

# Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition, Inc.

Wednesday, November 2, 2016  
UVM Extension Office, 23 Pond Lane, Middlebury, VT



## Directors Business Meeting MINUTES

### Attendance

Brian Kemp, Peter James, Eric Clifford, Rachel Orr, Loren Wood, Cheryl Cesario, Nate Severy, Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman, Rico Balzano

### **9:38 am Meeting called to order**

Opening Comments

Secretary Report - Review and Approve Minutes last meeting

*Motion to approve October minutes: Eric Clifford*

*Second: Brian Kemp*

*Discussion: none*

*Approved (5/0/0)*

Membership Applications and Approvals

*James Faulkner (Charlotte), Vermont Farmer Member application*

*Motion to approve Mr. Faulkner as a Vermont Farmer Member: Brian Kemp*

*Second: Loren Wood*

*Discussion: none*

*Approved (5/0/0)*

Treasurer Report - Financial Report to the Board

Jeff presented the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss statement through November 2, 2016.

*Motion to approve Treasurer's Report as presented: Peter James*

*Second: Loren Wood*

*Discussion: funding outlook...grants/projects overview, etc.*

*Approved (5/0/0)*

Dairy Outreach Coordinator Position – Update

**Hiring Committee**...meet with all candidates prior to next directors meeting

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## Open Membership Meeting Minutes

### **Attendance**

Brian Kemp, Peter James, Eric Clifford, Rachel Orr, Loren Wood, Cheryl Cesario, Nate Severy, Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman, Rico Balzano, Bill Barnes, Susan Smiley, Jed Davis, George Tucker, Matthew Severy, Ernie Audet, Matt Biette, Joe Tisbert, Lynn Demaro

### **10:00 Welcome and CVFC President Comments**

#### **WLEB Grant Final Report**

Nate Severy presented a draft of a final report to WLEB for the project. 6-7 farms completed the entire Crop Management Implementation planning process with Nate. 3 no-till corn, no till new seeding, Italian ryegrass as a break crop, cover crop strips, cover cropping with manure incorporation...301 acres. Partial budgets, planning templates. The "team of advisers" approach was not very successful, instead Nate served more as a mediator and tracked progress, etc. Net profitability averaged between \$24-\$200 per acre (this included EQIP payments).

Will this be able to be used in the future by farmers or will it require a TA person to implement? Incorporate it into what NRCS, Extension, Conservation Districts will be able to use. Help with follow-up.

Why the range in profitability? Depended on practice.

What next...are there other grants that could continue the work? The unique part of this project was the documentation process and providing written feedback to the farmer. VHCB funds business planners that are now starting to incorporate environmental practices into that analysis...this could be a good tool to work with folks like that.

If you have any input on report, let Nate know in the next few days as he will be submitting next week.

#### **VAAFM Grant Application**

VAAFM has an RFP for the first round of Ag-Clean Water Improvement Projects. Nate is preparing an application CVFC under the organization development category to host 12 field days/workshops, and then recruit 8 farmers to implement practices. \$18,606 request, CVFC will match \$1300 from other funds.

*Motion to submit application to VAAFM: Brian Kemp*

*Second: Loren Wood*

*Discussion: good membership recruiting tool, opportunity to continue a project that has been working well. Susan asked about how outreach to farmers would work.*

*Passed (5/0/0)*

#### **Annual Meeting- January 5, 2017**

Conflict with date, moving to a week earlier, will make a motion at next meeting. Looking for agenda ideas.

#### **Logistics of farmer meeting with CLF's Lakekeeper, Rebekah Weber**

Date:

LFO: Blue Spruce Farm

MFO:

SFO:

Others: Matthew Severy

## **No-Till Farmer Innovator Award**

We were notified that CVFC won the National No Till Farmer Magazine's No Till Innovator Award in the Organization category. This award includes a free registration, lodging and meals to attend the conference. Kirsten will send out an email asking for folks who are interested in going to let her know and we will decide how to select who gets that privilege.

### **Joe Tisbert, President of VT Farm Bureau- update and how our organizations can work together**

Brian introduced Joe Tisbert and their conversations about

Advocacy...in the state, in the country

Unify farmer groups..."Stop the Attack" early in the RAP process did not go over very well. He would like to be at the table and hear from lots of organizations. Farm Bureau wants to be part of the cohesion of agriculture in Vermont. He goes to regional and national meetings. VT Farm Bureau believes in water quality and unifying all the groups.

We can tap into American Farm Bureau resources and their 6 million members.

My vision is to try and unify groups, sit together, find out what we have in common, make the best of new regulations, support each other, leverage outreach efforts. What's important to us and how can VFB support us?

RAPs are now about long-term funding. Let's make sure we secure long-term, stable funding.

Peter: Are you suggesting that VFP be the 'one voice' for Vermont agriculture. Joe: that is his vision, how do we make it happen, so many groups, but we need input from everyone. We need to sit in the same room and discuss what we can go forward on.

