

**Town of Boscawen
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex
FINAL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, May 9th, 2023, at 6:30 PM**

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, John Porter-Vice Chair, Gary Tillman, Ralph Odell, Roger Sanborn & Bill Bevans—Ex-Officio

Excused: Julie Fournier-Alternate

Staff Present: Kearsten O'Brien—Deputy Planning & Community Development Director & Kara Gallagher— PCD Assistant

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

Roll Call complete.

Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:

- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 105, add 'Porter' after 'Vice Chair'.
- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 128, change '...included a barber school' to '...did include a barber school'.

Mr. Gary Tillman motioned to approve the 04.11.23 draft minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Ralph Odell. All in favor. None opposed.

Financial Report:

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the Financial Report through 05.09.23 as presented. Seconded by Vice Chair Porter. All in favor. None opposed.

Old Business:

1. *May Tasks:* PCD Assistant Gallagher will track the May tasks.
2. *Invasive Species:* Chair Keegan and Vice Chair Porter monitored a North Country meeting as guests on Microsoft Teams. The meeting was attended by individuals interested in working to control invasive species. The presenter was Ms. Jillian Kilburn, a NH Fish & Game biologist. She provided information about an ongoing program along the upper reaches of the Connecticut River that are showing some success. She cited techniques to keep certain species under control. As well as noting, some invasive species present significant challenges that require covering them with plastic, digging them out, and/or using herbicides to control. Vice Chair Porter said the meeting gave helpful background information to gain insight into how to approach the invasive species project in Boscawen. Chair Keegan will reach out to Ms. Kilburn to obtain a copy of her slide presentation. Furthermore, he will arrange a date for a presentation to the Conservation Commission and Public Works Director Dean Hollins. Chair Keegan mentioned there is Conservation Commission member that works for NH Fish & Game who might provide additional information. Vice Chair Porter noted Fish & Game's approach is to foster cooperation among towns working with various committees. Mr. Ralph Odell shared feedback he received from an individual at his part-time job. The individual was frustrated with the lack of plans available to the public to control invasive species. No further discussion.

3. *Strengthen Local Processing Act (SLPA) Follow-Up:* Chair Keegan gave an update on SLPA, part of the major Agriculture Bill before Congress. Chair Keegan spoke with Mr. Tyler Hyde from Representative Kuster office. Due to the Agriculture bill's size and complexity, there are several subcommittee's working on various titles. Mr. Hyde noted the bill has been 'status-quo' for the past two months.

4. *Draft Horse Event:* Mr. Roger Sanborn gave an update on the progress of the Draft Horse Event and Flashy Flock cutouts. On Thursday, May 11th, the sign-ups for the Old Home Day Flashy Flock opened. Individuals that sign-up will bring their slips to Twiggs Art Gallery on June 17th to pick up their chicken cutouts. For the August 20th Draft Horse Event, Mr. Sanborn said there was a good number of draft horses coming to demonstrate. They will be plowing in the front of the house. Attendees, should they so desire, will also have the opportunity to drive a team on their own, with guidance from the owner. Mr. Tillman questioned if there are 2 different draft horse events. Chair Keegan received an email from Mrs. Adele Sanborn last week that explained the upcoming Twiggs calendar of events. There will be two draft horse events. The first event on June 17th at Twiggs, the day people will be picking up their Flashy Flock chicken cutouts. The second event is on Sunday, August 20th. Chair Keegan noted Mrs. Sanborn email assumes the Agricultural Commission would be responsible for judging the chicken cutouts on Sunday, August 20th. Chair Keegan clarified that the Commissioners need to decide whether or not to judge the 2023 Flashy Flock competition. Discussion ensued. Deputy Planning & Community Development Director Kearsten O'Brien suggested if they couldn't get judges, to take pictures of the decorated cutouts and then send out a survey to vote. Vice Chair Porter will ask Mrs. Sue Porter if she would be interested in judging. Mr. Sanborn volunteered to judge. Chair Keegan was concerned with Mr. Sanborn's judging and running the Draft Horse event. There was discussion and agreement to delay the judging until later in the day after the Draft Horse Event. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested having individuals bring the cutouts to a central location. Vice Chair Porter suggested Commissioners be involved in the judging and to discuss the details further with Mrs. Sanborn. All concurred with the Vice Chair. Chair Keegan will invite Mrs. Sanborn to the next meeting.

Vice Chair Porter motioned to approve the Agricultural Commission being judges on August 20th, after the draft horse event. Furthermore, to discuss the mechanics with Mrs. Sanborn at the next meeting. Seconded by Mr. Tillman. All in favor. None opposed.

- Vice Chair Porter asked for clarification on who will be organizing the food on August 20th at the Draft Horse event. Mr. Tillman mentioned the idea to the Old Home Day Committee, and they plan to provide baked goods, drinks and pizza, similar to the Yard-Sale event. Vice Chair Porter suggested clarifying who will be in charge of the food. Mr. Tillman will discuss that responsibility further at the next OHD meeting.
5. *Community Garden:* Chair Keegan provided a Community Garden update. There are 12 new plots, but none rented to date. PCD Assistant Gallagher noted there are 2 plots left in the original section. No further discussion.

 6. *Welcome Wagon Update:* Vice Chair Porter gave an update on the Welcome Wagon proposal. Chair Keegan researched and found an existing 'Welcome' package that Town Clerk Hoyt distributes to new residents. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested providing locations and addresses for local agricultural enterprises in the packet. Mr. Tillman noted the Rack Cards include information about local businesses. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said Ms. Tina LaRochelle was still included in the Rack Card and was not sure if she was still in business with selling Bedding Plants and Vegetables. Vice Chair Porter suggested replacing Ms. LaRochelle with the individual on Corn Hill Road missed on the latest card. A Commissioner noted that there is a supply of updated cards without Ms.

