

Shelter Island Deer & Tick Committee

Meeting Minutes 04/21/10

Attendance:

Members Present: Janalyn Travis-Messer, Abigail Field, Mike Scheibel, Dr. Scott Campbell, Dr. William Zitek and Jennifer Zacha

Members Excused: Chairman Rae Lapidés, Pat Shillingburg and Steve Lenox

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

Meeting called to order by Janalyn Travis-Messer at 10:05 am at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

- ❖ Dan Gilrein began the meeting by updating the group on the status of the 4-poster units. He stated that all Shelter Island units were deployed by the end of March. Deployments were delayed mostly due to contractor scheduling issues. He reported that there were no problems noted with the units and that two of the units in Mashomack were relocated. He added that all landowners were on board again this year. Fire Island also experienced delays in deployment due to weather issues mostly, but all units had been deployed as of early April.
- ❖ Mr. Gilrein mentioned that Andy Szulinski of C.R. Daniels will be meeting with him to discuss 4-poster design issues, such as inadequate springs and the inconvenience of the bottom panel of the units, which need to be unscrewed for cleaning. Mr. Gilrein and his associates have several improvement ideas in mind which they plan to share with Mr. Szulinski, and he stated that the company was open to looking into these suggestions.

- ❖ Mr. Gilrein then informed the group that he will be attending the East End Mayors and Supervisors meeting this afternoon and had a handout prepared for same, which he shared with the group. In addition, he and Mrs. Walker had given a presentation on the 4-poster study to an Ecological Dimensions of Disease class, which is being taught by an adjunct professor from Columbia University.
- ❖ The topic then shifted to project finances. Mr. Gilrein shared with the group that even with the generous grants from the DEC, the town has a \$30,000 budget shortfall and Cornell has an \$80,000 shortfall. The project is scheduled to end by early 2011, after all final reports are completed. He added that the funds we currently have available would get us through late summer/early fall. If additional funding is not secured, the units would need to be pulled earlier in the year, which would compromise the results of the study. He stated that he would like to do one more tick analysis in June 2011, which would reflect the results of the 2010 deployment of 4-posters.
- ❖ Ms. Field asked what would happen if we didn't deploy the units again in 2011, but perhaps deployed them every other year. Mr. Gilrein replied by saying that he had not seen data on that particular scenario, so he could not comment on the efficacy of that method of deployment. Dr. Campbell added that some communities do deploy every other year because it is more cost effective. He added that trying to determine infection rates (from tick-borne illnesses) is costly and difficult to do.
- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer asked Supervisor Dougherty if a representative from the Department of Health will be attending the East End Mayors and Supervisors Association meeting later today. Supervisor Dougherty stated that unfortunately no one from that department would be in attendance. She then asked if it were a possibility that the Association may present a check to help fund the tick study. Supervisor Dougherty replied that the Association's monies had already been reserved for other groups/issues, so a check would not be forthcoming. Ms. Travis-Messer then asked if the town's budget shortfall could be corrected with funds from the contingency plan. Supervisor Dougherty explained that those funds were slated for use in the upcoming flood pump-out project.

- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer then moved on to discuss another funding opportunity which has been presented to the Foundation by the Group for the East End. Apparently, if the Foundation can raise \$8,000 to \$10,000 (roughly 10%), a private donor would fund the remainder of an \$80,000 donation to the study. She reported that the Foundation has raised \$1,000 of this amount already. She wanted to stress that a large portion of the study's funds have come from private donors (residents.) She also added that she will be attending a meeting in June regarding the ¼% grant and that it looks favorable that the study could receive a decent amount of funding from said grant. She cautioned that those funds may not be available until the end of the year.
- ❖ Mr. Gilrein mentioned that he has spoken with many landowners who have 4-poster units on their property and they have been very cooperative and supportive of the project. He suggested that these landowners be approached regarding donations to the project, especially since they are directly benefitting from having the units on their land.
- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer commented that education was a large part of the Foundation's efforts early on, and that those efforts have fizzled somewhat as time has progressed. Mr. Gilrein added that tick images on the internet are not very good quality and that high quality images of all local tick species and all life stages should be accessible in one place. Ms. Travis-Messer suggested Channel 22 as a possible media outlet. Ms. Field talked about tick identification keys being helpful.
- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer shared that she had recently met with Dr. Peter Kelt (who has a 4-poster unit on his property) and he had mentioned that in the past he would see deer that were loaded with ticks and now the deer appear to have very few ticks on them. She is hopeful that this is an indication that the devices are working as anticipated. Mr. Gilrein cautioned that it is a little early to tell since the lone stars are just coming out, so there has not been much tick activity the past few months.

- ❖ Mr. Gilrein added that they are considering taking fewer deer tissue samples (such as eliminating liver samples since they have never shown any trace of permethrin) to help cut project costs. Ms. Travis-Messer commented on the recent press release which announced that 26 of the 29 deer sampled over the course of the project had no trace of permethrin, and the 3 that did show traces were probably the result of cross-contamination. Mrs. Walker discussed the changes which were made to the sampling protocols. Ms. Travis-Messer asked for confirmation that the permethrin was not passing through the deer hides into the tissues below. Mr. Gilrein stated that a more in-depth study would need to be performed to determine the capacity for that. Mrs. Walker stated that she has begun her field and camera work for the season.

- ❖ The group then reviewed and discussed handouts on the deer harvest numbers for the most recent hunting season. Mr. Scheibel commented on the Mashomack numbers and added that one more doe was harvested in Mashomack since his last report to the group back in February.

- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer informed the group that the May meeting will be Chairman Lapedes' final meeting with the Committee, since she will be moving out of state, and that she would like to have a party in her honor at that time. All agreed.

- ❖ The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 12 at 10 am, in the Town Hall meeting room.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 am.