



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

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

December 16, 2020

2:00 PM

Microsoft Teams meeting

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- Members Present:** Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt, Jonathan Edwards, Cara Sawyer, Dr. Michael O'Neill, Linda Auger, George Motel, Hilary Criollo, Rosemary Bove, Richard Ruggiero
- Members Absent:** Jamie Jones, Indrajeet Chaubey, Washington daSilva
- DoAg staff:** Rebecca Eddy, Amanda King, Kayleigh Royston
- Guests:** Jim Frey

- Call to Order:** Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. Commissioner welcomed Council members and introductions were made.
- Review and approval of Special Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2020.** George Motel motioned to accept. Jonathan Edwards seconded. All in favor, motion passes.
- Public Comment:** none
- Reports**
 - Legislative Update:** Kayleigh Royston provided an update on the status of the agencies legislative package for upcoming session which has not yet been approved. It will be made publicly available upon approval. Session starts on January 6, 2021. Commissioner Hurlburt noted that the agency did propose the availability of wine in grocery stores and that was declined. DPH Commissioner Seagull looking to prioritize farm wineries in other ways. Commissioner Hurlburt requested that ideas be sent to him and Rebecca via email.
Discussion ensued regarding sector rules for reopening and requirement of wineries and breweries to provide equivalent of dining experience in order to serve alcohol. Jon Edwards spoke with Mike Rell regarding local DPH.



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Requirements are causing hardship on industry. George Motel voiced concern about not allowing wineries to sell in grocery stores. Connecticut is one of 12 states that doesn't allow grocery store sales. Grateful for Commissioner's work on their behalf. Further discussion about outlook and guidance clarification. Kayleigh Royston assured that she will continue working to gain clarification on the sufficient purchase of food and establishing options that are not as burdensome. Commissioner Hurlburt requested members send recommendations via email to bring forward to DECD, DPH, and OTG.

- b. **Financial:** Rebecca Eddy provided update on financial status. Beginning balance: \$119,825.54; encumbrances: \$3,140 (CT Grown Magazine); \$116,685.54 available balance. Michael O'Neill motioned to accept report. Richard Ruggiero seconded. All in favor, motion adopted.
 - i. 2021 Budget:
 1. Big E 2021: \$15,000
 2. Research & Education: \$2,500
 3. Passport & Marketing: \$95,000Discussion ensued. Richard Ruggiero motioned to accept proposed budget of up to \$15,000 for Big E, \$2,500 for Research & Education, \$45,000 for Passport and \$50,000 for Marketing. Linda Auger seconded. Rosemary Bove suggested contingency plan if Passport amount isn't enough to support development of mobile app. Linda Auger recommended friendly amendment to combine Passport and Marketing funds into one. Cara motioned to accept friendly amendment. Linda seconded. All in favor. Amendment passes.
All in favor of the motion with amendment. Motion passed.
- c. **Big E:** Rebecca Eddy provided members an update with the 2021 Big E slated to happen September 17-October 3, 2021. Rosemary Bove added that all signs point that it will happen, but capacity may be limited. Big E is leaning on Avenue of States to formulate plans.
- d. **Research and Education:** Rebecca Eddy reported on updates from Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) working group and suggested a virtual SLF presentation. Commissioner Hurlburt suggested inviting NY Farm Wine Executive Director to speak; re-engage with other state's resources for virtual presentations on marketing or technical assistance. Richard Ruggiero was in agreement and asked about timeframe. Rebecca Eddy recommended February 2021 for SLF presentation and offered agency assistance with technology.



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- e. **Passport:** need to solicit proposals for mobile app creative, or explore other options. Rebecca shared information about Bloom which is being used on West Coast as an opportunity to develop platform to include in-state shipping of wines. Discussion ensued. Dr. O'Neill offered to sit on subcommittee. George Motel asked about messaging on 2020 program. Subcommittee: Mike O'Neill, Linda Auger, Cara Sawyer, Hilary Criollo.
5. **Old Business:** Discussion on marketing campaign and issuing an RFP. Need to identify costs of mobile app and then finalize budget amount for RFP. Goal is to coincide with start of 2021 Passport program.
6. **New Business:**
 - a. 2021 Meeting Dates: February 11, May 13, July 8, December 9. Jon Edwards motioned to accept. Hilary Criollo seconded. All in favor, motion passes.
 - b. Tour des Farms – Passport to Farms, seeking \$10,000 total. Discussion ensued. Tabled and will revisit at February meeting.
7. **Adjournment:** Jon Edwards motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Rebecca Eddy, December 21, 2020