

**MERRIMACK AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
OCTOBER 14, 2020**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bob McCabe at 7:00pm

Present: Ron Miner III, Bess Parks, Paul Drone

Comments from the Press or Public

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **SUMMER FARMER'S MARKET:** The summer market was well attended throughout the season, with the last market October 7, 2020, instead of the originally planned October 14, 2020 closing date. The Commission would like to thank Charles Morgan for his continued support in allowing the market to be held at his Vault Storage location at 526 Daniel Webster Highway, in Merrimack. Bob mentioned the new pop-up tent has a sizable tear due to wind damage. If unable to repair, he will look into purchasing a new one for the 2021 market season.
- b. **COMMUNITY GARDEN:** The community garden was closed on October 11, 2020. Bob mowed, rototilled and seeded the area with winter rye grass cover crop. He will notify the Merrimack Water District for removal of the water meter. The Commission appreciates the water districts support in making the gardens a success.
- c. **MEMORIAL TREE:** The Red Delicious Apple Tree in memory of Pete and Nancy Gagnon has been planted. A memorial stone will be placed at the base of the tree with the inscription "In Memory of Pete and Nancy Gagnon". Both Pete and Nancy will be remembered for their many contributions to the Town of Merrimack and the Agricultural Commission. Ron asked the commission to appropriate \$75.00, the cost for having the memorial stone engraved. Paul made the motion to approve \$75.00 for the engraving, Ron seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.
- d. **ELECTIONS:** Ron Miner III was been voted in and accepted the Vice Chairman position with approval from the Board. Ron's duties would include assisting Bob at meetings or other commission activities. Paul made the motion to accept Ron Miner III as Vice Chairman, Bess seconded, motion carried. 3-0-0.
- e. **UNH EXTENSION CLASSES/WEBINARS:** See Attached
- f. **HORSE SENSE: HOW HORSES GROW WINTER COATS:** Autumn is a time when many horses are putting on their winter coats in earnest. What causes it? Is it the change in temperature or the shorter days? The reduction of light causes the horse's body to begin the production of the hormone melatonin, which in turn prompts additional coat growth. When daylight increases in the spring, melatonin decreases and the horse sheds it winter coat. Horses in the North, with shorter days produce more melatonin, then horses in the South. The result of this is that most horses naturally grow a coat that is suitable for their climate. This said, all horses are different with winter coat thickness varying from breed to breed. When cold weather does strike, a horse's coat will look as though the hairs are standing up, making him/her look fuzzier, softer and woolier than normal. The individual

hairs actually spring up in cold weather crating air pockets that provide extra insulation, therefore keeping your horse's natural body heat from escaping. Don't make the mistake of blanketing your horse if healthy and has a good winter coat. By taking away this natural insulation you can actually make the horse colder. Of course, there are situations when blanketing is warranted, such as a clipped horse, horses just exercised, senior horses or horses that don't put on an adequate coat for the environment. Blanketing should be on a case to case basis.

- g. **BUG ALERT:** A New Hampshire nursery found and reported spotted lanternfly. *Lipoma delicately* (SLF), an invasive insect first detected in the US in 2014. SLF is known to feed on more than 70 kinds of plants and is considered a risk to a variety of important agricultural, ornamental, and hardwood crops. Nursery personnel and NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food inspectors detected and killed several adult SLF on the premises and identified SLF egg masses on red maple trees that had originated from Pennsylvania an SLF quarantine area. Other activities have included insecticide treatment of nursery plants to knock down SLF adults prior to mating, training of nursery staff in SLF identification and management and implementation of best management practices at the nursery to prevent movement of SLF on plants and equipment.
- h. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Balances as of September 30, 2020. The Farmer's Market Fund Account is \$4,560.09. The Community Garden Fund Account is \$1,793.21 with a combined total of \$6,353.30. The July 8, 2020 treasurers report will be read at the November 11, 2020 meeting.
- i. **MINUTES:** Ron made the motion to accept the minutes, with the spelling correction of the nursery name in item c. Memorial Tree, from "Milligan" to "Millican". Paul seconded. Motion carried 4-0-0.

No Comments from the Press or Public:

Comments from the Commission: Bob suggests gardeners use the fall season to get outside garden projects completed, along with cleaning tools before putting away for them winter. The commission is also looking for new Agricultural Commission members with an interest in agricultural. Merrimack residents may contact Bob at bobmccabe@comcast.net.

Motion to Adjourn: Ron made the motion to adjourn at 7:26pm, Paul seconded, motion carried 4-0-0.

The next meeting of the Merrimack Agricultural Commission will be held November 11, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., in the Matthew Thornton Room, East Wing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bess-Arden Parks
Acting Secretary