

## **Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance**

January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Yankee Farm Credit, Farmvu Dr WRJ, VT

10:00am-12:30pm

Present: Jed Davis, Beth Kennett, Paul Doton, Amy Richardson, Larry Martin, Walter Gladstone, Ed MacGlaflin, Tom Beaudry, Heidi Doloff, John Mudge, George Miller, Daniel Hudson (UVM), Sylvia Harris (VT NRCS), Ken Underwood, Jason Johnson, Jason Fluery (VT NRCS), Steven & Arlene Stocking, Jada Haas, Linda Corse, Doreen Morris, Rob Wheeler, Kimberly Hagen (UVM), Bill Emmons, Ryan Patch (VAAMF), Beth Ann Finlay (NH NRCS), Steven Schmidt (NH NRCS), Chris Lary (VT FSA), Larry Scott, Carl Majewski (UNH), Ron Rhodes (CTRWC), Orson St. John, Katherine Adams, Jake Guest, Mary Childs (White River NRCD).

Approximately 23 farmers and 12 partners gathered together on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 for the first Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance (CRWFA) meeting. Jed Davis facilitated the meeting. The group collectively went through the Champlain Valley Farmers Coalitions By-laws providing comment on changes and adoption to formalizing CRWFA By-Laws. Below is a summary of recorded comments organized by article discussed.

### **Article I. Name**

The group discussed the new alliance name; Connecticut River Farmers Watershed Alliance vs. Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance. The name shall be Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance (CRWFA).

### **Article II. Purpose**

The mission statement was collectively reviewed and revised to reflect all sectors of agriculture and encourage inclusion of all size, types, and communities of farmers.

### **Article IV. Members**

This article generated a lot of discussion. Majority of discussion surrounded the membership classes. The group agreed to have multiple classes of membership. Class 1- Voting members who are farmers from VT/NH, Class 2- Non-voting individual member, Class 3- Non-voting business member who own or operate related agricultural businesses, Class 4- non-voting special members. Discussion about flexibility of membership is captured in Class 4, the special non-voting members.

The definition of a farmer was discussed to help identify who the voting members would be. The alliance discussed adopting the Vermont state definition of a farmer and also recognize the future prospect of identifying non-Vermont farmers as members. The definition of a farmer will be revisited in a separate meeting.

Multi-state membership was also discussed. Vermont and New Hampshire farmers were present at this meeting. Geographic range is recognized as an important topic. Several ideas were brought to the table such as eventual sub-chapters, limiting voting membership to Vermont and NH for the immediate future, designating geographic outliers as special non-voting members temporarily to help hold the focus and direction of the group as it is in the initial formalization stages.

## **Article V. Board of Directors**

The group discussed the need for a Board of Directors as the next step in formalization. There will be no fewer than 9 directors. A maximum was not designated to allow for flexibility as awareness of the CRWFA grows.

Geographic coverage re-surfaced during this discussion. Questions included: Should we limit directors temporarily? Is it a benefit to start as a small area? Will there be sub-chapters in the future to provide better coverage? How do we start small geographically to help maintain focus on the work, purpose, and priority? Discussion surrounding these questions will continue. Ideas offered included crafting the By-Laws to illustrate forward thinking of having sub-chapters to provide coverage to the CT Watershed. The nominating committee and board of directors will continue the geographic and membership/voting discussions.

The By-Laws will include an amendment Article to allow for future revisions.

At this time, the group moved forward in nominating or volunteering for the board of directors. The sign-up sheet was also passed around for people to check next to names they would like to see as directors or if they were interested. The following were nominated as directors:

1. Adams, Katherine-Equine, Vermont
2. Beaudry, Tom- Crop consultant/Dairy, New Hampshire
3. Corse, Linda-Organic Dairy, Vermont
4. Doton, Paul- Dairy, Vermont \* Nominated as Chair
5. Emmons, Bill- Beef, Vermont
6. Gladstone, Walter- Dairy/Vegetable, Vermont
7. Johnson, Jason- Dairy/Equine/Sheep, Vermont
8. Kennett, Beth- Dairy/Hospitality, Vermont
9. MacGlaflin, Ed- Dairy, New Hampshire
10. Richardson, Amy- Dairy, Vermont
11. Stocking, Steven- Crops, Vermont

Nominations will continue to be welcome for the board of directors.

Next steps:

- Future thinking- What will be the meat of the organization?
- Articulate purpose with landowners in NH and VT, and with key partners
- Share list of attendants for familiarity of who, where, and what type of agriculture
- Share meeting minutes, revised mission statement, updated By-Laws- Draft 1
- Board of Directors Meeting January 25<sup>th</sup>, White River Junction

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Childs  
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