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Fairfield County Deer Management Alliance Minutes 6_11_12

1 message

David Streit <streitdave@yahoo.com>

Tue, Jun 12, 2012 at 8:55 AM

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Fairfield County Deer Management Alliance

Meeting dated June 11, 2012

Wilton Town Hall

Minutes

In attendance:

David Streit, President, Redding

Teresa Gallagher, Shelton

Denise Savageau, Greenwich (accompanied by High School intern)

Russell Cornelius, Brookfield

Dave Shugarts, Newtown

Patricia Sesto, Wilton

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

Laurie McGrath, Darien

Observers:

Peter Knight, Westport

David Francis, Guilford

Peter Hood, Fairfield

Welcome. The meeting was opened at 10.30 a.m. by David Streit, President, who welcomed town representatives and David Francis, now resident in Guilford.

Approval of Minutes. David Streit proposed that the words "at this point and started yelling" be deleted from the Minutes of the meeting of 3/19/12. With this change, the Minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's report Pat Sesto confirmed that there had been no movement. She had not sent out the requests for payment of dues and was reluctant to do so until the Alliance decided what expenditures for the year were planned.

A discussion followed on the idea of taking out a ½ page ad in the Hartford Courant; Denise Savageau felt an article by an environmentally concerned journalist would be more effective. The challenge of establishing reliable deer numbers was also discussed. The next survey with aerial photos by the DEEP was scheduled for 2013, subject to weather conditions. Denise mentioned an article in the May/June edition of Connecticut Wildlife headed "An Alternative Approach to Monitoring CT's Deer Population". Dave Shugarts explained that, in response to an apparent drop in fawn numbers, this was a DEEP project in north west Connecticut that hoped to monitor the death rate of fawns. Vaginal implant transmitters on the does would be used to establish when a fawn was born and, after it was located, radio collars would track it over the next several months.

Dave went on to note that, while does would naturally produce 2 fawns a year, recent statistics suggest that the surviving fawns are 1.8 to 1.4 p.a.. In Redding the number was 0.4 that David Streit felt was primarily the effect of coyotes.

On the question of public awareness, Laurie McGrath felt a two-sided brochure was more effective than the current DEEP booklet.

Reverting to the issue of the Alliance expenditure budget, Dave suggested that a study on the effectiveness of the various tick sprays in use be undertaken. This remained controversial. For example, a study in Maryland had suggested that "bifenthrin", that had been approved for tick control by the EPA, might have a carcinogenic effect. Denise commented on a Yale anti-toxin group and noted that the emphasis was on pesticides not deer control.

Town reports

Darien. Laurie McGrath reported that the aim was to simplify the effort. It was felt that

private landowners would be willing participants in a controlled hunt program.

Newtown. Dave Shugarts said that Howard Kilpatrick had discussed the deer issue at a town meeting on May 21. The Selectmen were luke warm on the subject of deer management.

Brookfield. Russ Cornelius said that deer harvest numbers were down by 1/3 and hunters were losing enthusiasm. Because of budget constraints, the town had decided not to spray public areas and school play grounds. Russ had vigorously opposed this citing the danger of damaging the population and, as a result, the program had been reinstated. Laurie McGrath noted that this could be a liability issue for towns.

Greenwich. Denise Savageau reported that they hoped to run a second sharp shoot either this year or next. Stamford had also expressed interest in a sharp shoot given the very many residents that use town parks and property each year.

Redding – Dave Streit said that the DEEP plan for Redding was expected at the end of June.

Wilton – Pat Sesto said that the Town had accepted the appropriateness and effectiveness of sharp shooters although some hunters were opposed. Public education continued to be very important, especially the cost aspect of lost school time for children affected with Lyme and the cost of aftercare. The Board of Ed. had the numbers on lost school time. Dave Shugarts commented that the popular view was that sharpshooting cost towns \$600 per deer but the real cost was closer to \$200 per deer.

Westport – Peter Knight commented on the progress of the newly formed deer committee and the difficulty posed by the Town's unique "no hunting" ordinance.

Guilford – David Francis, having recently moved to Guilford from Wilton, noted that Guilford was primarily focused on the environmental impact of excessive deer numbers and less on health issues.

Other matters. David Streit circulated a letter dated June 5 that, with the assistance of Pat Sesto, he had composed and sent to the DEEP. It contained a number of proposals and it was suggested that the letter be circulated to news media using the list developed by Kent Haydock. He also mentioned the need to identify a successor as President of the Alliance next year.

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Future meetings and Plans.

As previously agreed, future quarterly 2012 meetings would be held on the following dates:

September 10

December 10

There being no further business, on motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

David Streit

President

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