

Shelter Island Deer & Tick Committee

Meeting Minutes 11/18/09

Attendance:

Members Present: Chairman Rae Lapides, Janalyn Travis-Messer, Steve Lenox, Mike Scheibel and Jennifer Zacha

Members Excused: Pat Shillingburg, Dr. William Zitek, Dr. Scott Campbell

Non-Committee Present: Supervisor Jim Dougherty, Dan Gilrein, Susan Walker and Ted Hills

Meeting called to order by Chairman Lapides at 10:07 am at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

- ❖ Chairman Lapides opened the meeting by discussing the group from the Tick Borne Disease Committee of Nantucket who came to visit Shelter Island earlier in the month. She mentioned that Mr. Gilrein and Ms. Walker met with them during the day and asked if they could share their experiences with the group. Mr. Gilrein started by saying that he has sent a report outlining the visit to Chairman Lapides and that the Nantucket group is interested in instituting a program similar to ours. He added that their main focus is on tick borne illnesses. He also shared that Nantucket has a population of approximately 2,400 deer and that they had in the vicinity of 200 deer vs. vehicle collisions last year. Ms. Walker mentioned that their hunting season is very short and Chairman Lapides added that they are slowly getting back into their hunting program. Ms. Travis-Messer inquired as to whether Nantucket has a similar habitat structure as Shelter Island. Ms. Walker commented that it is similar, but that Nantucket does not have any open spaces as large as Mashomack. Chairman Lapides mentioned that the Nantucket group is not planning to place 4-

poster units all over the island, only in certain areas. Mr. Gilrein continued by saying that he discussed costs, logistics, implementation and maintenance with the visiting group and Ms. Walker added that appropriate placement was discussed in detail as well. Chairman Lapidès added that most members of the Nantucket group are members of the scientific community. Mr. Gilrein stated that one committee member is actually the son of the entomologist for whom the blacklegged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*) was named. Chairman Lapidès also mentioned that the Nantucket group met with Supervisor Dougherty and attended a dinner with members of the Deer & Tick Committee. She added that she would be providing them with more detailed cost information as it is compiled. Mr. Gilrein commented that since Nantucket doesn't have a local Cooperative Extension (the nearest Extension personnel are located in Cape Cod) that they would need to run their program more independently. Ms. Travis-Messer said that she stressed education and prevention as being key issues. Chairman Lapidès included the fact that they have not seen evidence of the Lone Star tick on Nantucket as of yet.

- ❖ Chairman Lapidès then shared with the group the details of an e-mail she received from Vinny Palmer of the DEC. Mr. Palmer delivered a \$100,000 check to Mr. Gilrein and his associates at Cornell and added that Cornell will use some of these funds to cover the project's budget shortfall for 2009.
- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer asked if corn consumption has changed since the last update. Mr. Gilrein answered that after the dramatic decline in September (due to the abundance of acorns) corn consumption has increased again. Mr. Lenox added that he has noticed an increase in the number of acorns this year and Mr. Scheibel commented that the number of acorns from red and black oaks has in fact increased quite a bit and the number from white oaks and chestnut oaks has declined.
- ❖ Chairman Lapidès shared with the group a letter she had received from Mr. Palmer of the DEC. The letter indicated that the NYS 4-Poster Tick Management Study might be eligible for a PEP grant. She passed along the letter to Mr. Gilrein and asked if he could follow up with Mr. Palmer on it. Mr. Gilrein agreed to speak with

Mr. Palmer on the subject. Ms. Travis-Messer added that the grant could be worth another \$5,000 to the project. Mr. Gilrein also suggested that we should have a list of past project donors as this information could be of interest to future potential donors.

- ❖ Mr. Scheibel asked the group for information regarding project expenses for 2010. Chairman Lapedes mentioned that Dominick Ninivaggi of Vector Control has committed to maintaining the 20 units in Mashomack again for 2010. Mr. Gilrein added that there is still a major portion of the 2010 budget that needs to be funded, but that the pieces are coming together.
- ❖ Chairman Lapedes then asked the group about any other funding sources that may be available. Ms. Travis-Messer asked if someone should meet with Suffolk County Legislator Jay Schneiderman since he is very supportive of the project. Supervisor Dougherty stated that he will meet with Mr. Schneiderman and will also be in touch with Legislator Edward Romaine. Mr. Gilrein added that Mr. Schneiderman visited Cornell recently and was very impressed with what he learned about the project. Ms. Travis-Messer also added that the SI Town budget for the program was cut from \$199,000 to \$80,000. Mr. Gilrein stated that he has projected a 10% increase in corn consumption for 2010.
- ❖ Chairman Lapedes asked when the 4-Poster units will be deployed next year. Mr. Gilrein stated that they will be deployed in March as they were in 2009. Mr. Scheibel asked where the units will be stored for the winter. Mr. Gilrein replied that they will be stored in the same location as last year at the town landfill.
- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer asked the Cornell representatives to confirm that the deer sampling procedures have been modified to help prevent contamination. Ms. Walker responded by saying that there is no way to prevent sample contamination 100%, and that they are trying to replicate what hunters would be exposed to while dressing a deer. They have implemented procedures that will help reduce the possibility of contamination, but if a hunter is dressing a deer and obtaining the samples on his/her own, it is not a controlled environment, so contamination could still occur.

Chairman Lapidés commented that the latest test results were very good and Ms. Walker added that the sample size for that round of testing was only three deer and that the group needs to look at the bigger picture. Mr. Scheibel stated that the group needs to do a better job of informing the public of the test results. Supervisor Dougherty agreed and suggested sending excerpts of the test results to the Reporter.

- ❖ Supervisor Dougherty asked about the status of the ¼% grant application that the Group for the East End is working on. Chairman Lapidés responded by stating that Jeremy Samuelson is tying up loose ends on the application and should get a draft copy of the application out soon. She asked if Mr. Dougherty could check in with Jeremy on his progress. Supervisor Dougherty mentioned that he has been in touch with Jeremy recently regarding the grant.
- ❖ The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 9 at 10 am.

UPDATE: Chairman Lapidés announced via an e-mail sent on December 2nd that the December Committee meeting has been cancelled and that the next meeting will be in January 2010.

Attached: Shelter Island and Fire Island Deer & Tick Control Study Monthly Update – October-November 2009 provided by Dan Gilrein & Susan Walker.

Meeting adjourned by Chairman Lapidés at 10:52 am.