

**Town of Boscawen  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
Boscawen Municipal Complex  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7:00 PM**

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, John Porter- Vice Chair, Roger Sanborn, Ralph Odell, Gary Tillman, Julie Fournier

Absent- Tina Larochelle, Bill Bevans & Lorrie Carey-Ex Officio

Others Present - Crystal Tuttle- Planning & Community Development Clerk

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

Roll Call: Completed no guests.

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

Mr. Gary Tillman requested changing lines 91 and 92 to read Mr. Gary Tillman motioned to not continue NH Farm Bureau Membership. After discussion it was decided to leave the record at that because there was no consensus for second. Chair Keegan explained that the recorder had failed to operate correctly. He and Ms. O'Brien had had to reconstruct the meeting from memory. He also reiterated that the task at hand was to reconstruct the record to the best of our ability. This item could then be reintroduced later in this meeting for reconsideration.

Ms. Fournier requested two changes, lines 16 and 17 change Nate? To Nathan Gaunte at DOC.

Ms. Fournier commented on line 36, that the blue area didn't happen. Chair Keegan said the printing had already been done.

Ms. Fournier commented on change line 38, the telephone number changes also didn't happen because the printing had already been done.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 45, change signs to sign. Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 46, change them to it. Two times on the same line.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 56, change ? to Crouch.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 61, change Bumblebee's to bumblebees.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 62, clean update to cleanup date.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 64, change doing to plowing.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 65, change "is" to "asked if".

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 71, change stat up to start up.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 74, change Chai to Chair.

Chair Keegan requested one change, line 75, to change farm to Farm.

Chair Keegan requested one change, line 78, change Give to Given.

Chair Keegan requested one change, line 105, change has that Mr. Rousseau develop' to has asked Mr. Rousseau to develop.

Ms. Fournier requested two changes, line 110, add a space between 2022 and Commission and strike the word that.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 113, add schedule after 2022.

Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 117, change meeting date to the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Mr. Ralph Odell motioned to approve the October draft minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Roger Sanborn. All in favor. None opposed.**

### **Financial Report:**

**Mr. Sanborn motioned to approve the Account Report as of 12.09.21. Seconded by Mr. Tillman. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Land Use Happenings:** Mr. Tillman reported the Planning Board was supposed to review two gravel pits, but the ownership changed, and they haven't developed an ownership certificate, so it is moved to next month. Mr. Porter said Black Forest bought Dimitris to expand their business. There will be an office, employee work rooms and more parking. Mr. Porter thinks they will be incorporating the addition for use next year. PCD Clerk Crystal Tuttle thinks they may need to present a site plan because it is changed use.

### **Old Business:**

**Rack Cards:** Ms. Fournier said the Rack Card was printed and it looks very nice. PCD Clerk Tuttle said they are all gone so people must have taken them to hand out. Chair Keegan said he needs to send cards to Marty Boutwell and Joe Pustizzi. Mr. Sanborn will take over the responsibility of getting rack cards to Mr. Boutwell. There is no order pending but they are not expensive. PCD Clerk Tuttle said the cost was around \$170. Chair Keegan suggested ordering more at that price if we have the money. Mr. Porter suggested waiting until spring. Mr. Tillman supported the purchase. After further discussion it was decided to revisit the issue in January.

**Home Composting:** PCD Clerk Tuttle said PWD Dean Hollins has the composting sign. She can remind him to put it up. Chair Keegan spoke briefly about where to put the sign along the road with PWD Hollins. He, however, had left the sign at their facility where staff could see it. Staff then asked if DPW was no longer taking food scraps for composting. Mr. Tillman observed if they don't let people take food waste to the Transfer Station, then it should be composted at home. Chair Keegan said he and Mr. Hollins talked about educating the public before placing the sign. The idea is to educate residents and answer related questions before hand, for example at Town Meeting with an information table with information materials and Commissioners present to answer questions. They can also put information on Facebook, in the town office and the library. Chair Keegan will work with PCD Clerk Tuttle and Alternate Fournier on an educational program.

