



Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition Inc.

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

MINUTES

ZOOM LOCATION:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://uvm-edu.zoom.us/j/7672674868>

Dial in by phone: 1 (929) 436-2866 | Meeting ID: 767 267 4868

In attendance: Kirsten Workman, Brian Kemp, John Roberts, George Foster, Jeff Carter, Eric Clifford, Cheryl Cesario,

Directors & Membership Business Meeting

9:39 am

Call to order & President's Report

Brian Kemp

PES Meeting: RFP put out to look at soil health matrix was awarded to Gund Institute (Alissa White, Taylor Ricketts, Joshua Faulkner). Jon Winston also working with them. Ambitious plan to have some stuff out by Nov/Dec. It should start to move forward more quickly. Hopefully we'll start to see a structure formed....what are thresholds for payment, what are the parameters of payments, etc. Also information presented by two UVM professors about ground sensing, lidar, etc. There will be a survey soon...make sure membership responds.

Secretary Report

Kirsten Workman

- Review and approve August/September meeting minutes (*attached*)
No quorum to approve
- Approve membership applications

Treasurer Report

Jeff Carter

- Review current financial reports (*attached*)
No quorum to approve

Group Check-in

All

How is the fall harvest season going? What worked well this crop year, what didn't? What cover crops are you planting? Goals for next year?

Communications Update

Sarah Audet

From Sarah Audet email:

September Projects

- Distributed monthly e-newsletters to members and non-members on September 29.
- Completed the second installment of the public education campaign with WVTk. Ads are running throughout September and October. They address cover crops, explaining why farmers who just harvested their crops are planting again with winter on the horizon. In his on-air interview on September 27, John discussed corn chopping, harvesting feed, planting cover crops, preparing barns for winter, and handling all the pressures of the pandemic and economic constraints. You can listen to the interview at: <https://bit.ly/3DbSKbl>
- Completed the prospective member brochure.

- Supported John in writing his editorial. Read it at: <https://bit.ly/3uGyMCx>
- Ongoing promotion of October 13 workshop
- Began writing the next quarterly print newsletter, which will be mailed out on October 27.

October Projects

- Ongoing promotion of October 13 workshop
- Story/Media feature about October 13 workshop
- Quarterly Print Newsletter (mail October 27)
- Monthly E-Newsletter (send October 27)
- Website Audit
- #Farm24VT – committee to approve budget and project timeline, and start applying for grants/sponsorships

Executive Director Report

John Roberts

- CAFO Meeting on October 18th with ANR – John will recruit CVFC members and reach out to Scott Magnan and Paul Doton to engage the other two groups as well. Julie Moore’s letter was forwarded to all members...not trying to be punitive, but will proceed as planned. Will be reaching out to Gov. Scott staff that oversees VAAFM/ANR to keep her in the loop.
- Wetlands rules are on hold. Last stakeholder meeting many of other stakeholders beyond ag were not satisfied with process and some of the rule language (ie. Transportation, etc.). Pointing out inconsistencies with Laura Lapierre...ie exemptions for crops should apply to pasture; an existing ditched crop field may not be able to be tiled. Brian felt like some of the environmental groups are also frustrated that ag does have exemptions...so this holdup could work either way (to a benefit or detriment to ag). Maintaining communication with ED of NRC, Chris Pearson (senate ag),
- Patrick Lawrence working with Meghan Giroux looking for crop farmers (corn/soy) willing to do a 10-acre experiment in alley cropped with perennial shrub/tree species and serve on an advisory committee. Will send out information shortly.
- Rutland Regional Planning Commission requesting a letter of support for a grant application to research project 22A/Route4 vicinity for cold storage...meat, cheese, fruit, veg. No commitment, just designating support of the concept and need. John will go ahead and send a letter of support.
- CVFC Logo Hat \$2300 for 200 hats...will send out email.
- Concerns about ACoRN presentation to LCBP CAC. Against conventional ag. Should we be concerned about their membership in our organization? Restrictive views around regenerative ag in many places (PES, Climate Action Council, etc). There are also members of ACoRN that may not hold those same beliefs. We had this particular conversation with RuralVT also. If they are saying in a public forum that they want me out of business, it doesn’t feel right to have them be part of our organization.
- Nuffield Scholarship...coming to the US, a program for farmers to basically go on sabbatical to travel to other farms and learn new things about conservation agriculture. He will share information with others to see if anyone is interested in this type of opportunity.

Climate Council & Pay for Performance Update

Jeff Carter

Jeff will update us on local climate council initiatives and the VAAFM Pay for Phosphorus Performance project

Grazing for Profit Field Day on 10/13/21 @ Meeting Place Pastures

Knoxland Farm (Bradford, Vt.) and Meeting Place Pastures (Cornwall, Vt – CVFC Members) will share their experience custom grazing dairy heifers and how this might fit in to your herd management system as a way to raise healthy young stock efficiently, effectively and with a solid financial bottom line. Paul Knox will share why he grazes heifers and Cheryl and Mark Cesario will show us how to maximize profitability by grazing intensively to provide growing animals with high quality forage in the pasture. We will see Paul's heifers and the Cesario's pastures and get to ask questions and troubleshoot how to implement this system effectively.

Other Updates:

All

- Eric Clifford...Farm Show changing some things. Booth fees going up and will be charging admission. It has been free for the whole history of the show. Doesn't seem like a good way to welcome the public especially if they aren't expecting it. Jeff explained the change in leadership and management of the show.

10:40- ADJOURN Meeting – Next Meeting...November 3rd, 2021 -

Dan Baker (UVM Faculty) Labor, Housing & Energy Research and implications and Whitney Hull (new Dairy Management Educator with UVM Extension and the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center)