Brian: That's a big challenge with so many different demographics and conditions that drive each individual group. The approach needs to be to identify where we agree, but allow for individual groups to deal with issues in their own way. There are common goals and situations, so we will need to figure those out in order to represent a unified voice on specific issues as opposed an "umbrella".

Joe: We don't have one hat to wear...we can cover a lot of issues. Economics, viability, etc. I don't have all the answers, need your help to understand all the nuances, will be reaching out. Finding common ground, but showing how all the different pieces fit together. How can we help you be successful?

Lynn: As a lobbyist, keeping all farming industries in the loop, making sure conversations are happening 'around the table' instead of 'across the table'. Farmers are a small group, and we don't want to have disagreements be exploited.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> AT STOWEFLAKE: Governor/Lt. Governor Town Hall 3:00-5:00...please come.**

**Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>: Breakfast at the Statehouse**

Joe: Don't want to be 'left off the table'. Will be a stronger voice. We have so many resources available from the National Organization

Lynn: One of the big priorities will be to get better funding for Extension

### **LCAR-current status of RAPs and what to expect next**

LCAR asked VAAFM for 30 days

Chuck was going to listen and respond to comments made at LCAR...13-page response. Didn't look like any changes, justifications and explanations, may reword a few things, defending flexibility, changing 'frequently flooded' designations with proof.

What about Vermont CAFO permits?

[http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/stormwater/docs/Agriculture/sw\\_gp\\_6100\\_faq.pdf](http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/stormwater/docs/Agriculture/sw_gp_6100_faq.pdf)

### **Tile Drainage Workgroup summary**

Act 64 requires new regulations for Tile Drainage, workgroup met last week (2x). Recommendation from this group goes into a report that goes to VAAF & DEC, they decide what to then put in a report to Legislature in January. In 2018 RAPs will be opened up and new rules will need to be included for tile.

Can we get the message to David Deen that we don't want Iowa data to determine what we do in Vermont? Jeff thinks he gets that already.

Affects 4% of land according to Census? Hot spots...doing more analysis in Jewitt Brook.

Trying to get away from blanket rules, but more specific.

Conversations about tile drainage getting moved over to 'point-source' instead of 'non-point'. What could trigger that?

### **Upcoming Events**

VFB Gubernatorial Town Hall Discussion: 11/4/16, 3:00-5:00 pm, Stowflake Resort

Legal Education & Environmental Regulations Workshop, Farm Viability: 12/15/16 (Vergennes)

Farm owners can contact Tony Kitsos with questions or requests for program resources. Anthony Kitsos [Tony.Kitsos@uvm.edu](mailto:Tony.Kitsos@uvm.edu). Our program registration will be set up in the next couple weeks.

#### **Legal Education and Environmental Regulations:**

UVM Extension farm business specialists are working on an 18<sup>th</sup> month project to bring legal education and legal topic resources to Vermont farmers as the state transitions to new Required Agricultural Practices (RAP's). Our business team will also be working with participants in the Custom Manure Applicator Certification Program.

#### **Save the Dates:**

We have legal education workshops scheduled for December 15<sup>th</sup> (Vergennes), December 16<sup>th</sup> (Randolph) and December 20<sup>th</sup> (Enosburg Falls). Each workshop will run from ~10 am – 2:30 with lunch included. The sessions will include short presentations on legal issues related to the final RAP's and break-out discussion groups. Workshop topics will overview the rights and responsibilities of both farmers and regulatory agencies. Topics will include: non-compliance procedures, intro to due process/appeals process, liability concerns (farmers, tenants, landlords, custom applicators) and opportunities for farms to raise questions that will shape this project through its ending date in Fall 2017.

Farm Viability website is here: <http://blog.uvm.edu/farmvia/>

Legal project webpage is here: [http://blog.uvm.edu/farmvia/?page\\_id=1121](http://blog.uvm.edu/farmvia/?page_id=1121)

We will finalize resources guides and fact sheets and post them to the website by mid-December.

Clean Water Funding...11/16/16 Room 11 at Statehouse

CVFC Annual Meeting: 1/5/17 (Vergennes)

Diane Bothfeld hosting Farm Bill Discussion 11/8 9:00to 12:30 at Statehouse

Other Business:

- VT Farm Show Booth? \$360 includes electricity
    - Jed Davis...co-locate with Conn. River Group and other groups?
  - EQIP Batching Deadlines - Farmstead
    - November 18<sup>th</sup>
    - February 17<sup>th</sup>
  - EQIP Batching Deadline - Agronomic
    - November 18<sup>th</sup> ...spring planting (no-till, crop rotation, etc.)
    - February 17<sup>th</sup>
    - April ?
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**12:06 Motion to ADJOURN Meeting: Eric Clifford**  
**Second: Brian Kemp**

**Reminder: Next CVFC Board of Directors Meeting – December 7, 2016**