

Shelter Island

Deer & Tick Committee

Meeting Minutes 07/21/10

Attendance:

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

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

Non-Committee Present: Dan Gilrein (via phone), Susan Walker and Ted Hills

Meeting called to order by Chairman Pat Shillingburg at 10:04 am at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg started the meeting by asking Mrs. Walker to report on her recent work. Mrs. Walker told the group that the sampling protocol has changed slightly from last year and that the new protocol can be found on the project website. She added that the goal has been to answer the question of how this project influences the hunters and community at large. She informed the group that she recently met with the NYS Department of Health about their concerns of tickicide residues on deer when hunters are processing them. She stated that she will post an abstract about it on the Cornell website.
- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg then called Mr. Gilrein at his office for his report. Mr. Gilrein stated that he and his team are almost done entering the tick count data and should be finished with the summary by early next week. His initial impression is that tick numbers are significantly lower than previous years. He added

that weather may be a factor, although there has not been much research done on this. He commented that Shelter Island numbers are greatly reduced especially in areas like Cackle Hill. Mrs. Walker asked Mr. Gilrein if he could offer some input on why the count is also lower in the control site of North Haven. Mr. Gilrein replied that it could be the weather and that he hopes to be able to do another round of sampling in June 2011, which would reflect the results of this year's deployment. He added that the numbers on Fire Island are lower also. He stated that there is no hunting on Fire Island and the units are deployed in dense residential areas, so corn consumption is around 1 ½ times higher there. Chairman Shillingburg asked if the deer are looking better overall. Mrs. Walker replied that tick load on the deer has been reduced based on visual interpretations from the camera surveys.

- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg then continued with the agenda items and asked the group about the plan for the future. She asked Dr. Campbell to report on what he had looked into on the subject. Dr. Campbell stated that he had been in touch with Dr. Mat Pound, who said it is too early to come up with a plan since the final report data would need to be analyzed first. Dr. Pound also said he would be happy to offer his assistance once the data is ready for review. Mr. Gilrein added that the final report should be ready in late winter/early spring of 2011 and that Mrs. Walker's work will end around March or April next year.
- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg then commented on the need to come up with a number for the town budget for next year. Ms. Travis-Messer asked if fewer units could be deployed or if the deployment season could be shortened to save costs. Mr. Gilrein stressed that Mrs. Walker's data on deer movement and behavior is crucial in order to get a sense of which deployment areas are the most important. He also stated that it is still uncertain which locations will be available for unit deployment next year. He added that he is working on gathering this information and that it may be possible to place units on private property and/or have homeowners pay for units located at their residences. Ms. Travis-Messer stated that the group requested a \$200,000 budget for 2010 and that it was reduced to \$95,000. She said the group should focus on that number in the hopes the board approves at

least that amount again for 2011 and we should look into how many devices can be deployed for that amount. Chairman Shillingburg commented that there should be a maintenance program in place for all future years. She recommended deploying for the entire season, but reducing the number of units deployed or deploying them every other year. Dr. Campbell stated that Dr. Pound mentioned that certain areas such as Mashomack may not be as imperative to the study since it is non-residential. Dr. Campbell also added that the study officially ends next year and if the units aren't registered by the DEC, the program can't proceed anyway. Ms. Travis-Messer reminded Dr. Campbell that Vinny Palmer of the DEC has stated that he will extend the permit for another year. Dr. Campbell said that we should get confirmation on that and that the registration process takes time. Ms. Travis-Messer asked if North Haven could use some of our 4-poster units if we only deploy some and not all of them next year. Chairman Shillingburg stated she would speak with Mr. Palmer and relay his response to the group at the next meeting. Mr. Gilrein mentioned that according to the 4-poster user's guide Shelter Island should have 166 units deployed based on area, so we can still have some success by deploying fewer units than what is called for.

