



# Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council

Regular Meeting  
Thursday, December 14, 2023  
10:00 AM  
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**Members Present:** Commissioner Hurlburt, Linda Auger, Hilary Criollo, Jonathan Edwards, Cara Sawyer, George Motel, Richard Ruggiero, Jamie Jones, Ellen Woolf

**Members Absent:** Indrajeet Chaubey, Washington da Silva

**DoAg Staff:** Rebecca Eddy, Michael Wolf, Ally Hughes,

**Guests:** None

1. Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 10:08 am.
2. Motion to approve Special Meeting Minutes from July 14, 2023, made by Hilary Criollo, and seconded by Linda Auger, no comments. All in favor, minutes approved. Richard Ruggiero was not yet present for this agenda item, but upon joining asked that the meeting minutes reflect that, "Hilary Criollo asked on behalf of Keith Bishop that the Department of Agriculture share Wine Council information."
3. Public Comment: There were no members of the public present. Rebecca Eddy introduced Michael Wolf as the new contact at the Connecticut Department of Agriculture for the council.
4. Reports
  - a. Financial  
Rebecca Eddy reported that there were encumbrances of \$4,402, expenditures of \$10,510, and that the council will enter the fiscal year 2025 with approximately \$54,000. Jonathan Edwards moved to accept the financial report and was seconded by Linda Auger. All in favor, motion carried.
  - b. Legislative  
Commissioner Hurlburt noted the upcoming distribution of legislative packages.  
  
Jonathan Edwards asked questions about farmland preservation. Discussion with Commissioner Hurlburt ensued.
  - c. Big E
    - i. Review of event  
Jonathan Edwards explained details of the event from 2023 which are outlined in the Big E CT Farm Wine Council Booth 2023 Summary. Edwards noted that they saw similar

traffic and sales with the thirteen booths compared to prior years and ended this year's sales approximately two percent less than in 2022.

Rebecca Eddy reported that from the \$10,000 budgeted, the council was able to replace refrigeration and add the Kegeator and coolers. Currently there has been \$4,679.81 in fees reported from the event, however, this does not include expenses for the Kegeator or DAS printing which total approximately \$3,700.

Commissioner Hurlbert commends those involved in a successful event with over \$85,000 in sales.

ii. Action on 2023 Big E final report

Motion to approve the Big E final report made by Cara Sawyer and seconded by Linda Auger. All in favor, motion carried.

iii. Action on booth operators for 2024 and 2025

The council took no action on booth operators to gather further information. This will be an action item at the February meeting.

d. Research and Education

i. Follow up on CAES wine/grape research

Jamie Jones expressed an interest in educational programming in February.

Jamie Jones and Rebecca Eddy discussed opportunities for funding and research about grapes and Spotted Lantern Fly.

e. Passport App

i. Update on redemptions and drawing

Rebecca Eddy reports that this year's program will end 12/31/2023 and to date there were 53,322 total visits, 22,789 approved stamps, and 2,503 manual stamp approvals. The drawing will be done in mid-January for disbursement of prizes to follow in February.

Members expressed their interest in bringing back physical passport books and the desire from customers for a hard copy book to return. Discussion ensued.

Motion to allocate up to \$15,000 for production costs associated with the passport program made by George Motel and seconded by Jamie Jones. All in favor, motion carried.

ii. Action on TCC/DarumaTech change order for reset date

Rebecca Eddy explained that there was an expressed interest in resetting the stamp expiration dates for better management of the program. Discussion ensued.

Motion to allocate \$2,524.50 for DarumaTech to create a hard reset date made by Linda Auger and seconded by Hilary Criollo. All in favor, motion carried.

- f. Marketing
  - i. Action on Media RFQ budget for FY24 and 25  
No action was taken.
  - ii. Action on incorporating FWDC into Agency Marketing RFQ  
No action was taken.

5. Old Business

- a. Richard Ruggerio asked to revisit the conversation around Farm Winery, Brewery, and Cidery permits from a previous meeting. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Hurlburt stated that the DoAg Staff Attorney will reach out regarding the permit for clarification.

6. New Business

- a. Approval of 2024 Meeting Dates
  - i. February 8, 2024
  - ii. May 9, 2024
  - iii. July 11, 2024
  - iv. December 12, 2024

Motion to approve of the 2024 meeting dates as proposed made by George Motel and seconded by Jamie Jones. All in favor, motion carried.

7. Adjournment

Jamie Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Michael R. Wolf, Agriculture Marketing and Inspection Representative 1, December 19, 2023