

**Town of Boscawen  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
FINAL MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:30 PM**

**Members Present:** John Porter – Acting Chair, Gary Tillman, Ralph Odell, Julie Fournier – Alternate & Bill Bevans – Ex-Officio

**Excused:** John Keegan – Chair

**Absent:** Roger Sanborn

**Others Present:** Kara Gallagher – Planning and Community Development Assistant & Recording Secretary

Acting Chair John Porter opened the public meeting at 6:30 p.m. and completed roll call. Acting Chair Porter made Ms. Julie Fournier a regular member for tonight's meeting.

**Minutes:**

Acting Chair Porter requested one change to Line 43 – Change “Elekrisola” to “Elektrisola”.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the 10/10/23 draft minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Financial Report:**

**Mr. Tillman motioned to approve the Financial Report through 11/14/23 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Old Business:**

*Economic Development Committee 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Pumpkin Ride & Walk Recap:* Acting Chair Porter and Chair Keegan represented the Commission at the event. Acting Chair Porter said the event went well considering how quickly it was planned. He said around 100 people attended throughout the day. He and Chair Keegan helped Ms. Emma Richmond-Boudewyns from Fresh Start Farms bring pumpkins over to the Jamie Welch Park. She went all out with her decorations and merchandise. There was also a baker and a couple of food vendors in attendance. The EDC is hoping to make this an annual event. Some feedback received was to concentrate the event around Jamie Welch Park instead of having multiple stops, focus on more than just kids' events, and recruit more vendors. Black Forest Nursery had a wonderful photo stop. Overall, the event was quite successful, being planned at the last minute. The EDC was pleased with the outcome. They have set a tentative date of Oct 5, 2024. Ms. Fournier asked what kind of advertising was done for this event. Acting Chair Porter said social media, local news publications, the Town website, and the Jamie Welch Park sign.

*2024 Farm and Forest Expo Update:* Acting Chair Porter attended a Farm and Forest Expo meeting prior to this meeting. They have declared real success for moving to the Deerfield Fairgrounds. They have set a

date of May 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. They want to try to make it bigger and better. Some potential improvement goals are adding a PA system, acquiring more vendors, and more space for educational meetings. Vendors will begin receiving notifications in December. He said the Deerfield Fair representatives have been great to work with. They enjoy the event, and it helps fill a void in their schedule. The event is a great opportunity for networking within agriculture.

### **New Business:**

Approval of 2024 Budget: Chair Keegan and Acting Chair Porter discussed the 2024 budget and agreed that they'd like to keep it the same as 2023. Acting Chair Porter suggested utilizing the revolving fund if extra expenses come up. Ex-Officio Bevans mentioned in the future the AgComm may need to be self-sufficient using the garden plot income, rather than having a line in the town budget. Discussion ensued.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to propose the 2024 budget as \$1,700. Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

Drafting the 2023 Annual Report: Chair Keegan asked Acting Chair Porter to divide the task up between the Commissioners. Acting Chair Porter offered to create a rough draft by midnight tonight if the other Commissioners will give feedback and edits. His goal would be to have a draft prepared by December 1<sup>st</sup>. All concurred.

Potential 2024 Projects: This committee does best with a project. The following project ideas were discussed:

- Giving local restaurants recognition for using local food.
- Update rack cards.
- Recognize local agricultural activities in Boscawen.
- More publicity for local agriculture.
- Community Garden growing competition.

### **Other Business:**

Mr. Odell read an article in *Country Folk Magazine* about local youth that won awards in agriculture. A Boscawen resident, Olivia Mason, was champion in the category: *Breed of Cattle Highland*. Mr. Odell thought it would be nice to find a way to have some local recognition for young people/students in town. Acting Chair Porter suggested inviting her to a future meeting. Congratulations to Ms. Mason for this great achievement.

Mr. Odell said both Agricultural teachers at Winnisquam Regional High School have been replaced this year. Mr. Odell wrote a letter to the school administrator to get in contact with them to try and set up a meeting.

**Next Meeting:** December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.

**Mr. Tillman motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Odell. All in favor. None opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted by Kara Gallagher.*