

**Fairfield County Deer Management Alliance**

**Meeting dated September 9, 2013**

**Wilton Town Hall**

**Minutes**

**In attendance:**

Dave Shugarts, Newtown

Russell Cornelius, Brookfield

Laurie McGrath, Darien

**Observers:**

Peter Knight, Westport

Peter Hood, Fairfield

In the absence of President David Streit (due to a pressing personal issue), it was decided to press forward with the meeting in the form of a round table. Peter Knight volunteered to take

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the Minutes.

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**Approval of Minutes.** The Minutes of the June 10, 2013 meeting, having been circulated previously, were approved.

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**General discussion**

Dave Shugarts began by congratulating Laurie McGrath on the excellent article that had appeared in the **Ridgefield Press** on August 24. Laurie said that she had sent it to a number of newspapers; the **Stamford Advocate** had printed it but she was uncertain how many others. It was especially opportune as hunting season would begin next week.

Peter Knight reported for **Westport** that the deer committee was close to finalizing its report (excluding Peter's minority position) that placed its main emphasis for population control on Dr. Allen Rutberg's immunocontraception program. The program had reportedly been launched in **Hasting on Hudson** although it was not clear if it had actually started. For Westport, the DEEP informed Peter that they had given no indication one way or the other that they would approve such a program. Russ Cornelius noted that such a program was very expensive to implement in a suburban environment. Town budgets were under pressure and funds made available for deer would typically need to be offset by a reduction in other town services such as maintenance, street cleaning etc. Financial support from organizations such as the Humane Society or Friends of Animals might be enlisted. Dave Shugarts added that the Four-Poster program in **Shelter Island** cost \$4,500 for each feeding station that also had to be approved by the DEEP.

Russ said that hunting on 800 acres of town property in **Brookfield** was proceeding with no incidents and no problems. The effort was coordinated by a deer manager who was not a town employee but whose activities were covered by town funded insurance.

John Moran had spearheaded the Be Safe **Newtown** program modeled on the Be Safe **Redding** approach. The harvest had been 350 with an increment of 35 as a result of the program. Dave said that they had tried to establish a check station in Newtown to assist hunters but had met with resistance from the DEEP.

Commenting on the **Darien** situation, Laurie said that she and her husband were identifying and contacting Lyme sufferers and DVA victims in an effort to expand the list of interested persons willing to support Darien's deer culling activities. The principal issue affecting all communities was lack of information and understanding. She would like to arrange a showing of the movie "Under Our Skin" at the Darien library or similar venue. Russ said he was willing to

coordinate the showing and to introduce it. He counseled that notices should be sent out at least 6 weeks in advance and that there could be no financial gain from the showing. He recommended that it take place on a week night.

Commenting on the CDC's announcement of greatly increased **Lyme disease cases**, Russ observed that, at least in Connecticut, since 2009 doctors were legally protected from being sued for over prescription of drugs for long term cases. However, the record of the insurance companies going after doctors for such treatment was abysmal. He cited Dr. Joseph Burrascano as being preeminent in diagnosis and treatment of Lyme and other vector borne diseases. The recommended **chemicals for personal protection** against ticks were: **permethrin** that could be sprayed on clothing and was good for 20 washes – and the repellent **Deet** that was sprayed on exposed skin.

After further discussion on various related topics, the meeting was adjourned at 11.45 a.m.

The next meeting will be held on December 9, 2013 at the same time and place.

Peter Knight



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