



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Commissioner



Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

860-713-2507
www.CTGrown.gov

Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council

MEETING MINUTES

May 9, 2019

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
450 Columbus Blvd, Plaza South, Meeting Room B

Members Present: Commissioner Designee Bryan P. Hurlburt, Jonathan Edwards, Hilary Criollo, Jamie Jones, George Motel, Indrajeet Chaubey, Dr. Michael O'Neill, Richard Ruggiero, Dr. Frank Ferrandino, Linda Auger (phone), Cara Sawyer (phone)

Members Absent:

DoAg staff: Rebecca Eddy, Nathan Wilson

Guests: Washington DaSilva

1. **Call to Order:** Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. Commissioner welcomed Council members and introductions were made.
2. **Review and approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for February 7, 2019:** Motion made by George Motel. Seconded by Jonathan Edwards to approve the minutes. All in favor. Commissioner Hurlburt abstained. Motion passed.
3. **Public Comment:** none
4. **Reports:**
 - a. **Legislative:** Jonathan Edwards reported that it has been an active session and the CVWA lobbyist has been keeping them apprised on developments including the elimination of 25% grown for farm wineries and bypassing the 3-tier system. Jamie Jones expressed concern for duplication bills giving same rights to those not growing. George Motel expressed concern over additional bills, including the legalization of marijuana, labor, bottle bill and the damage from wildlife (bears) to crops. Commissioner Hurlburt provided an update on the legislative session and the various bills the agency is watching, including Community Investment Act (CIA) funding.
 - b. **Financial:** Rebecca Eddy reported that as of 5/2/19 the Council had expenditures of \$15,558.09, encumbrances of \$18,964.00, and a balance of \$66,572.61. Members reviewed the budgets for various programs.
 - c. **Big E:** Rebecca Eddy presented a proposed tasting schedule for the 2019 Big E based upon applications received. Discussion on dates and staffing



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ensued. Jonathan Edwards made a motion to approve the 2019 Big E tasting schedule with modifications by DoAg staff as needed with the approval of affected wineries. Hilary Criollo seconded. All in favor.

Jamie Jones thanked Jon, Keith Bishop and Rebecca for work on this initiative. Jon Edwards complimented Rosemary Bove and Rebecca's efforts. Rebecca will coordinate with facilities on a sketch of the new tasting booth and share with the operators prior to the next meeting.

- d. **Research and Education:** Richard Ruggiero distributed the Farm Wine Twilight Meeting flyer for the event being held on June 19, 2019 at Paradise Hills Vineyard in Wallingford, CT. Rich reported on the guest speakers and asked Rebecca to follow up on purchasing the field guides for attendees. Rebecca reported that she received 16 RSVP's already. Deadline to RSVP is 6/12.
- e. **Passport:** Rebecca Eddy reported on the distribution meeting held April 24. The printed passports were available at all 40 participating wineries by the start date. Dr. Michael O'Neill provided an updated on the mobile app launch. Discussion ensued on how to ensure active participation from all wineries. Rebecca updated the Council members on the CT Conference on Tourism which was held on May 8. The Passport program received the CT Tourism Partner of the Year award. Hilary Criollo and Rebecca accepted the award. A video was made to promote the award at no cost to the council and will be used on social media and other applicable locations. Rebecca reported that since the last meeting the Facebook page has experienced a 15% growth in the number of fans with 8,375 as of 5/9/19. The Passport event reached 424,700 people (increase of 22%) with 39, 100 event page views and 25,300 responses. A total of 29 posts reached 131,367 people at no expense to the Council.

5. **Old Business:** none
6. **New Business:** Jon Edwards asked about the new, large DOT attraction signs and how wineries could be listed. Jamie Jones acknowledged the passing of former Commissioner Bruce Gresczyk, Sr.
7. **Adjournment:** George Motel motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jon Edwards seconded. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.