

Town of Boscawen

Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes – Draft
Boscawen Municipal Complex – 4th Floor Meeting Room
April 13, 2017 at 7pm

1 **Members Present:** John Keegan – Chair, Elaine Clow – Vice-Chair, Bill Bevans, Tina
2 Larochelle, Angela Swyers

3 **Members Absent:** Josh Marshall, Roger Sanborn – Ex-Officio

4 **Alternate Members Present:** John Porter

5 **Alternate Members Absent:** Ken Marshall

6 **Others Present:** Jeff Abbe – Garden Committee Member, Katie Phelps – Recording Secretary

7 Chairman Keegan called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with a voting board.

8 Roll Call made by Chairman Keegan.

9 **Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:**

10 The Commission reviewed meeting minutes from the March 16, 2017 meeting and made
11 suggestions on edits.

12 **Motion made by Vice-Chair Elaine Clow, and seconded by Tina Larochelle, to accept the**
13 **minutes from the March meeting as amended. All in favor.**

14 **Accountant's Report:**

15 The Commission reviewed the Treasurer's Report for January 1 thru April 13, 2017. There has
16 been \$1,850.58 spent from the \$1,800 budget line for the Community Garden. Katie Phelps
17 noted the January 18, 2017 Board of Selectmen's minutes which state that garden plot fees can
18 be used towards the Community Garden budget line. Garden Plot fees currently total \$270.

19 **Motion to accept the Accountant's Report made by Tina Larochelle, and seconded by**
20 **Angela Swyers. All in favor.**

21 **Land Use Updates:**

22 Tabled until May when Alan Hardy is available.

23 • **Community Garden Updates:**

24 Jeff Abbe said he, John Keegan, and John Porter decided on a location for the new shed. The
25 floor for the shed was built today at Merrimack Valley High School. There have been donations
26 from businesses and Roger Sanborn and Derek Mills have offered to do the tilling Saturday,
27 April 15th. The suggestion was made to send out thank you letters to businesses who have
28 donated materials for the shed. Jeff Abbe and Katie Phelps will work on this together. There will
29 be a work day on Saturday, April 22nd at the Community Garden from 10-2pm. Plot layouts and
30 garden shed prep will be done. Dean Hollins will be bringing his the town's backhoe to the

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31 garden to prepare the area where the shed will sit. In terms of the shed cost, Jeff Abbe anticipates
32 approximately \$1,000 more will be spent before it is complete.

33 Chairman Keegan followed up with Mr. Valinski at Merrimack Valley High School regarding
34 the number of studs ordered. The extra studs were ordered to account for the student's margin of
35 error in the learning process. Jeff Abbe suggesting donating the excess materials back to the
36 school after the shed is complete. The students provided the labor at no cost to the AgComm.

37 Katie Phelps provided garden sign up information to date. She has received 8 applications so far
38 for the 2017 season. Most people are requesting the same plots as last year, however, some
39 would like to change. There have not been a lot of people returning the photo release forms with
40 their applications. Katie will send a reminder for people to submit the form.

41 Elaine Clow states that there will be a piece in the Newsvine advertising the Community Garden
42 and informing people to call Katie Phelps for more information.

43 • **Pustizzi Site Visit:**

44 On March 29, 2017 Vice-Chair Elaine Clow, Bill Bevans, and John Porter completed a site visit
45 to Joe Pustizzi's farm on Corn Hill Road. Mr. Pustizzi was interested in building an agricultural
46 housing facility. The reviewers concluded the proposal was not the normal farmer/employee
47 relationship due to the terms of the proposed lease arrangement. The Commission members
48 thought a subdivision would be in Mr. Pustizzi's long term interest. Mr. Pustizzi withdrew his
49 application for Technical Review because his lease fell through after the site visit was
50 completed.

51 The Commission will discuss the site visit at the May meeting in the context of how best to
52 support agricultural worker housing.

53 • **Agricultural Rack Card Development:**

54 Commission members are still in the process of gathering information for the rack card. John
55 Porter said it has been very well received and people understand the concept. The consensus has
56 been that most people don't want visits from the public but aren't opposed to being named in the
57 card to showcase agriculture in Boscawen. Information can be forward to Josh Marshall so he
58 can develop a prototype for the next meeting that includes more information. Katie Phelps is
59 compiling information as people submit it. She will forward it to Josh.

60 • **Educational Program Update:**

61 Vice-chair Elaine Clow provided an update on the educational program. She hasn't found a
62 replacement yet. There was a talk on chickens on March 6th and pigs with Dot Perkins on April
63 3rd. On May 1st there will be a talk on Integrated Pest Management and Beginner Gardening with
64 Ann LaCroix. There are currently 11 people signed up between Katie's list and the Extension

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65 office for the May 1st program. On June 5th there will be hands on talk about herbs at the
66 Community Garden. There will be another IPM class in July – Date and time TBD.

67 Chairman Keegan had suggested at a previous meeting that instead of doing a talk every month
68 that possibly there could be one every other month. Tina Larochelle mentioned that it might be
69 easier to find a replacement if there was only a talk every other month. The Commission
70 discussed trying to find a Master Gardener who was interested in the educational program.
71 However, timing for the discussion with Cooperative Extension, has yet to be determined.

72 • **Other:**

73 Vice-Chair Elaine Clow asked if there were any Commissioners approaching their term end
74 dates. Katie Phelps provided term dates and Angela Swyers' term expires in June 2017. All other
75 Commissioners term dates expire in 2018 and 2019.

76 • **Identification of 2017 Objectives from Master Plan:**

77 Chairman Keegan tabled this topic until the next meeting in May.

78 **Motion to adjourn made by Vice-Chair Elaine Clow, and seconded by Tina Larochelle. All**
79 **in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.**

80 The next meeting of the Commission will be May 11, 2017 at 7:00pm.

81 *Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Phelps*

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