LaRoche's information. PCD Assistant Gallagher suggested replacing outdated information on the current Cards with a 'stick-on' label. Vice Chair Porter recommended following the existing format, with 'stick-on' labels and asking Town Clerk Hoyt to include the Rack Card and the Department of Agriculture's 'Who's Who In New Hampshire Agriculture Directory', and the description of Boscawen Agriculture that he wrote. The Commissioners reviewed and approved Vice Chair Porter's draft description of Boscawen Agriculture. He recommended formatting this 1-pager to fit the existing Welcome Bag. PCD Assistant Gallagher will create a draft mock-up that fits the Welcome bag format. Chair Keegan had spoken with Town Clerk Hoyt, and she is willing to include the AgComm material. Mr. Sanborn volunteered to donate maple syrup for the bags. He will check how many containers he can provide. Vice Chair Porter asked how many new residents come into town each year? Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said each month, with updating deeds, there are roughly 5 to 10 new homes. On a related point, Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested, in the future, AgComm make separate bags for different public events. Vice Chair Porter asked if the member directory could be incorporated into the insert. PCD Assistant Gallagher noted she would need permission from each Commissioner to list their phone numbers and email. Commissioners reviewed the listing and decided to include emails only for public information. PCD Assistant Gallagher asked the Commissioners to review the rack cards so they can remove businesses that should no longer be listed. Discussion ensued. The Commissioners will review the rack cards and PCD Assistant Gallagher will make changes using new labels.

7. Composting Education Initiative: Mr. Tillman and PCD Assistant Gallagher found the composting education material and signs. Mr. Tillman noted there were multiple unused copies publicizing last year's training. He recommended being more cautious about overprinting materials in the future to avoid wasting paper. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the stickers on the signs can be removed for reuse. Discussion ensued and Commissioners agreed the signs should be revised and reused. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will do so by Saturday, June 3rd. Mr. Tillman noted there is an inventory of magnets that can be used for publicity as well. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will reach out to Town Clerk Hoyt about including the magnets in the Welcome bags. Chair Keegan and Mr. Tillman volunteered to distribute composting material on Saturday's at the Transfer Station between 10:30am-12:30pm. Mr. Odell volunteered to pass out materials at the Transfer Station on a Tuesday or Wednesday. Mr. Tillman will start passing out material on Saturday, June 3rd. Mr. Odell will start on Wednesday, June 7th and Chair Keegan will distribute on Saturday, June 10th. The Commission will discuss future dates after reviewing the feedback from the first 3 handout days.
8. Status of HB-300/HB-462: Mr. Odell has been following the status on HB-300 and HB-462 related to composting. Both of the bills were sent to the Finance Committee on March 23rd and are still being reviewed. He found information on the State website that described the bills and a timeline for their initiation. He contacted Mr. Rob Johnson, the Policy Director at NH Farm Bureau, for more details. He focused specifically on the level of activity related to the bills and if there was anything the Commission could do to help support them. He is still awaiting a call back. The State of NH Website also provided information on the bill's sponsors but provided no contact information. Chair Keegan noted HB-300 sponsors include two people of interest, Senators Watters and Pearl. Chair Keegan stated there were two other bills in the Senate dealing with waste that may be this year's primary focus in terms of major landfills and siting.
9. NH Farm Bureau: Chair Keegan spoke with Mr. Odell about the Commission's relationship with NH Farm Bureau. He noted because the AgComm has a membership, all Commissioners also have NHFB memberships. NHFB has a Merrimack County group that provides input on different policies and issues to NHFB leadership. Chair Keegan suggested having a Commissioner participating in those meetings might be a way to have more impact on NH agriculture. Mr. Odell provided information on his past experience. He noted often times people from NHFB are sponsoring bills, such as composting

bills. Vice Chair Porter suggested inviting Mr. Rob Johnson, or another Policy Director, to attend an upcoming AgComm meeting to discuss how the Commission(ers) can help. Chair Keegan noted Mr. Howard Pearl is the chair of the Senate Ag Committee and is an active member on the NHFB. Chair Keegan will reach out to Mr. Johnson for his availability and schedule his attendance.

New Business: Chair Keegan asked Commissioners if they wanted to participate in the Old Home Day Yard Sale a group. Last year Chair Keegan and Vice Chair Porter participated individually. Members decided not to participate as a commission.

Other Business: Chair Keegan noted he will be out of state during most of the month of July. Vice Chair Porter will run the July meeting.

Pending Tasks:

- Chair Keegan will reach out to Ms. Kilburn and arrange a session with the Conservation Commission and PWD Hollins;
- Chair Keegan will reach out to Mr. Rob Johnson for his availability to discuss HB-300 and HB-462 and other NHFB business;
- Chair Keegan will discuss the judging with Mrs. Sanborn and invite her to the next meeting;
- Composting Education at Transfer Station: Mr. Tillman June 3rd, Mr. Odell June 7th, Chair Keegan June 10th;
- PCD Assistant Gallagher will create a draft mock-up of Vice Chair Porters draft that fits the Welcome bag format;
- Mr. Sanborn will check his inventory on containers for maple syrup & continue organizing Draft Horse Event;
- Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will take stickers off on the composting signs and recompose their messages by June 3rd;
- Vice Chair Porter will get the "Who's Who" booklet from the Dept of Agriculture for "Welcome Bags".

Next Meeting and Public Hearing:

- Tuesday, June 13th, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Sanborn motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Tillman. All in favor. None opposed.

Respectfully submitted, Hannah Gardner