

# Shelter Island

## Deer & Tick Committee

Meeting Minutes 06/16/10

Attendance:

Members Present: Chairman Pat Shillingburg, Janalyn Travis-Messer, Mike Scheibel, Dr. Scott Campbell and Jennifer Zacha

Members Excused: Abigail Field, Steve Lenox, Dr. William Zitek and Dr. Vincent DiGregorio

Non-Committee Present: Dan Gilrein (via phone) and Maggie Hayes (SI Reporter)

Meeting called to order by Chairman Pat Shillingburg at 10:01 am at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg started the meeting by calling Mr. Gilrein at his office for an update from Cornell. Mr. Gilrein stated that tick sampling started last week on Shelter Island and it was finished yesterday. They are sampling a few new areas in Mashomack and at Goat Hill and stated that they are on schedule or maybe even a little ahead of last year's schedule. He remarked that the tick counts are very low on Shelter Island – "remarkably low." He added that we won't really know the full extent of how well the 4-posters are working until the tick sampling is completed in North Haven (the control site.) They will start sampling in that area this Friday. From what he has heard, tick levels are currently much higher there, but weather conditions may have affected them. He went on to share that things are going well with the applicator and maintenance of the units. He had no major problems to report and stated that there appears to be much less wildlife damage to the units compared with last year. He then mentioned that Jennifer Stress is leaving the project and Wesley Smith will be taking over

in her place. Chairman Shillingburg then asked Mr. Gilrein about Fire Island's progress. Mr. Gilrein stated that they will be sampling Fire Island after North Haven is completed. He anticipates that all sampling will be finished earlier in the season than it was last year. Dr. Campbell added that it is difficult to compare meteorological conditions from year to year. Mr. Gilrein agreed and said that they try to deal with the variability in the weather, watch degree days and sample from a wide array of sites. He also added that Cornell received additional funding for the project and this money should cover all additional expenses, but there are always unknown factors to consider, such as how much corn the deer will eat. He has asked for another \$20,000 to cover any budget gaps that may occur. Chairman Shillingburg then thanked Mr. Gilrein for his report and asked him if he would like to remain on the call to offer additional input during the remainder of the meeting, which Mr. Gilrein agreed to do.

- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg then began to discuss the agenda she provided. She wanted to focus the meeting on what should be done this summer and what should be planned for future years. For the summer, she discussed a few options such as placing some sort of tick display in Town Hall as an educational tool for the public. She also mentioned that there were more of the informational brochures that the Committee designed and distributed in previous years, but they may need to be updated. She added that there were no longer any Spanish language brochures since they had not been translated correctly, and that this should be addressed since there is a need for them. Dr. Campbell suggested that any educational materials should be available at the public library since this is where people would go to look for information to educate themselves on this topic. He also added that the County has educational materials in Spanish and that he would see what they have available, check that it is up-to-date, and bring his findings to the next meeting. Ms. Travis-Messer suggested that the poster which was presented at the last meeting is a great educational tool and should be utilized if it is not already displayed at Town Hall. Mr. Gilrein expressed that the poster is just a general overview of the 4-Poster program and not an ideal educational tool as far as tick education specifically. Chairman Shillingburg stated that the Committee needs to design

a poster of some kind for public education purposes. Mr. Gilrein asked what size poster would be best. Chairman Shillingburg stated that a color 8 ½ x 11 poster would be a manageable size that could be placed on bulletin boards around town. Ms. Travis-Messer added that it would be a good size for doctor's offices as well. Mr. Gilrein recommended that the poster should have fairly limited text and what text there is should be bold and big and there should be lots of photos. He added that he would be able to work with Dr. Campbell on this project.

- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg then continued with the agenda items and discussed a possible opportunity for a public information program this summer with tick specialist Howie Ginsberg of the Rhode Island National Seashore. She stated that she had a discussion with Mr. Gilrein recently and that he had said that Mr. Ginsberg is an effective public speaker and is very knowledgeable on the subject. She asked the group if she should extend him an invitation to come and speak this summer. Dr. Campbell agreed that Mr. Ginsberg is a great resource, but added that he is extremely busy as of late since he was recently awarded a Lyme disease grant. He stated that there is no harm in asking him and that he would provide Mr. Ginsberg's e-mail address to Chairman Shillingburg.
  
- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg then moved on to discuss future ideas for the Committee. She said the main focus should be how to keep tick counts low. Dr. Campbell said that a lot depends on the outcome of the final report and the fact that the DEC still needs to decide whether or not they will register the use of the units in New York State. Ms. Travis-Messer stated that it was her understanding that the DEC will extend the project's special use permit for another year to cover 2011 as well. Mr. Gilrein agreed that that was his understanding also. Mr. Scheibel commented that the group needs to find out soon if the permit extension is definite or not since this information is necessary to plan the budget for 2011. Chairman Shillingburg offered to e-mail Vinny Palmer of the DEC to confirm this information. She also added that she had recently spoken to Supervisor Dougherty about including the 4-Poster program in future town budgets.

- ❖ The group then went on to discuss the need of a dedicated town or county staff member who would be on-hand for the day-to-day operation of the units once the Cornell staff is no longer on board. Ms. Travis-Messer commented that she thought that one or two highway department personnel had been trained to work with the 4-posters. Chairman Shillingburg replied that if they had been trained it was a few years ago and they are not current on their training since they were ultimately never utilized for the project. Dr. Campbell also stated that the training is very involved and includes a 30-hour course, an exam and fieldwork with a licensed pesticide applicator. Mr. Scheibel agreed that he was unaware of any highway personnel who are currently licensed applicators. Regarding Cornell's final project report, Dr. Campbell asked Mr. Gilrein if he could include recommendations for the future use of the 4-poster units, such as placement of units and number of units to put in use. Mr. Gilrein replied by stating that he had planned to include that information as a part of the report.
  
- ❖ The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 21 at 10 am, in the Town Hall meeting room.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.