

# DRAFT Shelter Island Deer & Tick Committee

## Meeting Minutes 09/09/09

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lapides at 10:10 am at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

### Attendance:

Committee: Chairman Rae Lapides, Janalyn Travis-Messer, Dr. William Zitek, Patricia Shillingburg, Steve Lenox and Mike Scheibel

Non-Committee: Chief James Read, Ted Hills, Jim Dougherty and Recording Secretary, Peter Vielbig

### Old Business:

- None

### New Business:

- Chairman Lapides opened by asking Chief Read what his plans were for the nuisance hunt this season. Chief Read replied that he would plan to conduct the hunt as last years and be sure not to interfere with the study.
- A discussion followed regarding the deer population vis-à-vis how it affects the study. A general consensus was reached that the deer population was down. Mike Scheibel added that there are still more deer around than ecologically sustainable and that the hunt should be continued.
- Steve Lenox asked about the stats on deer vs. car accidents and Chief Read responded that it was definitely down from 60-70/yr, three years ago to 20+/- this year – a definite decrease.

- Ray Lapides asked if the nuisance hunt hours would change. Chief Read responded that no they would remain the same. He also observed that the process was “self correcting” in that the fewer deer reduced the number of hunters.
- Steve Lenox reported anecdotally that two large landowners had told him that they observed that the tick population was way down.

Rae Lapides then turned the floor over to Dan Gilrein and Susan Walker for their information.

- Dan reported that the quality of the corn was good
- Less wildlife damage to the 4 posters
- Hunting adjustments would be made in forthcoming meetings with Chief Read and Jim Dougherty.
- Susan reported that the camera photos have shown a definite decline in ticks on the animals.
- They have a good system for population estimates
- Only other animals really using the 4 posters to feed are squirrels and raccoons, perhaps a few rats now and then.
- Wild Turkeys do not seem to eat the corn; other birds eat from the ground.
- Mike Scheibel reported that there was a marked decline in the tick infestation on deer ears from '06
- Bill Zitek asked if there was any known connection between Wild Turkeys and lone star ticks. He had seen information calling the lone star the “Turkey Tick”

Rae Lapides turned the discussion to comment on an article in the NY Times about how the people of Nantucket were mobilizing take in interest in reducing the deer/tick population.

- It was generally agreed that Shelter Island was way ahead of the curve in this process and that other towns on both forks and in other areas of the State, were interested in how the 4-poster study is proceeding here.
- Jim Dougherty said that he would be speaking to the other supervisors about the possibility of their contributing to the study. Also that the other towns had severe budget problems.

Bill Zitek asked how the education efforts were proceeding. Rae Lapidés responded that they were going to print more brochures as they are very popular and need replenishing and that she plans to continue with other education.

The question of the venison donation program was raised.

- Chief Read responded that it would continue and that a butcher would be hired as was last year.
- Susan Walker added that the possible contamination results from the three test deer taken this summer would be available in late September and forwarded to Jim Leach for his evaluation and publication. The samples were taken in a manner that would replicate the way a hunter would dress a deer.
- The venison program should be conducted with a disclaimer that people were doing this at their own risk and that there may be some contamination.

There being no further business or discussion the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Lapidés at 10:40.