MERRIMACK AGRICULTURE COMMISSION
MINUTES
OCTOBER 12, 2016

Meeting was called to order by President Bob McCabe at 7:09pm.

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

No Comments from the Press or Public

a. **Summer Farmer's Market**: October 12 was the last day of the summer market with perfect weather for vendors and purchasers. Bob is preparing a new list of possible vendors for the 2017 market. He thanked the Morgan family for their continued support in the use of their property for the summer market.

b. **Thank You**: Bob extended a thank you to Jim Kilpatrick and Shaelagh Nelson for their help throughout the summer market. In appreciation of Jim's volunteering, Bob presented him with a $100.00 gift card to the Homestead restaurant. A motion was made by Don Miner to reimburse Bob $100, second by Paul, motion carried. 5-0-0.

c. **Update on Plans for 2016/2017 Winter Farmer's Market:** Don Miner, Manager of the winter market, confirmed the winter market will begin October 19, 2016 at the John O'Leary Senior Center from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. Don's goal is to present a wide variety of produce, along with other locally made products, i.e. wine, cheese, baked goods and other specialty offerings. Don's previous proposal and appropriation of $200.00 for advertising/promotional post cards has been put on hold to investigate other options. He requested the $200.00, along with an additional $125.00, totaling $325.00 to purchase signs, similar to the summer market signs, that could be placed throughout the town. Don also mentioned that Bedford will include information regarding the Merrimack Market on their face book page. Ron Miner made the motion to re-appropriate the original $200.00 with an additional $125.00/total $325.00 to Ron Miner for the purchase of signage, Bess seconded, motion carried 5-0-0.

d. **Community Garden Closure**: The gardens will be closed as of October 15. All non-degradable items need to be removed from the plots by that date. Bob reported some plots still have not be cleaned out. Notifications will be made to those plot lessees, with follow up per garden rules/regulations if necessary. Bob with plow and seed a winter cover. Motion made by Don to reimburse Bob $100 for seed, Paul seconded, motion carried 5-0-0.

e. **Absenteeism**: Letter received from Amanda Yonkins with her resignation from the Agriculture Commission. She expressed regrets she was unable continue and participate as a board member and thanked the commission for their understanding.

f. **UNH Extension Classes & Activities of Interest**: Bob reviewed available classes being offered throughout the state. October 14, UNH Fairchild Dairy Research Day, Durham; October 22, Laconia Pumpkin Festival; October 26, North Country Fruit and Vegetable Show in Whitefield; November 2, N.H. Direct Marketing Conference, Portsmouth Country Club; November 11, NHFB 100th Annual Meeting, Church Landing, Meredith; November 12, December 7 and January 25, NE Farm Succession

School in Concord; November 13, Associated Women's Annual Meeting at Shaker Village, Canterbury; November 15, Corn Forage Meeting, Westmorland; November 16, Corn forage meeting, Haverhill and December 10, Women's Farm Equipment/Maintenance Workshop 9-4pm, West Thomson School in Durham.

g. **Bug Alert**: Bob reported the woodpeckers have been busy eating the ticks on the trees, but other destructive bugs and beetles still persist.

h. **Horse Sense**: Bess gave some cold weather feeding tips for horse owners. Keeping good weight on horses going into winter. Provide adequate hay or other fiber rich feed that provides heat to help keep them warm. If additional fat calories need to be added, 4-8 oz. of corn oil added to the meal will help. Provide fresh clean water at all times. Lack of water intake can lead to impaction and colic. Make sure the horse's teeth are in good condition to chew their food properly, and deworm according to veterinary instruction to avoid parasites that might prevent optimum digestion. Feed can be soaked for easier digestion if the horse is old and has poor teeth, and feed several times a day to maintain a good weight. Provide free access to salt, plain or trace mineral. Keeping these tips in mind will help your horse emerge from winter healthy and in good weight and fitness for the year ahead.

i. September, October, November's treasurers reports to be read at November 9, 2016 meeting.

j. **Minutes**: Minutes read, correction made on Winter Farmer's Market Plans: Should be Don, not Ron on sentence 4. Motion then made to accept.

No comments from the press.

No comments from the public,

Comments from the Commission: Bob received several thank you notes from 4H members who received gift certificates. Bob also suggested that beginning with the new summer market in June, that Jim Kilpatrick be paid for the 3 hours he assists at the market each week. This issue will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Ron Miner mentioned he would be interesting in researching the history of farming, past and present. This addition to our agenda would be most interesting to members and residents.

Motion made by Bess to adjourn, Don seconded, motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bess Parks, Acting Secretary

DRAFT