

Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition, Inc.

Wednesday, August 3, 2016
UVM Extension Office, 23 Pond Lane, Middlebury, VT



Directors Business Meeting Minutes August 2016

In Attendance:

Brian Kemp, Lorenzo Whitcomb, Jeff Carter, Kirsten Workman, Nate Severy, Dave Conant, Loren Wood, Eric Clifford, Bob Foster

9:37 am...Meeting called to order

Opening Comments

Secretary Report - Approve Minutes last meeting

Motion to approve July minutes: Brian Kemp

Second: Lorenzo Whitcomb

(6/0/0)

Membership Applications and Approvals

None received this month

Treasurer Report - Financial Report to the Board

Jeff reviewed the Balance Sheet, Profit & Loss Statements as of August 3, 2016

Motion to approve Treasurer's Report: Loren Wood

Second: Eric Clifford

(6/0/0)

Dairy Outreach Coordinator Position – Update

-check-in with VAAFM regarding their candidates

-Bob Foster will check in with Jed Davis-

-Refresh Miner institute, VTC contacts, CREAM

Other Business _____

-VT Dairy Producers Alliance

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Open Membership Meeting

10:00 Welcome and CVFC President Comments (Brian Kemp)

- Still recruiting for Dairy Outreach Coordinator position
- No new members this month...need to work on this. New position will help.

- Workshops, field days
- Farm Bureau meeting in Rutland...FB is interested in being involved with watershed groups. Joe Tisberg (new president), wants to become more involved with larger farms and the concerns they are facing. Bring him to a CVFC meeting?
- Bus Tour on September 26th xx
- Legislator Event again?

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No-Till Innovator Award nomination

Kirsten shared the no-till nomination narrative that was submitted

Crop Patrol Schedule: (Nate)

- No-Till Corn , Italian Ryegrass, and Alfalfa (Danby)
- No-Till Short Season Corn Variety Trials (Panton)
- Italian Ryegrass as a short rotation crop
- Cover Crops
- Sunflowers
- No-Till New Seedings
- Other exciting topics
 - Rachel Orr...triticale with no-till new seeding (41 tons off 24 acres), no-till @ Woods, Thomas no-till ss corn and new seeding
 - Water quality stuff...leachate, milkhouse waste, buffers
 - Ag Service Business...go to Lawes and get a tour
 - Manure management

Addison County Field Days...ENTER YOUR CROPS, WE'LL PICK 'EM UP!

- Trailer to pick up entries
- Display/Booth...rainfall simulator
 - Before & after (negative?)
 - How do we use this opportunity to gain memberships? We need help to make it better...what works?
 - Host a seminar....panel discussion
 - Have brochures at member's booths (Bourdeau
 - Video, slide show,
 - Pictures with a "why and answer"

Short-Video collaboration with NE Dairy Promotion

- From Laura Hardie...
- Kirsten/Marie - thanks for the interviews – you're naturals. The drone footage of the field in Shoreham is just what we needed. We also got some great footage with George Tucker from NRCS with their rain water cover crop demonstration – also very visual and really helps explain the process. In September, we'll be working to get footage of cover crops being planted and will be going to Fairmont Farm, the Gervais Farm, Liberty Hill Farm, and following Eric Severy to get footage for the video on manure. Kiley Putnam and Jenny Karl (copied on this email) will be working with Vince (the videographer you met), to see the project through while I am on leave. In October, we'll be sharing with the leaders of the watershed groups a draft version of at least one of the videos for your initial feedback. Our goal is to complete one video by early November, and the other shortly thereafter – with flexibility depending on how long it takes to

get the footage we need in September. Thanks again for your partnership. I'm looking forward to sharing these videos to help spread the word about the positive environmental work farmers are doing every day.

Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance Update

Paul Doton gave an update on the CRWFA activities

- Up to 12 members
- Working with UVM Extension and in NH
- Utilize White River Conservation District for administrative assistance
- Working with trans-Canada group and dam projects

Future Farm Inspections- Expectations and Realities

Nate Sands (MFO/LFO Program Supervisor) and Steve Cash, new MFO/LFO inspector joined us to give an update on VAAFm restructuring. Nate gave the following update:

- Thankful for invitation...glad to provide an update on Agency activities.
- 12 new people in VAAFm as a result of Act 64, and moved some others around
 - Louise Waterman...now doing outreach communications
 - Sylvia Justi...joined Small Farms Program
 - 5 people in SFO program
 - 5 people in MFO/LFO program
- Re-structured staffing and responsibilities...transitioning over the next year
 - Jim Leland:
 - Laura DiPietro: Deputy Director of Water Quality Division (Montpelier/Williston)
 - Nate Sands...managing 10 inspectors, education staff, Williston office
 - David Huber...enforcement officer
 - Maria Steyaart...MFO/LFO Coordinator
 - Steve Cash (used to manage a 350-head angus farm in central NY): Addison Co.
 - Abbi Pajak: Grand Isle, some Chittenden and Northern Addison
 - Tyler Knapp: Southern Addison, Rutland, Bennington, Franklin
 - Mary Childs: Connecticut River
 - Trevor Lewis...SFO Coordinator
 - Sylvia Jensen
 - John Roberts
 - Katie Gehr
 - Clark Parmalee
- 350 sites evaluated in Franklin County...first priority for SFO inspections. SFO group will go from watershed to watershed
- All LFO meetings are complete...two months
- 90 more MFOs to inspect before permit cycle ends next July
- Agency audited in 5 years (per Act 64)...should VAAFm be regulating farms when they are also supporting ag in Vermont?
- 'Meet & Greet' before an actual inspection, already looked through files.
- Opened a field office in Williston (Harvest Lane)...water quality inspectors, engineers, education, conference space (available)
- Communication policies
 - Brian Kemp emphasized the importance of good communication. We have had lots of conversations, there has been an improvement, but we are still hearing about

responsiveness being less than ideal. Full voicemail accounts, not hearing back. Just an email or call back confirming we have heard.

- 48-hours is the policy for response time. Trying to leverage more resources from agency...administrative support, etc.
- Down to one engineer...one more to hire.
- RAP public comments
- Complaints
 - 50% validity...estimate
 - Now anonymous (Act 64)
 - Online tool
 - Could you require an actual address of violation?
 - David Huber gets all complaints...and then out to staff
- David Conant...Have that one person who REALLY knows our farm (fields, facilities, etc.), trusting TSPs to provide information
- Technology...what about drones, etc.
- CEAP...clean water funds, capital funds. Right now there is \$\$ for digital manure spreading record keeping (50%). Louise or Trevor likely will manage that program. Louise is managing FAP right now.
 - Priorities that might impact more farms?

Other Business: _____

- Letter to LCAR?
 - September 15th will review RAPs
 - At next CVFC meeting (9-7-16), we may have more information, and can decide then.
- Mosier Bull case
 - Rutland Co. State's Attorney is taking it to criminal court...involuntary manslaughter
 - Could set a precedent for all livestock owners. If he is convicted, it could make it easier to litigate future cases.
 - Farm Bureau is hoping for support from other farm groups. Letter to state's attorney, newspaper, legislator.
 - State law mentions 5-strand barbed wire, NRCS uses 4-strand hi-tensile
 - State law mentions intact bulls not allowed.
 - Farm Bureau already has addressed it.
 - Loren: I think we should write a letter.
 - Motion : Loren Wood
 - Second: Lorenzo
 - Discussion: avoid details, keep it generic. Is this a topic we address, right to farm? Civil vs. criminal
 - (5/0/0)
 - Timing: look into it.

12:14 Motion to ADJOURN Meeting: Eric Clifford

Second: Brian Kemp

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