

Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition, Inc.

Wednesday, April 8th, 2015
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
UVM Extension Office
23 Pond Lane, Middlebury, VT



10:00am: BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Attendance:

Board of Directors: Brian Kemp, Tim Kayhart, Peter James, Loren Wood, Ernie Audet, Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman, Eric Clifford, Ben Dykema, Lorenzo Whitcomb, David Conant, Marie Audet

Members: Ben Gleason, Ed Schilliwaski, Brad Lawes, Matt Biette, Matt Severy, Ray Brands

Staff: Nate Severy

Public: N/A

Meeting Called to Order@ 10:07

Welcome and introductions

Jeff Carter

Revised agenda order

Are meeting announcements getting to folks, effective?

Secretary Report

Kirsten Workman

Approve March Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve March Minutes: David Conant

Second: Peter James

Discussion: change spelling of 'Bourdeau'

Passed without dissent or abstention

Treasurer Report

Jeff Carter

Jeff reviewed the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss statements as of April 8, 2015

Motion to accept as printed: Ben Dykema

Second: Loren Wood

Discussion: none

Passed without dissent or abstention

Membership Application Approvals

Kirsten Workman

Two applications proposed:

Class 1 Voting Farm Member: Greg Bernhardt & Hannah Sessions, Blue Ledge Dairy

Class 4 Individual Non-Voting Member: Julie Smith

Motion to accept applications as proposed: David Conant

Second: Ben Dykema

Discussion: none

Passed without dissent or abstention

Presidents Report

Brian Kemp

- H.35 approved through house with little dissent.
- Meeting at VAAFAM with Farmers Watershed Alliance, NE Agribusiness & Feed Dealers, NOFA, Green Mountain Dairy Producers. Good meeting, all at table was mostly in agreement:
 - Support more VAAFAM staffing
 - Small farm certification
 - NOFA offered to help with inspections (during VOF certification process)
 - FWA had some different funding proposals, didn't support the use of current use revocation
 - Marie: having multiple farmer groups at the table strengthened the VAAFAM approach to have consensus
- Harvey Smith Meeting (legislators, Chris Killian, James Ehlers, VNRC, Bill Moore). Went over everyone's point of view. Agency has not done enough...fines and enforcement hasn't cut it. Should VAAFAM be enforcement agency? If the agency had more power, would they even use it? Recognized that farmers are not the whole problem. Killian proposed amendments to H.35 for sewage treatment plants. Ehlers...I just want the lake cleaned up. Didn't have any new ideas for funding. Agreed that farms need more technical assistance, education, etc. If a farmer is already working on a problem with state, NRCS, etc...they should get a stay.
- Member Recruitment: Hulett Farm Meeting on April 16th ...Rico & Nate
- Brian nominated and awarded an EPA Merit Award for Region 1

UVM Extension Updates

Jeff Carter/Kirsten Workman

- Soil Health Workshop
- ATF No Till Cover Crop Symposium

Funding Proposals

- High Meadows Foundation - organizational support
- VT Working Lands Enterprise Board ...waiting for word if it is approved.

Program Coordinator Report

Nate Severy

- Farm/Field Meetings & membership recruitment
 - Eric really liked the format of shop meetings
- Coordinating with members on farm projects
- No-Till/Cover Crop Options...fact sheet, decision making tool

Legislative Update

Brian Kemp

H.35 – approved by House with little dissent

- Funding mechanisms...possible they could all go away with S.49 proposed per parcel fee. Starr wanted 'everyone' to pay. Would likely get rid of the ag-specific funding sources.
- Most of the rulemaking and proposed AAP changes are the same.
- Letter of appreciation to the chairs of committees...thank you for letting us be a part of your process, for all the work you have done for ag community, we support you, if you need us engaged in the future please let us know....*Ray Brands move, second David Conant, passed*
- Once something is passed, there will be some press. A consortium of groups should celebrate passage and support. Should we initiate or coordinate it? Part of the solution/discussion. Get official endorsement. Farmers told us... Agreed. Motion to initiate a supportive press release: Ben Dykema, Second: Loren Wood, Discussion....will we know what's really in the bill? Yes..will send out, passed without dissention (ernie audet, abstain).
- April 20th ...want a vote??
- Marie attended a Bridport legislative event:

- Worried about it not having enough teeth.

Brian: If not all CVFC members do not agree with our positions, we want to know. Please talk with another board member. Its okay to have different points of view, but we want to know.

Motion to ADJOURN @ 12:18 PM: Peter James

Second: David Conant

Passed

Next CVFC Board of Director Meeting – May 6, 2015

Middlebury, VT