- ❖ Dr. Campbell asked if the final report will include any deer management recommendations. Mrs. Walker responded by saying that it was not a required part of the report, but if she was supplied with the specific informational needs of the group, she could include that information. Dr. Campbell stressed the importance of it. Dr. Zitek inquired about the areas on the Island where no units are currently deployed, such as Shorewood. Mrs. Walker stated that she would be looking into that to determine where units should be placed in the future and added that housing density is a determining factor. Mr. Gilrein commented that he has seen new plant growth in areas that have been heavily browsed and that deer numbers have dropped due to deer management efforts.
- ❖ Mrs. Walker asked the group if resident tick complaints are currently being tracked. Chairman Shillingburg replied that there haven't been complaints of late, so there is no tracking system in place. Ms. Travis-Messer stated that she recently inquired at Dr.

Peter Kelt's office whether or not they have been seeing fewer patients with tick bites. He mentioned that he did not see any tick bite patients until June of this year, whereas he traditionally would start seeing them in March. Mr. Gilrein added that the 4-poster is not the beginning and end of the tick issue and that deer management is a huge component, as is public education. He also mentioned that there may be other options, such as biological products and modifications to the units that could reduce costs.

- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg informed the group that the Committee's tick brochures had been delivered to the IGA and a few other Island locations. She asked about the poster that had been discussed at the last meeting. She stated that she would inquire with Town Hall staff as to the location of the poster and whether it will be posted in Town Hall or not. Mr. Gilrein offered to print a smaller version of the poster and said he would deliver it to the group. He stated he will work on creating an 8 ½" x 11" version. Dr. Campbell asked if the poster being discussed was for educational purposes or if it was simply a smaller version of the large 4-poster poster that Town Hall has. He stated that we need a poster that discusses prevention and shows the types of ticks. Chairman Shillingburg asked about a patient handbook for visitors who are bitten by a tick on the Island and go back home to see their doctors for treatment. They could give the brochure to the doctor as a way of aiding in their diagnosis. Dr. Campbell responded that he had left some county brochures in Chairman Shillingburg's car. She stated she would look at them. Mrs. Walker suggested that something could be provided to veterinarians' offices since many pets are seen for tick-related problems. Dr. Campbell stated that there are many brochures, cards, etc. out there already and that the group should look at these and utilize them instead of re-inventing the wheel. He added that the Lyme Foundation has a good educational card available.
- ❖ Chairman Shillingburg stated that she e-mailed Howie Ginsburg, as discussed at the last meeting, and that he has not replied. Dr. Campbell reminded her that he is busy with a grant project, but that he would follow up with him. Chairman Shillingburg suggested that the group's focus for now should be getting

information out to the public. Dr. Campbell asked Mr. Gilrein if Cornell may have some educational materials. Mr. Gilrein stated that he has not seen anything, but will look into it.

- ❖ Ms. Travis-Messer asked Mrs. Walker if she has learned anything new from her research on deer movement. Mrs. Walker replied that her research is posted on the project website and that deer movement is based on biological factors. In May and June when the does are ready to give birth they tend to move into Mashomack and then they move back to their home areas afterwards. She added that it varies, but seems that the deer in the South study area stay closer to home, whereas the deer in the North study area move outside of their home range more often. Chairman Shillingburg asked if deer inherit their ranges. Mrs. Walker replied that they do. Fawns stay within their mothers' home range and over time the ranges overlap. She added that more educational presentations should be done. She stated that she would need a location to hold the presentation and that the fall season would be a better time for her since the summer is quite busy. Dr. Zitek commented that in the summer there are more people here, so that would be an ideal time for a presentation otherwise. Ms. Travis-Messer suggested Columbus Day weekend since many people come to the Island that weekend. Mrs. Walker stated she would be out of town at that time. Ms. Travis-Messer then suggested sometime in the end of September. Chairman Shillingburg suggested the school auditorium as a venue and that the group could discuss the details at the next meeting.
- ❖ Mr. Hills asked the group about the status of the grant that the Group for the East End has been working on. Mr. Gilrein stated that the paperwork was finalized and submitted in May and that a decision should be made in approximately a month. He added the amount should be around \$20,000.
- ❖ The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 18 at 10 am, in the Town Hall meeting room.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 am.