

**Town of Boscawen  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 6:30 PM**

**Members Present:** John Keegan – Chair, John Porter – Vice Chair, Gary Tillman & Ralph Odell

**Members Excused:** Julie Fournier – Alternate, Bill Bevans – Ex-Officio and Lorrie Carey – Alternate Ex-Officio

Chair Keegan opened the public meeting at 6:30 p.m. and completed roll call.

**Minutes:**

Chair Keegan requested 2 changes – On line 62, replace “is excited” with “is looking forward to doing so” and on line 93, replace “and” with “are”. Vice Chair Porter requested one change to line 95 – Replace “Shotes” with “Choate”.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the draft minutes as amended. Seconded by Vice Chair Porter. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Financial Report:**

Mr. Tillman said the Financial Report presented was reflected through March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. He provided an email containing the actual balance through March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, that he received from Treasurer Tama Tillman. The actual balance through March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, was \$1652.13. Ex-Officio Bevans was to have met with Finance Director Kate Merrill regarding discrepancies in the Financial Report but was not present to report back. Chair Keegan will have Ex-Officio Bevans provide his report at the May meeting. Chair Keegan would like to accept the balance as reported and wait for the result of Ex-Officio Bevans’ conversation with FD Merrill.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the Financial Report balance of \$1652.13 as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Old Business:**

**Follow up on Boscawen Community Garden (BCG) Mini Plots:** Chair Keegan and Mr. Odell met with Jeff Abbe. Mr. Abbe expects less participation in the BCG this year as he has heard back from a few of last year’s gardeners that they won’t be returning. Mr. Abbe saw a webcast called “Square Foot Gardening” and thought it was quite impressive. He thinks some of the points covered could help in generating interest in the BCG. However, instead of mini plots at the BCG, the new idea is to place raised gardening beds at Dorval House for the Parks & Rec Summer Program. Chair Keegan spoke with Town Administrator Katie Phelps who likes the idea. Messrs. Abbe, Odell, and Keegan will continue to work with Town Administrator Phelps and Parks & Rec Coordinator Lori Cronin on the details.

Herb Garden Update: Mr. Odell said they discussed the reconstruction of the Herb Garden, and Mr. Abbe was able to procure materials with a donation from Colby Lumber as well as use funds that the Commission allocated for the project.

Economic Development Committee Update: Chair Keegan will be attending the May EDC meeting. Emma Richmond-Boudewyns, Market Manager of Fresh Start Farms, will also be in attendance. Vice Chair Porter said the EDC is currently working with Charlie Niebling on applying for a grant to make changes to Dorval House and the Boscawen Town Park. The EDC has plans to construct a pavilion, a look-out area by the former Canterbury Bridge and renovate the restrooms in Dorval House to make them more accessible to riders of the Northern Rail Trail. It's shaping up to be close to a \$250,000 project to commence in 2026. Vice Chair Porter reminded the Commissioners to keep the EDC Pumpkin Ride & Walk in mind. He said the Commissioners main goals will be to assist Ms. Richmond-Boudewyns with her set up and break down as well as recruit two or three other vendors to attend this farmer's market in October. Chair Keegan will ask Richardson's Farm to participate. Mr. Tillman has asked Mr. Dave Boudrias of Ledge Top Sugar House. He declined to participate because he did not want to compete with farmers to whom he sells his product, such as Highway View Farm. Vice Chair Porter plans to ask Highway View Farm to participate.

Calendar Update Yard Sale for Old Home Day Committee: The Yard Sale is planned for May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Municipal Facility. It costs \$5 to be in the directory and \$10 to have a table at the Municipal Facility. There will be a food truck for breakfast and lunch as well as a Bake Sale. The Old Home Day Committee has their last bingo night on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

Follow Up with Mary Choate, Cooperative Extension Service (CES): Mr. Odell asked Ms. Choate if there were guidelines that maple barbeque sauce producers are required to follow in New Hampshire. She said the state does not regulate products unless they're being processed. They do not inspect vegetables, for example. To regulate barbeque sauce, it would have to be processed in an approved kitchen. In agriculture, people are concerned about fake products coming to the market that may have the same name as a current product and capture the market and leaving the current producer with no recourse. Small, rural producers are struggling because there is no protection. There are standards for maple syrup, if the producers want the "Made in NH" seal, but there are none for many products. Mr. Odell plans to do more research and will report back.

### **New Business:**

#### **Annual Election of Chair and Vice Chair:**

**Mr. Tillman motioned to reelect John Keegan as Chair and John Porter as Vice Chair. Seconded by Vice Chair Porter. All in favor. None opposed.**

### **Other Business:**

Vice Chair Porter said the Farm & Forest Expo will be May 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> at the Deerfield Fairgrounds.

#### **Pending Tasks:**

- Chair Keegan will meet with Mrs. Adele Sanborn to discuss the Old Home Day Contest judging.
- Chair Keegan will discuss the creation of a logo with Mrs. Sanborn.

- Vice Chair Porter will ask Highway View Farms to participate in the EDC farmer's market.
- Chair Keegan will ask Richardson's Farm to participate in the EDC farmer's market.
- Mr. Odell will continue to research product regulation.
- Chair Keegan, Mr. Odell and Mr. Abbe will work with Town Administrator Phelps and Parks & Rec Coordinator Lori Cronin on the details of the garden beds at the Parks & Rec Summer Program.

**Next Meeting:** May 14, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Vice Chair Porter. All in favor. None opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted by Kara Gallagher.*