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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

August 17, 2023

Members:

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

Staff:

Janice EhleMeyer

Guests:

Meeting

The meeting was a Zoom call and not in person.

1) Approval of Minutes

The meeting started at 7:01 by John Halfinger. The meeting was an informational meeting only because a quorum was not met. No voting took place.

2) Public Comments/Presentations

3) RAC Board Members needed

Cromwell
East Haddam
East Hampton
Essex
Lyme
Middlefield
Old Lyme
Westbrook

4) Website

Janice looked at the traffic for the website. The site sessions are down but the people who visited are new and stayed on for 6 minutes and 40 seconds.

5) Farm Viability Grant

A. There was a conversation concerning the trailer. There is one coat of paint on the rails of the trailer. The sides of the trailer have to be drilled and installed. There are volunteers to help Richard drill the holes for the rails. Richard has a hoist that he can get on the trailer to get it installed.

B. Janice said that the Farm Viability Grant is due on November 30, 2023. The funding for the program will end on October 31, 2023 when the report will be completed.

C. Janice will send out a bullet sheet for what is required for the grant report.

6) CEDS grant – Healthy PlanEat

Janice reported that the grant will expire on September 23, 2023 and Rosemary have completed her requirements. There are now 9 farms from the RiverCOG region on her site which is about 1/4 of the farms. The new additions are:

HydroCat Micro Greens, East Haddam
Walden Farm, Moodus
All Hands Farm, Middlefield
Running Brook Farm, Killingworth
Eight Mile Farm, Deep River
Alex's Eggs, Essex
Long River Farm, Old Lyme

There was a conversation to invite the farmers from towns that we don't have representatives.

7) Middlefield agriculture zoning amendments updates

A. The towns proposal was voted forward to approve the zoning amendments.

8) Old Business –

A. Warren was asked how Durham's zoning proposal is doing. Warren said that P&Z are proposing to have some changes done to the wording of the zoning proposal. This happened without the Durham Agriculture Committees input. The definition of a Tac Store and Equestrian Operation was modified, saying that it had to be a commercial operation. The concerns were how will the operation be taxed and what makes it commercial? Other Proposed changes were that the farming operation has to be a legitimate farm. The question is what makes a legitimate farm? A P&Z meeting is scheduled for September 6th and the Durham Agriculture committee will be there to make comments.

9) New Business –

A. There was a conversation about what will be happening with the no-till equipment after the grant runs out? John Halfinger said that the equipment can stay at his place until RC&D finalizes what they want to do for the equipment hub.

B. Warren brought up an issue in Enfield, CT where the town accessor is accessing farm property 2 x3 x the value and not recognizing PA 490. The grant list has increased but it is at the expense of the farmers. Apparently, the Agriculture Commissioner has become involved with the issue. Meriden may be having the same issues. A conversation continued on how a farms PA 490 can be changed or removed.

10) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:03.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, **September** 14, 2023, at 7:00 pm. There will not be an August meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Ehle/Meyer