

Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition, Inc.

Tuesday, February 4th, 2014
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
UVM Extension - Middlebury
23 Pond Lane, Suite 300
Middlebury, VT 05753



BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Review and Approve January Meeting Minutes

Jeff Carter/Kirsten Workman

Jeff

Motion to accept January minutes: Ernie Audet

Second: Peter James

Discussion: none

Passed without abstention or dissention

Treasurer Report

Jeff Carter

Two Profit & Loss Statements:

- January – December 2013
 - Membership dues, expenses, FAP grant (income/expense)
 - Doesn't reflect the NRCS CIG grant (covered start-up costs, etc.)
- January 2014
 - More FAP cost share
- Balance Sheet
 - Checking and savings
- 1099 forms for FAP payments over \$600...
- Meeting with accountant to file the tax forms for CVFC inc.

Motion to accept Treasurer Report: Dave Conant

Second: Ernie Audet

Discussion: what about invoices for membership to members that don't renew??

Passed without abstention or dissention

President's Report

Eric Clifford

Montpelier Water Quality Testimony...Thanks to John Lucas, Ransom Conant, Brian Kemp, Jeff Carter and Kirsten Workman for testifying to legislature. Testimony was well received..."refreshing to hear farmers tell their own story, finally have someone testifying that knows what they're talking about"

Issues with Farm Bureau policies?? Acting defensive...HB 586, "unfair burden" language

Write a letter to Vermont Farm Bureau reflecting the need to 'work together' to solve the problem

Points:

- We want them working towards a solution to a water quality solution instead of being negative. We need positive and proactive. Respond to the numbers that are already out there
- Not adversarial...just asking us to join us in being proactive
- Alternative would be to meet in person...avoid taking it the wrong way?
- Write a letter voicing concerns and asking them to join us and **then invite them to meet with us at next board meeting**, follow up with a letter
- Avoid large vs. small

- House Ag Committee asked if Farm Bureau represents all the farmers....maybe 30 years ago.
- EPA timeline....need to act quickly and get on board to work together.

Annual Membership Meeting Recap

Jeff Carter/Eric Clifford

Meeting went very well....good panel.
Good attendance

Membership Application Approvals

Kirsten Workman

The Farm at VYCC (scholarship)
Barnes Black & Whiteface Ranch
Lucas Dairy LLC
Motion to accept all three applications including scholarship to VYCC: Ben Dykema
Second: Dave Conant
Discussion: None
Passed without abstention or dissent

Recruitment and Response:

Include by-laws
Follow-up to attendees at annual meeting

Winooski Meeting

A week after annual meeting, a group of lower Winooski farmers got together at Conants (Richmond to mouth of river). Jeff, Kirsten, Tom Eaton and Nate Sands were there. Lots of good discussion about getting NMPs and addressing BMPs as a group. As a result...at least three or four farms have applied to EQIP for NMP. Keep the ball rolling, good momentum. Get a smaller group together to talk about NRCS cost share and programs, technical service providers.

Elect Officers

Per our bylaws, the officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, & Secretary) shall be elected from the Board members, whom were elected at the Annual Membership Meeting on January 8th. Those Board members are:

Ernest Audet	Ted Foster	Loren Wood
Ray Brands	Peter James	Jeff Carter
Eric Clifford	Tim Kayhart	Kirsten Workman
David Conant	Brian Kemp	
Ben Dykema	Lorenzo Whitcomb	

Nomination:

President – Eric Clifford
Vice President – Ben Dykema
Secretary – Kirsten Workman
Treasurer – Jeff Carter

Motion to elect the above Board Members as officers for 2014: Ray Brands

Second: Loren Wood
Discussion: none
Passed without abstention or dissent

FAP Update

Jeff Carter/Kirsten Workman

- Acres/\$\$ submitted for payment
 - Almost all money went to cover crops (some conservation tillage)
- Spring Practices
 - Almost no money left for spring practices

- Future of the program...state shifting away from NMP and cover crops hoping to have NRCS pay for those practices. NRCS won't pay for manure incorporation, so state may shift to that. Will money shift to small farm inspectors?? Inspector vs. technical service.

Project/Policy Updates

Jeff Carter/Eric Clifford

- House Ag Committee Hearings on February 6th (Bridport/St. Albans) for House Bill 586
- EPA's letter of response to VAAF on Draft TMDL Plan
- TMDL Meetings
 - Haven't defined 'small'...seems to be a divisive and derails the conservation from the actual solution
 - How do we clean up the lake? Not who's fault it is...but how do we fix it.
- No-Till & Cover Crop Symposium...February 19 & 20,2014
- VT Dairy Producers Conference

Old Business

- Advisory Group Members
- Strategy for an Executive Director or staff person for CVFC...need a committee, some \$\$ (but not oodles), UVM EXT could fill the difference potentially. FWA has a part-time employee that is also a EXT employee.
 - Where do you want it to end up...
 - Mission of education and outreach, awareness, and talk to farmers
 - What's the list of things that we need done...follow-up, invitation to join,
 - Talk to ECHO...Eric, Jeff

Other Updates

NEXT MEETING: March Meeting (3/19/14) Seedway would like to come and give a presentation about cover crops

10:00-12:00 Meeting

12:00-2:00 Seedway

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn: Ernie Audet

Second: Ben Dykema

Discussion: none

Passed without abstention or dissention