

**Town of Boscawen**  
**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION**  
**Boscawen Municipal Complex**  
**FINAL MINUTES**  
**Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7:00 PM**

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, John Porter- Vice Chair, Ralph Odell, Gary Tillman, Julie Fournier- Alternate & Lorrie Carey-Ex Officio

Absent- Tina Larochelle, Roger Sanborn & Bill Bevans

Others Present – Kearsten O'Brien- Planning & Community Development Clerk

Chair John Keegan opened the public meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call: completed and guests introduced.

**Review and Acceptance of September 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

Vice Chair John Porter requests one correction, line 11, change convener to Chair John Keegan.

Mr. Gary Tillman requests one correction, line 47, change dam to dump.

Ms. Julie Fournier requests one correction, line 83, change PWD Hollins to Mr. Nate Gaunte  
One correction, line 86, change PWD Hollins to Mr. Nate Gaunte.

**Mr. Gary Tillman motioned to accept the 09.09.21 meeting minutes as amended. Motion seconded by Ms. Julie Fournier. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Financial Report:** Chair Keegan began this item with the explanation that all Ag Comm expenses are reviewed by him with either Kellee Easler or Kate Merrill prior to payment. Mr. Tillman expressed satisfaction with the explanation and was pleased to see the new detail in the October report. Mr. Tillman asked who Anne Lacroix was. Chair Keegan explained she is a Master Gardner who has volunteered educating gardeners and planted as well as maintains the herb garden with other volunteers including Louise Jacob. Anne has volunteered at the Community Garden since its inception.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to accept the 10.14.21 financials as written. Motion seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Land Use Happenings:** Mr. Tillman reported Kenney's Garage asked for an extension on the June Notice of Decision. Planning Board granted the decision to allow Mr. Kenney to apply for a Minor Site Plan by January 2022. Planning Board accepted a planned unit development application. The application consisted of four duplex's that are one bed room, this will be located behind Alan's Restaurant where Kesavan Mobile Home Park used to be.

**Old Business:**

**Rack Cards:** Vice Chair John Porter proposed moving the written information under the Richardson's photo to the 'blue' area to heighten contrast for easier reading. Ms. O'Brien

reported the cards are due for delivery on the 15<sup>th</sup>. If printing has been delayed she and/or Crystal will investigate including telephone numbers for each business in the upper right hand corner of the white area. If the cards have already been printed Ms. Carey suggested the Economic Development publication under consideration include telephone numbers for all included on these rack cards. Chair Keegan pointed out Crystal had found another local vendor willing to do the work for less than \$170. Following a short discussion, 25 cards per business will be the first distribution. At this point there is no need to purchase new plastic display racks as Crystal found the surplus in a storage space at the town office.

Compost Sign Update: Ms. Fournier is still waiting for the sign to be delivered. When in hand she will leave it at the town office where Mr. Hollins can retrieve it.

**Community Garden Update:** Ms. Fournier reported Mr. Abbe is currently enrolled in Master Gardener training. She spoke with him briefly about garden clean-up and plans for his Master Gardener project. His plan is to focus on volunteer recruitment and training centered at the Community Garden. He is working on the details and will be communicating with Ms. Fournier. In the meantime Mr. Odell contacted the individual he knows who teaches at the Winnisquam High School's Agricultural Technical Program. The focus for next year's program will be project based learning thru volunteer work in a range of agricultural fields. Ms. Carey observed this could fit nicely with the needs at the Community Garden. Chair Keegan noted there seemed to be a convergence of resources we just need to be agile and pull the elements together. Mr. Odell will follow up with Ms. Crouch. When our plans are firmer. Ms. O'Brien provided information about the insurance considerations that if there are volunteers helping a staff member or ex-officio needs to keep track on a roster and have them fill out a form. The Select Board can allow for a committee or commission member to act as staff to keep track of the roster and forms. Chair Keegan reported he had visited the Community Garden earlier in the week and was taken by the number of gardeners who had planted flowers and the numbers of honey bees and bumble bees present. That got him thinking about perhaps pushing back the clean-up date to feed more pollinators. Mr. Porter pointed out that October 15<sup>th</sup> is considered the last date a rye cover crop can be planted and Mr. Sanborn is ready to prepare the ground. Chair Keegan pointed out he will be plowing the fallow ground to keep down weed growth. Ms. Carey asked if hives had ever been considered. Chair Keegan said 'yes' but not considered in detail.

Granite Geek Article: Chair Keegan noted the discussion of this paper had been truncated at the last meeting and he wanted to revisit it at this point. Consensus emerged that the bank was a risky proposition here in NH with entities such as the Community Loan Fund, Credit East and small nonprofits with niche audiences and others with a wider constituency that loan and/or donate small sums to start-ups of all types. Mr. Odell did make the point that people with money are also looking for socially responsible enterprise to support.

Right to Repair: Ms. Fournier had attempted to email Commissioners information Mr. Crawford had shared with her but was thwarted by her email. But she intended to persevere. Chair Keegan reported he had spoken with Rob Johnson at NH Farm Bureau about this proposed legislation. The Farm Bureau Policy Committee had examined and discussed this proposal, HB 449 and decided it did not address the needs of the membership and decided not to monitor the proposed

legislation. Given the time and resources NHFB had dedicated to the bill, the Commission's consensus was to drop the item.

**Mr. Gary Tillman motioned to discontinue work on HB 449. Motion seconded by Ms. Julie Fournier. All in favor. None opposed.**

**New Business:**

**New Hampshire Farm Bureau Membership:**

Chair Keegan reported the Commission's membership had expired. Does the Commission wish to renew membership? Ms. Carey asked about the benefits and Chair Keegan reviewed the list on the membership card. Mr. Porter pointed out the Commission's original rationale was to support NHFB and a means for the Commission to become involved and informed by the NHFB work with the legislature, suppliers, etc.

**Mr. Gary Tillman motioned not to continue NH Farm Bureau membership. None in favor. All opposed.**

**Organic Certification by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food:**

Chair Keegan heard a brief item on the radio reporting that the Department was dropping all organic certification services and farmers would have to turn to private certification granting services. The first item to come to mind was, 'another cost downshift'. However, because of the brevity of the news item he called the department and spoke with Acting Director of Regulations David Rousseau. He explained there are four separate organic subject areas they certify: crops, livestock, wild crops and handling operations. The department will continue to offer certification services at no cost for crops and wild crops but not for livestock and handling operations (i.e. fruit processing, cheese, etc.). The Department will cost share for the latter 2 but there will probably be some out of pocket costs for producers. The major reason for dropping 2 of the services revolving around the increasing size and complexity of emerging federal requirements. However, Commissioner Jasper has asked that Mr. Rousseau develop a proposal for legislative consideration that would reinstate all 4 service areas. Chair Keegan told Mr. Rousseau the Boscawen Ag Comm would consider involvement in the development of the legislative proposal.

**Review of 2022 Commission Meeting Dates:** Kellee Easler requested the Commissioners review the proposed 2022 meeting dates. If they are acceptable, to pass a motion to accept them as proposed. A brief discussion ensued there being no objection.

**Mr. Gary Tillman motioned to accept the Agricultural Commission's proposed 2022 schedule as presented. Motion seconded by Ms. Julie Fournier. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Next Meeting:**

Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ 7pm.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion to adjourn by Ms. Fournier; Seconded by Mr. Tillman. All in favor. None opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted, John Keegan*