a combined total of \$ 7,518.90. The Winter Farmers Market Fund Account is \$367.09.
- i. MINUTES: With the correction of (Paul), not (Don) assisting Bob and Ron with the Community Garden preparation, Paul made the motion to accept the April 10th, 2019 minutes. Bess seconded, with motion carried. 3-0-0.

No Comments from the Press or Public:

Comments from the Commission: Bob received a reply from Jolee Chase, 4-H Manager for Merrimack regarding the Commission's request for information on how the 4-H group has benefited from the \$500.00 education fund provided each year. Jolee reports that the \$500.00 for 2018 was used to help send county youth to the 4-H Teen Conference that is held at UNH in Durham in June 2018. It is a leadership conference for youth who are 14 and older. The rest of the money was used to help send county youth to the Sheep and Goat Clinic held in New Boston in July 2018.

Motion to Adjourn: Paul made the motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Bess seconded; motion carried 3-0-0.

The next meeting will be held June 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m., in the Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks
Acting Secretary