



CONNECTICUT

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT
1066 Saybrook Road
Haddam, Connecticut 06438

*John Guskowski, President
John Weedon, Vice President
Barbara Kelly, Treasurer
Margot Burns, Secretary*

Meeting Minutes Tuesday 2/23/17, 1pm - 3:30pm Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

Board Members in Attendance: John Guskowski, Margot Burns, Lois Bruinooge, Aaron Budris, Barbara Kelly, Lynne Pike DiSanto, Jim Sipperly, Mark Goetz, Judy Rondeau

Board Members not in Attendance Matt Fulda, Sal Decarli, John Weedon, Jim Costello, Jim Larkin, Francis Pickering, MaryEllen Kowalewski, Mark Nielsen

Other Attendees: Jeanne Davies, Amanda Fargo-Johnson, Tom Morgart, Rebecca Andreucci, Kate Ruttan, Jim Hyde, Phil Chester

John Guskowski called the meeting to order at 1:01pm. He reported that as a council we will be entering a very busy time period due to the need to hire 4 staff positions to work with NRCS, Amanda's spring grant cycle, and the feasibility study concerning the "CACEE" project.

Secretary's Report

Discussion: Lynn DiSanto name needs a capitol 'S'

Motion: To accept the meeting minutes of 12/13/16.

Motion made by: Lynn DiSanto

Seconded by: Jim Sipperly

Voted: Motion passed. Abstain – Mark Goetz & Judy Rondeau.

Motion: To accept the special meeting minutes of 01/5/17.

Motion made by: Jim Sipperly

Seconded by: Lois Bruinooge

Voted: Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda items 4 unanimously moved until Barbara Kelly arrived.

Draft CTRC&D 2017-2020 Development – Funding Plan

Discussion concerned the need to ensure the long term viability and growth of our organization we need to develop a funding plan that could include possible events, direct mail campaign, accepting memberships, etc. Ideas ranged from recreating the Tour de Farms events, the use of social media, and the creation of an RC&D legislative agenda as a purpose and basis for membership. Jeanne asked that council members assess their ability to work on a marketing and membership committee.

Treasure's Report

Barbara Kelly presented the financial statements and explained that although some items had been paid down grant income is due to replace those items; in March planning for next year's budget needs to begin; and the environment account has approximately \$450,000 and earns approximately \$15,000/yr. in interest.

Motion: To receive financial reports as presented.

Motion made by: Lois Bruinooge

Seconded by: Judy Rondeau

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

USDA Funded CACEE Project – Program and Site Evaluation

Discussion concerned the need to do a needs assessment for the concept within the parameters of rural development and environmental and agricultural conservation as the first step in the process before site evaluation.

Ag Viability Grant/Project – LCRVCOG

3 workshops will be held concerning agriculture and water (UConn and State Water Plan Committee), growing hops (CT Experiment Station), and maple syrup production (Food Processing and Safety). A new list of farms has been provided by the Dept of Ag for review for the regional website.

Partner Updates

NRCS

The 2018 RCPP grant proposals are due April 21st and a new round of EQUIP has been announced.
CFPA

Received a grant from DEEP for trail maintenance on their blue blaze trail system

UConn – Community and Economic Development – Making headway on their trail census program and have installed 15 trail counters. Information can be found on their website.

http://clear.uconn.edu/projects/ct_trail_census/index.htm

CEDC will be holding 3 workshops on maker and coworker places, business retention, and business innovation.

NVCOG

Projects include Naugatuck River Greenway, Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, UConn Trail Census, and MS4.

RiverCOG

Some projects include continuation of Grow Smart, inland flood resiliency study, regional plan of conservation and development, Ag Viability workshops with the regional ag council.

Staff Reports:

Jeanne

FMPP Grant Potential Partners

Hired a very productive agricultural business intern – Chris Melendey – a senior from Eastern CT State University.

We have received resumes for all the positions advertised for the NRCS cooperative project.

Avalonia Land Trust ERT completed and beginning Camfield Woods in Essex.

Need to begin visiting individual Council of Governments.

We need to pick a location for the annual meeting somewhere in southern part of the State.