PCD Clerk Tuttle received a second quote for magnets from Deputy PCD Director Kearsten O'Brien. Ms. Fournier said they previously received a high quote from the DOC for business card sized magnets. PCD Clerk Tuttle said the new quote is \$70 for 200 magnets or .35 cents per magnet. They also have the option of 100 magnets for \$41 which is .41 cents per magnet. The magnets could be used at Town Meeting and various other educational events. Mr. Porter suggested a small change in the magnet's design.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to approve buying 200 magnets for \$70 for the Composting Program with Mr. Porter's change. Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Community Garden:** Ms. Fournier was waiting for more information from Mr. Jeff Abbe about the Community Garden volunteers. Mr. Abbe's Master Garden class is progressing well, and this includes volunteer development in the program. Chair Keegan said Mr. Abbe is working with Ruth Smith at Cooperative Extension on organizing the volunteers. She is the educator in charge of the Master Gardener Program. Mr. Abbe has suggested there may be two gardeners interested in volunteering. Mr. Sanborn suggested having a junior garden program for the schools. He would do the cultivating, fertilizing, and provide seeds. PCD Clerk Tuttle will check with Deputy PCD Director O'Brien because Primex has certain requirements regarding minor volunteers. Mr. Odell said in Loudon, they mulch heavy so students can plant crops in the spring. They grow slowly all summer and then the kids can pick the fruit and vegetables in the fall. Mr. Odell has been in touch with a person in Loudon and will follow up to get more information.

Mr. Odell said within the last month there was a proposal brought to the Manchester School Board with a curriculum and funding to put in a program where the kids would be more involved with producing food and meeting people. It is focused on food security in the poorer neighborhoods in Manchester. There have been several semi successful operations that have developed from these types of programs. Mr. Sanborn informally runs a similar program. Chair Keegan would like to keep these ideas in mind because the town has garden plots available and people in the community in need. Ms. Fournier suggested expanding Mr. Sanborn efforts. Mr. Sanborn is willing to expand what he is already doing. It is visible and accessible. Ms. Fournier said the only drawback could be water.

**State Organic Certification Programs:** Chair Keegan discussed the issue on Organic Certification. The Commissioner put a piece in the market bulletin explaining that the Department cut back their support for two of the four programs that do Organic Certification because of the lack of trained staff and the increasingly complex requirements required by the federal government. The Department is now trying to write a proposal to support these positions into their new budget. Mr. Rousseau is working with the Commissioner to complete it. Chair Keegan told Mr. Rousseau the Agricultural Commission would be willing to support their effort however needed. Mr. Porter said people must find their own certifiers now. Mr. Tillman asked if the milk was currently uncertified. Mr. Porter said no but thinks people will start using third party investors. Mr. Tillman asked when the certificate expires. Mr. Porter said the certification renews regularly with educational courses.

**New Business:**

**Annual Report:** Chair Keegan asked the committee to review the AgCom Report for 2021 to become familiar with the reporting. Mr. Porter put together a brief draft report for more input. Mr. Porter engaged several Commissioners to add information and return their work to him ASAP. The draft will send out for one more review and then approval.

**2022 Budget:** Chair Keegan reviewed the 2022 budget with the Commissioners. The garden plot money is turned over to the town each year, but it is available during the year, if needed. Mr. Tillman suggested not reducing the budget. Chair Keegan said the rack cards and magnet costs are the only outstanding potential expenses.

**Mr. Porter motioned to maintain the 2022 Agricultural Commission Budget at \$1,700. Seconded by Mr. Sanborn. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Commission Memberships:** Mr. Porter said the Preservation Alliance Membership is for a nonprofit historic preservation organization. PCD Clerk Tuttle said the last time the Commission was a member was in 2017. Ms. Fournier asked what benefit it would be to the Commission if they became a member. Mr. Porter argued the Farm Bureau would be a better fit for Commission membership. Ms. Fournier asked if the Alliance, in their fund grants do a lot of agricultural buildings. Mr. Tillman said they don't do grants, but they help assess in funding grants. Mr. Sanborn suggested funding both memberships.

**Mr. Sanborn motioned to approve putting \$200 towards a NH Farm Bureau and Preservation Alliance Memberships. Seconded by Mr. Porter. All in favor. None opposed.**

**NH Farm Bureau Merrimack County Meeting:** Chair Keegan said Mr. Josh Marshall told Mr. Porter few people had committed to attend, and he would appreciate help encouraging more members to attend. Mr. Porter helped bring together several additional people to attend. Mr. Porter said it was good to be represented there and it was a good meeting. Chair Keegan was impressed with the number of younger farmers in attendance.

**Other Business:**

Mr. Sanborn would like to make a proposal for consideration at the next meeting about doing sheep cut outs for fundraising.

Mr. Tillman asked if the Chair would contact Tina Larochelle about her membership status. Chair Keegan will contact her. Mr. Tillman suggested she become an alternate and bringing on another member. Chair Keegan suggested considering the two young women going to the Agriculture Program at Winnisquam High School to become Commissioners. Mr. Sanborn suggested starting them as Alternates. Mr. Porter said it could be beneficial for different perspectives.

Thursday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 @ 7:00 PM

**Adjournment:**

**Motion to adjourn by Mr. Sanborn; Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted, Hannah Gardner*