

**Town of Boscawen
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex
FINAL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 13th, 2023, at 6:30 PM**

Members Present: John Keegan – Chair, John Porter-Vice Chair, Gary Tillman, Bill Bevans, Ralph Odell & Julie Fournier-Alternate

Absent: Roger Sanborn & Lorrie Carey—Ex-Officio

Staff Present: Kara Gallagher—Planning & Community Development Assistant & Kearsten O’Brien—Deputy Planning & Community Development Director

Chair John Keegan opened the public meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Roll Call complete.

Review and Acceptance of Prior Meeting Minutes:

- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 31, change ‘Mr. Bevans suggested to remove...’ to ‘Mr. Bevans suggested removing...’.
- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 43, change ‘...suggested to keep funding broad...’ to ‘...suggested keeping funding broad...’.
- Chair Keegan requested a grammatical correction, line 61, change ‘committee’s’ to ‘committees’.
- Chair Keegan requested a grammatical correction, line 74, change ‘included’ to ‘includes’.
- Planning & Community Development Assistant Kara Gallagher noted one correction, line 81, Old Home Day will be on August 26th, not August 25th.
- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 82, change ‘His event...’ to ‘This event...’.
- Ms. Julie Fournier requested one change, line 83, change the word ‘over’ to ‘cover’.
- Ms. Fournier requested one change, line 95, change ‘Legislator’ to ‘Legislature’.
- PCD Assistant Gallagher noted one correction, line 130, the correct spelling of the Sales Manager’s name is Emma Richmond-Boudewyns
- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 132, change ‘...them’ to ‘...Fresh Start’.
- Chair Keegan requested one change, line 148, change ‘...in pasture options...’ to ‘...for pasture options...’.
- Mr. Gary Tillman noted one correction, line 149, change the word ‘combined’ to ‘combine’.

Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the 02.14.23 draft minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Ralph Odell. All in favor. None opposed.

Financial Report: Mr. Tillman noted there was a donation line for \$330. Deputy PCD Director O’Brien was not aware of any AgComm donations but there were Beautification donations. PCD Assistant Gallagher will clarify what the donation was with Finance Director Kate Merrill. Vice Chair John Porter asked how the carryover will be shown. Chair Keegan noted the Select Board has not approved it. The money from last year’s garden was put back into the Town’s budget. The Committee will not receive any 2022 carryover. If the Select Board approves the carryover, it will be effective starting the 1st of the year.

Mr. Tillman motioned to defer the approval of the Financial Report through 03.13.23 until the donation line is verified. Seconded by Vice Chair Porter. All in favor. None opposed.

Old Business:

- March Tasks: Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will track the March tasks.
- AgComm Account: The Commission previously discussed opening a new AgComm account. Chair Keegan is scheduled to talk with the Select Board at their meeting on Thursday, March 23rd. He will present the Commission's purpose statement for the account. If approved, Chair Keegan will work with Town Administrator Katie Phelps on the details related to the administration of the account.
- Local Processing Act Follow-Up: Chair Keegan reached out to U.S. Representative, Ann Kuster's Nashua Office. He made a connection with Mr. Ryan Hyde, who covers agriculture issues. Representative Kuster was one of the original sponsors of the Strengthen Local Processing Act (SLPA) which includes potential funding to support local slaughtering and processing facilities. Representative Kuster is supporting local agriculture including grants to help cover the costs of training about inspection guidelines and expanding animal processing infrastructure. The program also includes education and technical assistance grants for new operators. Chair Keegan noted he also updated Josh Marshall in the Department of Agriculture, Markets and Foods. Mr. Marshall felt it would be an advantage to his Department if AgComm initiated the interaction with Representative Kuster while the Department played a supporting role. Vice Chair Porter suggested the Commission write a letter to Representative Kuster supporting SPLA. He also recommended including the point that the lack of facilities has put a hold on agricultural growth in livestock areas here in New Hampshire. Chair Keegan will reach out to Mr. Hyde and update Mr. Marshall.

Financial Report Revision: PCD Assistant Gallagher reported the \$330 donation line was incorrect in the financial report. The \$330 is for garden fees.

Mr. Tillman motioned to accept the Financial Report through 03.13.2023 as amended. Seconded by Mr. Bill Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.

