



145 Dennison Road
Essex, CT 06426
(860) 581-8554
(860) 581-8543 (FAX)
www.rivercog.org

Chester, Clinton, Cromwell,
Deep River, Durham, East Haddam,
East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Kill-
ingworth, Lyme, Middlefield, Mid-
dletown, Old Lyme,
Old Saybrook, Portland, Westbrook

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL AGRICULTURE COUNCIL

May 18, 2023

Members:

Chester:
Clinton: Richard Martin
Cromwell:
Deep River
Durham: Warren Herzig
East Haddam: Jess Stone
East Hampton: -----
Essex: -----
Haddam: John Halfinger
Killingworth: Walter Adametz
Lyme:
Middlefield:
Middletown:
Old Lyme:
Old Saybrook:
Portland: Alan Fenrow
Westbrook: -----

Staff:

Guests:

Heather Milardo - Estuary Senior Center, Old Saybrook

Meeting

The meeting was a Zoom call.

1) Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by John Halfinger at 7:13. A motion was made by Richard Martin and seconded by Warren Herzig to accept the minutes from the April 20, 2023, meeting. A correction on the spelling of Korn School was asked. John Halfinger abstained from voting. Motion approved.

2) Public Comments/Presentations

- Heather Milardo – Estuary Senior Center, Old Saybrook

A. Heather said that they talked to their insurance company and that they plan to rent out their kitchen for anyone who would like to use it. The program should be starting in June 2023.

B. Anyone who is independent is covered under the Estuary's insurance.

C. Anyone who is operating as a business, they would need a certificate of insurance.

D. To have the Estuary purchase produce from local farmers is a problem because of the quantity and CT requires approval of the menu two months in advance.

E. The Estuary would like to purchase from farmers for a cooking demonstration and be able to give that type of produce to the seniors to take home.

F. Heather asked what happened at the end of a farmers' market with leftover food. Jess Stone said that they bring it back to sell at their farm stand if it is still good. Heather asked if some sort of arrangement could be made for the Estuary to purchase products.

G. Heather asked about food composting and if anything is happening within the region. Jess Stone said that she is doing a program on her farm. Heather and Jess will talk next week.

H. There was a question about how much notice the Estuary requires to use the kitchen. Heather said that their schedule varies a bit but depending on if they have anything going on, the kitchen will be available.

I. There was a question about the cost of renting the kitchen. Heather said that they are still working on that, and it will be on an individual basis.

J. There was a question about the Estuary buying garlic bulbs. Heather said that garlic is something that they would be interested in buying from a farmer.

3) RAC Board

RAC Board members needed.

Cromwell

East Haddam – Kristy will contact some farmers. There was a question about a farm with produce, CSA and flowers who may join.

East Hampton – John contacted a farmer

Essex

Lyme – Jess said that she will contact a farmer

Middlefield

Old Lyme

Westbrook

4) Website

A. Kristy Benson-Amarante is the featured farmer.

5) Farm Viability Grant

A. John Halfinger said that Rich Martin and Ron Larson drove the trailer over to John's house and the drill fit like a glove on the trailer.

B. Rich Martin said that the rub rails will be flat steel – 3/8" X 8" that will be bolted on to the pockets on the sides. Rich is contacting 3 welders to get bids.

6) CEDS Grant - Healthy PlanEat

No updates on the project.

7) Zoning amendment

A. Middlefield agriculture

The results from the public hearing will be looked into.

B. Farm and Tack Store regulations – Durham -

Warren explained that there was a public hearing and the P&Z commission voted to approve the regulations. The regulations will require a special permit for a farm store and changes in the regulations can be made by P&Z. A farm stand can only sell products grown on that farm. A discussion followed concerning % of products grown on the farm at a store, saving farmland if no new farmers are coming into farm, required size of farms for a stand, and parking requirements.

8) Old Business –

No old business.

9) New Business –

A. Jess talked about East Haddam looking into developing regulations for farm stands.

B. Warren talked about Field Day at Cecarellis Farm on Thursday, June 1st. There will be demonstrations for no-till and modified no-till. Preregistration is required. <https://news.extension.uconn.edu/2023/05/10/on-farm-field-day/>

C. Warren asked if anyone read the article about a farm in Maine that was closed due to PFAS contamination from sewer sludge. Warren asked if using contaminated compost may also register as PFAS contamination. The conclusion was to think about whatever you are bringing onto your farm.

10) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, June 15, 2023, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Ehle/Meyer

Draft