

**Town of Boscawen
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 10th, 2022, at 6:30 PM**

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, Gary Tillman, Bill Bevans, Ralph Odell & Julie Fournier-Alternate

Excused: Roger Sanborn & John Porter-Vice Chair

Absent- Tatyanna Wunschel-Alternate

Chair John Keegan opened the public meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Roll Call complete.

Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the 10.13.22 draft minutes as presented. Seconded by Bill Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.

Financial Report:

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the Financial Report through 11.10.22 as presented. Seconded by Ms. Julie Fournier. All in favor. None opposed.

Old Business:

- December Public Hearing Preparation: Update to By-Laws: Chair Keegan asked for discussion of the proposed changes. Discussion proceeded. Town of Boscawen Agricultural Commission Statement of Purpose/Bylaws, revision dated 04.14.11. Article C: Organization and Officers on page 2. Chair Keegan suggested on the last line of Article C 1., deleting “shall” and inserting “may”. His rationale was that “may” is more of a permissive word. After minimal discussion all Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve removing “shall” and inserting “may”. Seconded by Mr. Bevans. All in favor none opposed.

- Continuing to Article F: Meetings Item 2 on the same page. Chair Keegan suggested striking the text, following “as” on line 1 to “PM” at the end of the next to last line with: “the board may determine” followed by the current text, “in accordance with RSA 673:10”. Thus, the text for Item 2 would read: “Regular meetings shall be held at a minimum of four times annually and at other times as the board may determine in accordance with RSA 673:10”. Chair Keegan’s rationale for the change was that the other conditions included in the current article were not required by RSA 673:10 but could be re-established in the future if needed but currently limit the Commission’s options unnecessarily. Discussion followed.

Motion made by Ms. Fournier to accept the changes proposed by Chair Keegan. Seconded by Mr. Odell. Four in favor 1 opposed, the motion passed.

- Mr. Bevans will track Committee tasks for November.
- *Invasive Species Initiative Update:* Chair Keegan reported members of the Conservation Commission were interested in working with AgCom and the Department of Public Works (DPW) in the context of the 'Picking Our Battles' framework. However, given the holidays and the fall work responsibilities of Fish & Game personnel, i.e., hunting seasons, it would be best to wait until 2023 to learn more from Fish & Game personnel about the framework. Chair Keegan updated PWD Director Dean Hollins about the aforementioned meeting. In the context of that discussion Director Hollins suggested locating 'test plots' around town to control, for example knotweed. It could be a starting point without waiting until 2023. PWD Hollins would do the work and use its budget for materials. In this way the public would see control action in place, and it would be a practical way to start the project. Chair Alan Hardy of the Conservation Commission strongly supported the idea. PWD Hollins identified a small Knotweed infestation on Chadwick Hill Road to begin the work. He purchased heavy duty black plastic and has a local source of clean wood chips. This technique of fall spraying, covering with black plastic and a deep layer of wood chips has been successful at the Community Garden.
- *Other:* Vice-Chair Porter has redone the Salisbury sign which was in pretty bad shape with water again collecting in the letters. The reconstruction and painting has been done. He reiterated the importance of checking the signs annually to deal with deterioration in a timelier manner.

New Business:

- *Hazard Mitigation Committee Membership:* Chair Keegan shared a request for a Commission member to serve on the Committee. Three respondents were not able to. He repeated the request and Mr. Odell agreed to serve. Chair Keegan will be the alternate.
- *Point of order:* Mr. Bevans noted that Ms. Fournier, an alternate Commissioner, had voted on all the motions but had not been formally appointed by the Chair, per the Bylaws. At that point, Chair Keegan appointed Ms. Fournier to vote at this meeting. Commissioners voted again on the following motions with no change in the results:

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the 10.13.22 draft minutes as presented. Seconded by Bill Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the Financial Report through 11.10.22 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Julie Fournier. All in favor. None opposed.

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve removing ‘shall’ and inserting ‘may’. Seconded by Mr. Bevans. All in favor none opposed.

Motion made by Ms. Fournier to accept the changes proposed made by Chair Keegan. Seconded by Mr. Odell. Four in favor 1 opposed, the motion passed.

- Preparation of the Annual Report: Chair Keegan requested that Commissioners to take responsibility for a section of the report for the December meeting. He pointed out that a 1-page report was their objective.

Pending Tasks:

- Intro and Invasive Species Initiative: Chair Keegan
- Welcome signs and final edit: Vice-Chair Porter
- Community Garden Alternate Commissioner Fournier and Jeff Abbe: include composting education, herb garden, etc.
- Other: Mr. Odell attended an event at St. Paul’s School in Concord showcasing the gardening endeavors of refugee farmers. He pointed out that this is one of four locations where farmers are growing crops native to their countries of origin as well as crops native to New Hampshire very successfully. Many participate in the Concord Farmers Market as well as a market near Loudon Rd in Concord, directed at refugee populations. He noted that there is an organized support system for these aspiring farmers. An example was a new field west of I-89 off Clinton St. where farmers would be able to cultivate roughly a quarter acre each with irrigation. This represented a significant change in their production potential. Additionally, he mentioned that refugees are also farming in Boscawen on 13 acres leased on the Pustizzi Fruit Farm. Chair Keegan will follow-up with more information.

Next Meeting and Public Hearing:

- Thursday, December 8, 2022 @6:30 p. m.