



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

February 6, 2020

450 Columbus Blvd

Hartford, CT 06103

Plaza South Room A

Members Present: Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt, Jonathan Edwards, Cara Sawyer, Jamie Jones, Richard Ruggiero, Dr. Michael O'Neill, Linda Auger (on phone), George Motel (on phone) Hilary Criollo (on phone)
Members Absent: Washington DaSilva, Indrajeet Chaubey, Rosemary Bove
DoAg staff: Rebecca Eddy, Kayleigh Royston
Guests: none

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 December 5, 2019:** Motion made by Jonathan Edwards to approve the minutes. Cara Sawyer seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.
3. **Public Comment:** no public present for comment.
4. **Reports:**
 - a. **Legislative:** Jon Edwards reviewed CVWA's position. Discussion ensued regarding support for farm wineries and the allowances made in other states. Commissioner Hurlburt suggested hosting a Rural Caucus info session to education legislators.
 - b. **Financial:** Rebecca Eddy reported that as of 1/31/2020 the Council had expenditures of \$21,889.19, encumbrances of \$20,428.49, and a balance of \$74,438.77. Dr. O'Neill made a motion to accept the financial report. Jamie Jones seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed. Discussed ensued regarding the 2020 budget. Dr. O'Neill made a motion to commit the following funding to various priority areas: up to \$40,000 for Passport printing, app upgrades and prizes; up to \$3,000 for Research and Education events; up to \$8,000 for Big E booth needs and up to \$20,000 for marketing purposes for a total of \$71,000. Rich Ruggiero seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
 - c. **Big E:** Jon Edwards reviewed booth improvement needs including froze machines (2) with maintenance contract, TV menu boards (Rebecca Eddy to



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- look into repurposing DoAg equipment), installing wine tap and touch screen kiosk.
- d. **Research and Education:** Richard Ruggiero provided an update on a spring grower education session. Tentatively scheduled for first week of March at Jonathan Edwards Winery in North Stonington. Program will include pruning demonstration and guest speaker – TBD. Rebecca Eddy will disseminate final information to all growers. Dr. O’Neill mentioned that Katherine Van der Woude is working on conservation planning with NRCS and looking for interested vineyards to participate. Recommended that she attend Passport distribution and education meetings to let growers know. Jamie Jones shared that Dr. Andreadis is retiring from the CT Ag Experiment Station and the search is on for a new director. Discussion ensued regarding the state budget not including funding of the requested renovations to the Windsor Experiment Station.
 - e. **Passport:** Rebecca Eddy provided an update regarding Passport committee work on prizes. Dr. O’Neill recommended beta testing the app during the month of March to work out any remaining glitches. Discussion ensued. Jamie Jones motioned to allocate up to \$500 of the Passport budget to purchase incentives for 100 participants in the beta testing. Jonathan Edwards seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
5. **Old Business:** George Motel responded to the public comment of the December meeting regarding the Connecticut Grown designation for farm wineries. He is against the discontinuation. Jamie Jones reiterated that the designation was a compromise to recognize those who grow more than 51% of their own grapes or fruit. Jonathan Edwards concurred that he feels the designation doesn’t hurt anyone. Linda concurred that consumers don’t pick a winery based on the CT Grown designation and she’s in support of it.
6. **New Business:**
- a. Rebecca Eddy mentioned that Margaret Ruggierro of CVWA reached out regarding discrepancies on the CT Visit website managed by DECD related to the Wine Trail and Passport, as well as farm wineries and urban wineries. Rebecca has been in touch with DECD and is working to schedule a meeting to make the necessary changes.
7. **Adjournment:** Dr. O’Neill motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jonathan Edwards seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Rebecca Eddy, February 11, 2020