

**Town of Boscawen  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
Boscawen Municipal Complex  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 7:00 PM**

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

Absent- Kellee-Jo Easler- Planning & Community Development Director

Others Present: Danielle Bosco- Recording Secretary, Kearsten O'Brien- Planning & Community Development Assistant

Chair Keegan opened the public meeting at 7:00pm.

Chair Keegan read off the Covid-10 Public Meeting Notice of Telephonic Meetings, which reads as follows: In light of the State of Emergency declared by the Governor on March 13, 2020, and to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting is being recorded and any votes will be roll call votes.

Roll call completed by Chair Keegan

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

- John Porter said in the minutes it mentions the Exit 17 circle and since they are building a roundabout near the new Market Basket the two may get confused. Chair Keegan asked his recommendation. Mr. Porter said we should call it the Boscawen roundabout in the future.

**Julie Fournier motioned to approve the minutes as written. Seconded by Tina Larochelle. All in favor, approved as written. None opposed.**

**Financial Report:**

**Julie Fournier motioned to accept the financial report as written. Seconded by Tina Larochelle. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Land Use Happenings:**

Kearsten O'Brien reported on September 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30pm there will be a Public Meeting for the Land Use Regulations that will replace Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations. Kearsten will send the link for the virtual meeting to anyone wanting to attend. The link will be on the town's website under Planning Board Agenda.

**Old Business:**

- Ken Marshall Memorial Garden: Ms. Fournier spoke about the Community Garden and presented pictures. All but one plot is being used and people have been respectful of the water resource as well as social distancing. Anne Lacroix, a Master Gardener, usually does a presentation on Integrated Pest Management. However, in light of current circumstances. Ms. Fournier emailed all gardeners a copy of her material she also did

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interviews with three gardeners that were very informative. During the interviews all expressed how fortunate they are to be a part of this gardening community. Ms. Fournier also made a poster with photographs of gardeners and their crops. She would like to use the poster to promote the garden, and suggested posting it on the town website, among other places. Ms. Fournier had distributed an article about a kiosk used by another community garden where extra produce is collected for distribution to food pantries. She recommended reaching out to the Boy/Girl Scouts for help with the construction of the kiosk. She has spoken with Jeff Abbe who has concerns with the lack of shade in the area. An idea he offered was building a lean-to attached to the shed. Mr. Porter asked if there is electricity for a fridge. Chair Keegan said there is not. Mr. Marshall said a cooler may be easy to have available but not sure if it is needed. Mr. Colby asked if there is a problem with the current distribution process. Ms. Fournier said she has spoken with Hillary Bailey in regards to the NH Gleans program, it is going well. Gardeners have been taking extra produce right to the food pantry. Chair Keegan said the Commission will evaluate how the Gleans Program went in the fall. Tina Laroche suggested gardeners take produce directly to the Boscawen Food Pantry.

- Welcome to Boscawen Signs: Mr. Porter said the Penacook sign needed a lot of priming. The Salisbury sign had damage to the lettering which he and his wife fixed. The Franklin sign had priming done last year. It only needed a touch up. Rabbit road needed very little touch up. Water Street was in great condition and needed no touchup. The circle sign had touchup last year. Mr. Porter asked that a commissioner ‘adopt’ the sign and do the need a touchup. Chair Keegan said the Salisbury sign was knocked down this past winter by a plow. The area around each sign was bush wacked. This will need to be done each year. Mr. Porter pointed out the sign posts need another coat of paint either this year or next.
- COVID-19 Relief: Mr. Marshall reported the Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food has extended and expanded the coverage being offered. Details are available in the August 12th Weekly Market Bulletin. Chair Keegan said maple producers are now eligible for funding.
- Farmland under threat in NH: Chair Keegan said he and Mr. Porter attended a Webinar by the American Farmland Trust presenting data specific to New Hampshire. A major takeaway was, in addition to the outright purchase and conversion of farmland to development, housing development projects with large lots for individual homes lead to development on surrounding properties. Mr. Porter said after hearing the concerns he wished New Hampshire had some type of farm link program to help match people interested in farming with suitable agricultural land. Chair Keegan suggested something concrete the Commission could do is to express our concern in a public statement. Mr. Porter sees the need for some type of non-profit. Mr. Marshall observed the driving problem is the profit owners, including farmers, can realize selling readily developable land. Mr. Porter reported he had worked on a ‘farm link’ project in the past but had not been able to continue. Chair Keegan offered to contact Five Rivers to seek insight and

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advice. Mr. Porter will review his files and send the Chair relevant materials. The Chair will then draft a letter for review at the next Commission meeting.

- **Boscawen Round a-bout update:**

Chair Keegan said he met with the Select Board earlier this evening. At this point, the project is on hold due to lack of funding and in need of a new plan. The Circle Committee asked for funds from Franklin Savings Bank and Pete & Gerry's totaling \$20,000 and received only \$2,500. Pete & Gerry's donated \$500 while FSB approved \$2,000. Chair Keegan reported both organizations are focused on COVID related issues. Funds are shown in the Agriculture budget because the project was originally part of the Ag Commission. However, the Select Board has now formed a separate, free standing advisory Committee. Mr. Colby and Mr. Marshall stated the project has grown much larger than intended. They do not agree with the current price tag.

**New Business:**

- **Local Food Guide:** Ms. Larochelle explained the Local Food Guide is published annually by Merrimack County Conservation District (MCCD). These list food producers in Merrimack County. Ms. Larochelle has reached out to MCCD for more copied as well as information on how to broaden distribution to county residents. Kearsten O'Brien told her the guide will be posted on the Town Website.
- Mr. Marshall said Dr. Jay Brent Lloyd recently passed away. He was a professor at UNH and was awarded the Agricultural Adventurer Award before passing.

**Adjournment: Motion made by Tina Larochelle and seconded by Rusty Colby to adjourn. Roll Call Vote was made. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Adjournment at 7:55 pm**

**Next Meeting:**

*September 10, 2020 @7:00PM*

*Respectfully submitted, Danielle Bosco*