

Town of Boscawen
Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes – Final
Boscawen Municipal Complex – 4th Floor Meeting Room
April 13, 2017 at 7pm

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, Elaine Clow – Vice-Chair, Bill Bevans, Tina Larochelle, Angela Swyers

Members Absent: Josh Marshall, Roger Sanborn – Ex-Officio

Alternate Members Present: John Porter

Alternate Members Absent: Ken Marshall

Others Present: Jeff Abbe – Garden Committee Member, Katie Phelps – Recording Secretary

Chairman Keegan called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with a voting board.

Roll Call made by Chairman Keegan.

Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:

The Commission reviewed meeting minutes from the March 16, 2017 meeting and made suggestions on edits.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Elaine Clow, and seconded by Tina Larochelle, to accept the minutes from the March meeting as amended. All in favor.

Accountant's Report:

The Commission reviewed the Treasurer's Report for January 1 thru April 13, 2017. There has been \$1,850.58 spent from the \$1,800 budget line for the Community Garden. Katie Phelps noted the January 18, 2017 Board of Selectmen's minutes which state that garden plot fees can be used towards the Community Garden budget line. Garden Plot fees currently total \$270.

Motion to accept the Accountant's Report made by Tina Larochelle, and seconded by Angela Swyers. All in favor.

Land Use Updates:

Tabled until May when Alan Hardy is available.

- **Community Garden Updates:**

Jeff Abbe said he, John Keegan, and John Porter decided on a location for the new shed. The floor for the shed was built today at Merrimack Valley High School. There have been donations from businesses and Roger Sanborn and Derek Mills have offered to do the tilling Saturday, April 15th. The suggestion was made to send out thank you letters to businesses who have donated materials for the shed. Jeff Abbe and Katie Phelps will work on this together. There will be a work day on Saturday, April 22nd at the Community Garden from 10-2pm. Plot layouts and garden shed prep will be done. Dean Hollins will be bringing his the town's backhoe to the

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garden to prepare the area where the shed will sit. In terms of the shed cost, Jeff Abbe anticipates approximately \$1,000 more will be spent before it is complete.

Chairman Keegan followed up with Mr. Valinski at Merrimack Valley High School regarding the number of studs ordered. The extra studs were ordered to account for the student's margin of error in the learning process. Jeff Abbe suggesting donating the excess materials back to the school after the shed is complete. The students provided the labor at no cost to the AgComm.

Katie Phelps provided garden sign up information to date. She has received 8 applications so far for the 2017 season. Most people are requesting the same plots as last year, however, some would like to change. There have not been a lot of people returning the photo release forms with their applications. Katie will send a reminder for people to submit the form.

Elaine Clow states that there will be a piece in the Newsvine advertising the Community Garden and informing people to call Katie Phelps for more information.

- **Pustizzi Site Visit:**

On March 29, 2017 Vice-Chair Elaine Clow, Bill Bevans, and John Porter completed a site visit to Joe Pustizzi's farm on Corn Hill Road. Mr. Pustizzi was interested in building an agricultural housing facility. The reviewers concluded the proposal was not the normal farmer/employee relationship due to the terms of the proposed lease arrangement. The Commission members thought a subdivision would be in Mr. Pustizzi's long term interest. Mr. Pustizzi withdrew his application for Technical Review because his lease fell through after the site visit was completed.

The Commission will discuss the site visit at the May meeting in the context of how best to support agricultural worker housing.

- **Agricultural Rack Card Development:**

Commission members are still in the process of gathering information for the rack card. John Porter said it has been very well received and people understand the concept. The consensus has been that most people don't want visits from the public but aren't opposed to being named in the card to showcase agriculture in Boscawen. Information can be forward to Josh Marshall so he can develop a prototype for the next meeting that includes more information. Katie Phelps is compiling information as people submit it. She will forward it to Josh.

- **Educational Program Update:**

Vice-chair Elaine Clow provided an update on the educational program. She hasn't found a replacement yet. There was a talk on chickens on March 6th and pigs with Dot Perkins on April 3rd. On May 1st there will be a talk on Integrated Pest Management and Beginner Gardening with Ann LaCroix. There are currently 11 people signed up between Katie's list and the Extension

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office for the May 1st program. On June 5th there will be hands on talk about herbs at the Community Garden. There will be another IPM class in July – Date and time TBD.

Chairman Keegan had suggested at a previous meeting that instead of doing a talk every month that possibly there could be one every other month. Tina Larochelle mentioned that it might be easier to find a replacement if there was only a talk every other month. The Commission discussed trying to find a Master Gardener who was interested in the educational program. However, timing for the discussion with Cooperative Extension, has yet to be determined.

- **Other:**

Vice-Chair Elaine Clow asked if there were any Commissioners approaching their term end dates. Katie Phelps provided term dates and Angela Swyers' term expires in June 2017. All other Commissioners term dates expire in 2018 and 2019.

- **Identification of 2017 Objectives from Master Plan:**

Chairman Keegan tabled this topic until the next meeting in May.

Motion to adjourn made by Vice-Chair Elaine Clow, and seconded by Tina Larochelle. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.

The next meeting of the Commission will be May 11, 2017 at 7:00pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Phelps