

Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition, Inc.

Wednesday, June 1, 2016
UVM Extension Office, 23 Pond Lane, Middlebury, VT



Directors Business Meeting MINUTES

9:30 am

Meeting called to order @ 9:40

Approve Minutes from last Board meeting

Motion to approve May minutes: Brian Kemp

Second: Eric Clifford

Discussion: add 'minutes' to title

Passed (4/0/0)

Membership Applications and Approvals

Class 3 – Government/Non-profit: New England Dairy Promotion Board (Laura Hardie)

Motion to approve applications as submitted: Eric Clifford

Second: Marie Audet

Discussion:

Passed (4/0/0)

Financial Report to the Board

Jeff Carter presented the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement current through June 1st.

Motion to approve Treasurer's Report: Lorenzo Whitcomb

Second: Brian Kemp

Discussion:

Passed (4/0/0)

Dairy Outreach Coordinator Position – Update

Leave it open (no date deadline)

Cornell, UVM, VTC, Miner (Student job boards, etc)

Country Folks, AgriView,

Short-Video collaboration

Laura Hardie working with Peregrine Productions. Three one minute videos on:

No-till, manure injection, cover crops

Other Business _____

- ERP Grants: 0 for 3, didn't get any of them
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Open Membership Meeting

10:00 Welcome and CVFC President Comments - Brian Kemp

- UPDATE: Mosier bull, involuntary manslaughter charges, Rutland County Farm Bureau, sets a precedent as a criminal act.

10:10 Before meeting with Secretary Chuck Ross, we will go over the new RAP revisions and compare it to the old version. We will then generate questions and comments that we will discuss with Chuck Ross at 11:00.

11:00 Review of the RAPs with Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Ross

This draft is the LAST OPPORTUNITY FOR FARMER IMPUT before the ruling is enacted, so make sure you come and have your voice heard!

Other Business: _____

Public Meetings:

June 22 – Brandon – 2:30-3:30

12:00 ADJOURN Meeting

Reminder: Next CVFC Board of Directors Meeting – July 6, 2016

Jim Leland

Ryan Patch

Sec. Chuck Ross

Chuck introduced staff that joined him (Ryan Patch, Jim Leland).

Two public comment periods so far, another formal public comment period for the proposed rule. Want to move through logistics quickly and get it to LCAR (Leg. Rules committee). Likely won't have dramatic changes, but need to reflect public comments.

Hope is to have it approved as early as late September through legislative

Chase Goodrich. Frequently flooded fields, cover crop, if dates are in NMP could an exemption be approved for a 'farm' once and not annually.

Jim Leland...If its already in the plan and the plan is approved don't need to call and get 'permission'

Communication on exemption requests...lead time for agency and response time from agency. Looking at creating a system for a 'point person' and a case management system. Easier to FOIA? Trying to balance that. Complainers can complain anonymously and are required to investigate and respond.

Who's the contact? Farmers would like A person that is their point person...that has been lost recently. Goal is to have A name associated with each farm by next spring.

Keep asking how the communication is going to work. It helps VAAFM figure it out and get it right.

Inspection reports...helping farms on the path to compliance. That should be happening now (within 30 days). Complaint investigations/response are different. Act 64 will require communication about findings, immediate response back to farmer on status.

Is an exemption the start of a violation action? Not necessarily. Emergency exemptions, seasonal exemptions, if poor management. 'Farm specific management plan'. Language matters.

Who determines if a ditch needs 25-foot buffer? Already in the 590 standard, planners should be planning to that standard. Ultimate authority is VAAFM.

Farmers would like to see their Agency staff more often...not just when there is a violation.

Livestock Exclusion...focused on areas we know are problems, production areas, erosion problems, enough cover to prevent erosions, allow crossings. Heard that the 'exclusion everywhere' concept was too restrictive, from both public and legislature (\$\$). Tried to strike a balance and give Secretary authority to require exclusion. There are not unlimited resources, fencing every stream could use it all.

CVFC providing solutions

1. Cover Crop Dates on Flooded Fields...dates/residue
2. Lead time on data extension requests
3. Communication – VAAFM prompt answers? Who is the contact for each farm?
4. Is an exemption the start of a violation action
5. Can we pre-plan manure an CC exemptions as part of NMP?
6. Exemption vs. Permission
7. Who determines if a ditch is significant transport (10'-25' buffers)
8. Livestock Exclusion...doesn't look good