

Town of Boscawen
Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes – Final
Boscawen Municipal Complex – 4th Floor Meeting Room
June 8, 2017 at 7pm

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, Bill Bevans, Tina Larochelle

Members Absent: Elaine Clow – Vice-Chair, Angela Swyers, Roger Sanborn, Joshua Marshall

Alternate Member Present: John Porter

Alternate Member Absent: Ken Marshall

Others Present: Alan Hardy – Planning & Community Development Director, Katie Phelps – Recording Secretary

Chairman Keegan called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and named John Porter a voting member for the meeting.

Roll call made by Chairman Keegan.

Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:

The Commission reviewed meeting minutes from the May 11, 2017 meeting.

Motion made by Tina Larochelle and seconded by John Porter to accept the minutes from the May meeting as written. All in favor.

Accountant's Report:

The Commission reviewed the Treasurer's Report from January 1st thru June 8, 2017. \$2,690.77 has been spent from the Community Garden budget line. Garden plot fees collected to date total \$600.00. The Community Garden budget line is \$890.77 over budget, however, the garden plot fees will offset some of that overage.

Motion made by Tina Larochelle and seconded by Bill Bevans to accept the Accountant's report. All in favor.

Community Garden Updates:

The garden shed is in place at the Community Garden and Jeff Abbe has been putting finishing touches on it. He plans to paint it red with white trim. Chairman Keegan recommended that the Commission take a trip up to Corn Hill Road to see the blooming flowers between the cemetery and the garden. He said they were planted 6 years ago and they are gorgeous. They are at the peak of their bloom.

Chairman Keegan asked if there were any questions related to the budget. Alan Hardy said with municipal accounting you can't transfer the garden plot fee income to the Community Garden budget line. At the end of the year the final number is the sum of the income less the expenses. The Selectmen already authorized the use of the income but you won't see that amount move from that line.

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Katie Phelps said there are still people coming in for garden plots. There are still plots available if anyone is interested.

Member Updates:

Chairman Keegan informed the commission that Angela Swyers and Vice-Chair Elaine Clow have resigned from the Agricultural Commission. Elaine will continue to work with the Garden Committee. He wanted to thank them for their service to the Commission and wished them well in the future.

The Commission discussed recruiting new Commissioners.

Pustizzi Site Visit – Follow-up:

Alan Hardy and Chairman Keegan opened a review of the Pustizzi site visit. Alan was wondering how the subdivision option came up as part of that process. John Porter said it seemed to be a reversal of the normal farmer and employee relationship. It was the owner building new housing so the worker, in this case the leasee, would occupy the available residence. Bill Bevans noted that this might lead to individuals using this as a means to build additional housing on their property without complying with town regulations. Discussion ensued.

Discretionary Barn Easements:

John Porter explained the legislation supported by the Barn Preservation Alliance which encourages owner to maintain and restore old barns. Prior to this legislation owners were not fixing their barns because their taxes would go up. This easement allows work to be done and taxes to remain unchanged with the improvement. There are specific conditions that have to be fulfilled based on the Selectmen's decision. Oversight is the town's responsibility, however from time to time the Alliance will intervene if the non-compliance is egregious. The Collins' are a couple who recently requested and received a barn into easement, based, in part, on John Porter's report. He detailed the period of construction and specific changes needed to make the building 'period compliant'.

Boscawen Farmer/Flea Market:

The Boscawen Congregational Church went through a site plan review for this. The approval is for the park by the church. The parking has been reconfigured. Discussion ensued.

Agricultural Rack Card:

The Commission reviewed an updated version of the rack card from Josh Marshall. The Commission members suggested edits. Katie Phelps said she talked to Josh and he is still planning to change the photo on the card. Tina Larochelle said she would really like to have horse farms included. Bill Bevans mentioned having a Christmas tree farm listed. Tom Giovagnoli's egg farm wasn't included either.

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Chairman Keegan asked for the information to be compiled over the next two weeks so it can be printed. The suggestion was made to have 1000 printed to start. There will be 16 plastic holders. Alan suggested making a digital copy to post to the website. All the aforementioned were agreed to by consensus.

Education Program:

There were only 3 attendees at the Twilight Herb Talk. There was confusion over the date and time of the event. Chairman Keegan said he will check with Elaine to determine what programs are in the pipeline. He reported that he has met with Jeremy Delisle, the new CES agent replacing Amy Papineau and invited him to the July meeting. John Porter noted that Jeremy will be looking for contacts and reaching out to the community. In that context he can be a big help with the Commissions educational endeavors.

Alan said we have to have bees for pollination and there was a lady on Chronicle recently who may be a resource. She builds hives. He thinks her information is still on the Chronicle website.

Chairman Keegan asked if anyone would be interested in being Vice-Chair. Bill Bevans said he would.

Motion made by John Porter and seconded by Tina Larochelle to nominate Bill Bevans as the new Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Commission. All in favor.

John Porter was asked if he would be interested in changing from an alternate member to a full member. He said he would be interested in doing that seeing he knows he can get to meetings.

Motion made by Tina Larochelle and seconded by Bill Bevans to nominate John Porter as a regular Commissioner instead of an alternate. All in favor.

Motion to adjourn made by Bill Bevans and seconded by Tina Larochelle. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Next meeting of the Commission will be July 13, 2017 at 7pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Phelps