Amanda

Agricultural Programs

Agvocate -

- Continue to provide assistance to farms in the Thames River Watershed via TLGV RCPP Agreement with NRCS. Working with ECCD to engage new farms into the program.
- Monthly emailing of AGvocate newsletter (600 + recipients).
- Participate in Food Hub Webinar hosted by UConn.
- Hosted the quarterly Agvocate partner meeting at TLGV on 1/11/17.
- Attended the NRCS State Technical Committee Meeting on 1/18/17.

Grants-

- Re-applied to USDA FSA Grant – Farm Startup Express (\$88,000.00 request) – Grant Denied.
- Applied for USDA NRCS - CIG Grant to purchase Soil Health Equipment for organic farmers to implement no-till and cover crops. Awaiting announcement/approval (\$75,000.00 request).
- Applied to CT Department of Agriculture to update Livestock Zoning and Ordinance Guide (2012) and create protocol for AG Geospatial dataset. (\$45,000.00 request) Awaiting announcement.

Next AGvocate Steering Committee Meeting May 2017 – All are welcome to attend.

CT Farm Energy/ USDA/RBDG Grant -

- October 30, 2016 USDA REAP Grants:
- In total 5 Applications for farms located in New London and Litchfield County were funded. Whimsy Brook Farm, Hunts Brook Farm, Holdridge Farm Nursery, Starberry Farm, and Koewing Manor Farm. The 6th applicant farm decided to withhold their application from October and apply in March 2017.
- \$47,644.00 in total was received for the restricted fund pool for FY 2017 October Deadline.
- To date CFEP has helped secure 1.96 million in REAP grants, when leveraged equals 7.8 million in energy projects since 2010.
- CFEP is currently providing technical assistance in applying for: Restricted Funds (asking for 20k or less) and Unrestricted Funds (asking for over 20k in grant) for 10 projects consisting of 3 solar and 7 energy efficiency. Deadline is March 31, 2017.

Next USDA REAP Deadlines: October 31, 2017. CFEP is currently assisting 2+ farms with applying for Restricted Funds to USDA Rural Development and farms interested in applying for Unrestricted Funds in 2018.

CT Farm Energy/Projects & Outreach – USDA RBDG Grant December 2016 & January 2017

- CT Energy Efficiency Board member and C&I Sub-committee participation monthly
- Meet with and provide technical assistance to farms to develop their March 2017 REAP grant applications
- Meeting with Sustainable CT & UConn NEMO about solar siting (11/07/16)

- Farm Energy Video Development & Filming with UConn for 4 CFEP projects having received a REAP grant
- Continue partnership for farm assessments with CCAT and RiverCOG.
- Work with CET staff and board members on the MOU/transfer of NEFEC back to CT RC&D
- Prepared and submitted testimony to CT DEEP for the Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES) with regards to siting RE
- Attended the Dairy Summit at the LOB on 1/3/17
- Speaker at the DEEP Siting Workshop in Hartford on 1/10/17
- Attend Council on Environmental Quality Meeting on 1/25/17 with regards to siting solar on farmland at DEEP Hartford.
- Continue to follow the siting of renewables on farmland issue, bill proposals and speaking with partners in state and out of state about the issue.
- Host conference call with partners on brewery spent grain project, turning BSG into a usable pellet fuel source of energy on 1/26/17

CT Farm Energy/Projects & Outreach – DEEP/SEP Grant
December 2016 & January 2017

- Development of RFQ and application process for selection of farms for Compost Heat Recovery Pilot Project.
- Compost Heat Recovery Panel will meet at DEEP on March 7, 2017 to review and rank received applications from CT farms interested in being the host farm site for the CHR pilot project.
- Hosted the Quarterly Partner Farm Energy Roundtable at NRCS on 1/18/17.
- Continued coordination on anaerobic digester projects with several CT farms.

Filmed Farm Energy Videos with UConn Extension and UConn TV at: Oakridge Dairy, Full Bloom Apiaries, Ace Begonias and Paley's Farm Market.

Motion: To adjourn meeting at 3:20

Motion made by: Jim Sipperly

Seconded by: Lois Bruinooge

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Margot Burns, Secretary