

Town of Boscawen
Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes- Final
Boscawen Municipal Complex
January 10, 2019 7:00 pm

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, Julie Fournier, Rusty Colby, Josh Marshall, John Porter, Bill Bevans- Vice Chair

Members Absent: Tina Larochelle, Roger Sanborn-Ex-Officio

Others Present: Kellee Jo Easler & Danielle Bosco

Chairman Keegan called the meeting to order at 7:05pm with a quorum.

Roll call made by Chair Keegan.

Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:

Chair Keegan asked if anyone had any changes to the previous minutes from 12/13/2018 and several changes were made.

Motion made to accept the December minutes as amended by Ms. Fournier and seconded by Mr. Marshall All in favor, none opposed.

Financial Report:

Motion made to accept the budget for 2019 by Mr. Bevan's and seconded by Ms. Fournier All in favor, none opposed.

Motion made to accept the Financial Report for 2018 by Mr. Bevan's and seconded by Ms. Fournier All in favor, none opposed.

Land Use: Mrs. Easler said there is nothing new to present this month. Chair Keegan questioned if Conservation had an update on Walker Pond. Mrs. Easler said none to report at this time.

Farm Tax Relief Bill: Mr. Marshall stated he spoke with Rob Johnson from NH Farm Bureau and received phone numbers for contacts at Department of Revenue Division, but no names. Mr. Marshall said if the Commission could talk DRA or even have them meet with the Commission to discuss Commercial versus Agricultural for the property tax relief it would be helpful. Mrs. Easler asked if she should ask Avitar to discuss this issue. Chairman Keegan stated it would be best to use the contact numbers from Mr. Marshall and deal with State authorities. Mr. Marshall explained that the question the Commission is asking is: Can Agricultural can have a distinct tax designation? Mrs. Easler will reach out for more information.

Legal Update: Mrs. Easler provided legislation updates.

- Mrs. Easler stated that now Agritourism conflicts must be ruled on by the Commissioner of Agriculture. Mr. Marshall clarified that this does not mean the municipalities cannot mandate public health and safety requirements such as bathrooms, lights, parking lots, etc.

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- Mrs. Easler said there is an update about the use of seeds and fertilizers. Mr. Marshall explained individual municipalities cannot now regulate the use of agricultural inputs such as GMO's or cow manure.

Old Business:

- **Welcome to Boscawen Signs**
 - Chairman Keegan spoke about having the seasonal signs done by prison industries. Ms. Fournier said she drove by some of the "Welcome to Boscawen" signs and they may need more than a coat of varnish. She questioned the size of those signs. Chairman Keegan said there is a sign at the Torrent Station that can be measured and examined. Mr. Porter noted the posts are attached to the back of each sign. Thus, the seasonal signs will hang from the bottom of the sign itself. Hence, the controlling dimension is the Welcome signs' length. Ms. Fournier volunteered to get pictures of the signs to determine what type of touch ups are needed. Ms. Fournier said she noticed there is not much room to hang many signs if the snow gets deep. Chairman Keegan responded that, generally, only one seasonal sign will be up at a given time. Mr. Marshall noted even at the peak time he did not see more than three signs up at once. Chairman Keegan questioned how big the lettering should be. Mr. Marshall said he believed they did six inch letters on the Community Garden sign which can be read easily. Mr. Marshall said Carter Hill Orchard has similar signs he can look into. Mr. Porter said the sign shop is a good resource. Mr. Marshall said he will work on this and agreed this would be a good resource.

Town Report: Chairman Keegan provided copies of the 2017 Town Report and asked for input. Mr. Porter suggested getting the report down to one page. Mr. Marshall supported the idea while suggesting some information to include. Mr. Marshall will edit the submissions form Messrs. Abbe, Porter and Keegan. Mrs. Easler said the deadline for the report is January 18th.

NH Milk: Chairman Keegan spoke about the Commissioner Jasper's going public with NH brand milk. Mr. Porter said that farmers were nervous but are getting behind the Commissioner. Mr. Porter said the Commissioner is getting over some hurdles and thinks this will be great for NH. Mr. Porter said people will be able to purchase NH brand milk for an additional .50 cents per gallon, with the major portion going to farmers. Mr. Porter said the Commissioner is working

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with the principals at the Hood plant in Concord. Mr. Porter stated a survey showed that people are willing to pay from .50 cents to 1.00 more for NH. Mr. Marshal said surveys are one thing but wasn't sure people would pay the extra money. At the end of the day, Mr. Marshall supports anything to help the dairy farmers. Mr. Marshall reported that at a recent meeting in the State House, a dairy farmer said he had received six calls in the last month asking if he would buy the callers' cows. Mr. Marshall said Vermont has lost more dairy farms than NH and Maine is in the same position.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Marshall and seconded by Mr. Colby. All in favor, none opposed
The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by Danielle Bosco