- Draft Horse Event: Mr. Tillman gave an update on the Old Home Day Committee (OHDC) meeting related to the Draft Horse event. It will be on Sunday, August 20th from 10am to 2pm at the Sanborn Farm. The OHDC agreed to set up a food sale and serve refreshments, similar to their Yard Sale, to raise money. Chair Keegan noted Mr. Roger Sanborn reached out to Ms. Stacia Langille, a local farrier, but she will not be able to attend the event. Mr. Sanborn will be contacting another individual who may have interest in attending.
- ORIS/Pustizzi: The meeting with Ms. Emma Richardson Boudewyne, Sales Manager at Pustizzi Farm, was moved to Thursday, March 16th at 2pm. Chair Keegan and Mr. Odell will discuss how the Commission might work with Fresh Start to support their mission. Chair Keegan noted that Mr. Pustizzi encouraged Fresh Start to reach out to AgComm. Mr. Pustizzi also suggested that the Commission visit the producers during the growing season to understand what they're doing and who they are.
- Right to Repair: Mr. Sanborn was supposed to reach out to Mr. Adam Crete about the 'Right to Repair' issues. Chair Keegan will follow-up with Mr. Sanborn.
- Other: Mr. Tillman noted the OHDC Yard Sale on Saturday, May 20th should be added to the AgComm Calendar. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested adding the Economic Development

Committee Fall Festival on October 14th taking place from 1pm to 4pm, rain or shine. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien added she is looking for farmers and other agricultural businesses to attend.

Invasive Species: At the last AgComm meeting, the Commission discussed working with the Conservation Commission to research Invasive Species issues. Chair Keegan said he is hoping to meet with them this month. He asked if they should push back the discussion, given the issues around town governance and town meeting. Mr. Tillman suggested meeting this month. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the Conservation Commission has not discussed the issue in depth. Conservation's next meeting is on Tuesday, March 21st. Chair Keegan will talk with Chair Hardy about the meeting date and his participation.

New Business:

- *Farm Bureau Membership:* Chair Keegan noted Commissioners were sent a list of benefits they receive through the Farm Bureau membership. The benefits are available to Commissioners as members of the Agricultural Commission. Chair Keegan asked about membership cards. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted they haven't received a membership card to date. In the past, the card was left at the Town Municipal Office and Commissioners used it when needed.
- Chair Keegan noted all Commissioners have an updated copy of the signed AgCom By-Laws.

Other Business:

- Deputy PCD Director O'Brien gave the Planning and Community Development update. Last Tuesday, a Conditional Use Permit and Major Site Plan for the 16-unit apartment building was passed. The owner can pull permits to demolish the yellow house and rebuild, but he is still waiting on driveway permits. Ms. Fournier asked if the previous building was on the historical registry. Deputy PCD O'Brien said no. RSA 79 E, the Village District, is the town's historical rehabilitation tax. If this lot was on the registry or wanted to be, the owner could rehabilitate the building for a tax incentive for up to 5 years. The building would be assessed at the current value at the time of submittal and approval for the next five years. There is also a NH rehabilitation tax through the State, but the building must be on the registry or have engineered plans. Boscawen would prefer engineered plans for the historical buildings and an explanation as to how it was placed on the registry.
- Mr. Bevans had previously noted that development near Tom Giovagnoli's poultry farm was a source of odor from time to time due to the chickens. Chair Keegan would like the builders of the 16 unit site to receive an odor notice from AgComm as part of their documentation. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested sending the owner a notice, to remind them that Boscawen is a farming friendly community. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will have legal review the procedure.
- The Piontkowski pit on Commercial St. changed ownership. The permit was transferred to Sled Road LLC. They now run the gravel pit.
- On Sweatt St, a Conditional Use Permit was passed for a duplex.
- Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the Planning Board will be working on the Master Plan next month in collaboration with Central NH Regional Planning Commission.
- Vice Chair Porter noted the Commissioners should discuss future projects. No further discussion.

- Deputy PCD Director O'Brien asked Commissioners about composting flyers. Chair Keegan noted they haven't prioritized composting education thus far in 2023. Mr. Tillman suggested doing Saturday visits at the Transfer Station to advertise the program.
- Commissioners will discuss ideas on how to promote agriculture at the Fall Festival. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested that Farm Bureau have a booth. Chair Keegan suggested reaching out to Fresh Start. Discussion ensued and will continue at the April meeting.
- PCD Assistant Gallagher noted she is working with Mr. Jeff Abbe on the Community Garden applications. There are about 12 paid-up gardeners to date. Chair Keegan said there will be flyers at town meeting. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said they will be available at the library for voting as well. In addition, applications are accessible in the Town Office Lobby and on the Town Website.
- Mr. Tillman asked if the Commissioners are still looking for a youth member to join AgCom. Mr. Bevans has spoken to an individual, but he was unable to attend this meeting. Chair Keegan noted Commissioners should still be looking for a youth member.

Next Meeting and Public Hearing:

- Tuesday, April 11th, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted, Hannah Gardner