

Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition, Inc.

Wednesday, May 6th, 2015
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
UVM Extension Office
23 Pond Lane, Middlebury, VT



10:00am: Business Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Board Members: Eric Clifford, Brian Kemp, Ray Brands, Ben Dykema, Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman

Members: Ed Schilliwaski, Matthew Biette, Amy Couch

Public: George Tucker, Mark Marsh, John Roberts

Staff: Nate Severy

Meeting called to order at 10:13 AM

Welcome and introductions

Jeff Carter

Writing final report for CIG grant that started CVFC. Good to tell the story of our organization.

Secretary Report

Kirsten Workman

Motion to approve the minutes from April Meeting (4-8-2015): Eric Clifford

Second: Ben Dykema

Discussion: email them before the meeting

Passed without abstention or dissention

Membership Application Approvals

Kirsten Workman

None received since last meeting

Treasurer Report

Jeff Carter

Jeff presented the profit & loss and balance statements through May 6th.

High Meadows Fund grant is through UVM...separate accounting.

Currently on bank account: Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman, Eric Clifford. Should we switch it to Brian Kemp?

WLEB grant approved. Will go directly to CVFC. How do we utilize the grant to pay for staff? UVM bill CVFC,

CVFC has an employee, or independent contractor? Jeff will run the numbers to see the costs of different

options. 15 month grant to start July 1, go through two growing seasons.

Motion to approve treasurer's report through May 6th: Ben Dykema

Second: Brian

Discussion: none

Passed without abstention or dissention

Presidents Report

Brian Kemp

- 17 farms at Deer Flats Farm Meeting. Hilary Solomon opened up with water quality data (PMNRCD). Good attendance, good discussion. One farm had an opinion that CVFC was all 'big farms'. Brian met with him after. He is hoping we get a few new members from that meeting. Rico is following up.
- WLEB...already started getting that going. Money to help implement a farm plan with a team of Extension, other farmers, industry. There will be 6 plans as a pilot project. Water quality was a priority for WLEB this round. Custom applicator/harvester and some other good ag projects.

- H.35...going slowly now. Conversation with Alyson Eastman...thinks it will go through. Funding mechanisms might be different, but will likely pass. Changing all the time.
- Environmental Summit: May 29th @ VTC. If a board member/member wants to go, CVFC could pay for their registration. Eric on panel, Jeff will go, Brian is going.

Program Coordinator Report

Nate Severy

- Farm/Field Meetings -
 - Pawlet - Water Quality...Brian already covered this one.
 - Middlebury - Small farms...worked with Cheryl Cesario to get some smaller farmers here. Similar to the Pawlet meeting. 8 folks attended (30 invited). Attendees were engaged and interested.
- Membership recruitment
 - Although we haven't gotten new membership yet, the meetings are still worthwhile.
- Projects on member farms
 - No-till, reduced tillage
 - Two trials this summer: two farms Italian Ryegrass variety trial, alternative forage (yields, quality)...plant early, harvest up to 5 times with 40 lbs of N each cutting. Can we get up to 8+ tons of DM per acre? Quality is high, highly digestible fiber, milk/ton equivalent to corn silage. Will harvest cost more than forage value? Balage. A different rotation.
 - Forage Sorghum: 400 lbs, two varieties, 6 farms. Comparable yield and quality as corn silage. Economical, soil health. One harvest...plant @ 60-degrees, harvest at soft dough. Half organic, half conventional. Harvest...kemper head, mow first, compare.

Funding Proposals

- VT Working Lands Enterprise Board
 - Grant funds
 - Crop Management Implementation Plans (CMIP)
 - Bill Orr – no-till, cover crop
 - Peter James – no-till
 - Dan Barnes – no-till
 - Tim Kayhart – no-till, cover crop
 - Harvey Smith – no-till
 - Blending with economics and business planning

RCPP Press Conference

Eric Clifford

- Press conference at Conant's Farm
- Governor, Tom Berry, Congressional Delegation, lots of agencies
- T-shirts to Governor
- Coalition was 'the farmer group'. Dave mentioned in his comments.

UVM Extension Updates

Jeff Carter/Kirsten Workman

- Planter Clinics, Soil Health Workshop
- CIG Projects – cover crops and soil health, compaction
 - Expanding soil health project to multiple farms. Another soil health proposal to evaluate soil health tests available.
 - Joshua Faulkner CIG Soil Compaction and available water. Gosliga, Wood

11:00 Discussion and Guests

Reaching out to small farms

John Roberts, Agency of Agriculture

- H.35...options for funding. 7-8 new people (1 or 2 in the first fiscal year, gradual). Re-write the AAPs. All of this will take time.
- Meetings...interesting different levels of knowledge in different areas
- Franklin County Initiative. Ten agents (two per farm) looking at all 350 farms in 90 days. Not 'inspections', per se, but to figure out how serious is the non-compliance problem. JR has already visited 240 small farms, many have never heard of AAPs. Basic survey/inventory...contact info, type of farm, how many animals, NMP, soil tests, manure tests, manure systems, FSA maps (with permission). The new initiative will be in more detail...three fields at every farm, buffers, milkhouse waste, compliance specific.
- Communications will be key for H.35 implementation. WQ Training for farmers will have to be 'where they are'.

Water Quality Problems Update

George Tucker, USDA NRCS

- Is this a ditch, is this a stream, is this a violation??
- AAPs...who is actually read the WHOLE thing? Lots of circular references.
- Direct or indirect introduction of wastes into waters of the state
 - surface water, ground water
 - wastes definition
- If you have to fix it, what are you going to do about it.
 - Timing (of year)
 - Prevent it from happening
 - Not plowing through the runs
 - Bigger buffer at point of runoff
 - If the gully/sediment leaves the field, not in compliance (nothing to do with RUSLE)
 - Grassed waterway
- If you are following AAPs and still have a discharge, are you ok? No. New AAPs will have a better definition of ditch.
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Motion to Adjourn: Eric Clifford

Second: Ray Brands

Passed without dissent or abstention

ADJOURNED @ 12:30 pm

Next CVFC Board of Director Meeting – June 3, 2015

Middlebury, VT