

DEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
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TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**Deer Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2012**

In attendance: Mike Russnok, Chairman, Scott MacQuarrie, Vice Chairman, Frank Mabley, Donna Merrill, and Steve White

Also in attendance: Patricia Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs; Rudy Escalante, Kevin Clark, Judy Mabley

- I. Chairman Russnok called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.
- II. Russnok indicated the minutes should read 39 hunters are on the list to be tested for the 2012 season, as opposed to 39 having been tested last year.

Mike Russnok made a Motion to accept the minutes as corrected, Seconded by Frank Mabley, and passed 5-0-0.

- III. Russnok suggested a change in the agenda in order to discuss hunt planning and Public outreach at this point. It was the consensus of the members to move forward with this suggestion.

A. Hunt Plans

Russnok reviewed the June testing schedule. Hunter proficiency testing will be held at noon on Saturday, June 23, 2012 at [Lions Field](#) on Old Mill Road. Forty hunters are scheduled for testing and this is the only planned date. Should conflicts arise, individuals can make arrangements with Tim Fridinger. Of these 40 individuals, [approximately](#) 15 are new to the program.

For the controlled hunt, hunters have until June 30th to get their paperwork in.

Steve White provided an update on the landowner match program. Of the 40 surveys sent out to landowners who participated previously, only two responded. White went on to discuss the workload of contacting interested homeowners, matching them with hunters, and the need to follow up. Mabley agreed to help with the task. Means to maintain

unified oversight by White was initiated and then deferred to White and Mabley to sort out at their convenience.

White asked if the Conservation Commission newsletter could be used to promote landowner participation. Sesto responded that the timing is poor for this purpose and there is a need to educate the public about sharpshooting.

Russnok asked Patricia Sesto to secure permission to access SNEW lands for scouting, etc. as of September 1, 2012.

- b. Donna Merrill discussed the flyer she put together for the Garden Club plant sale and other venues. Her initial instinct was to make it quite straight forward, avoiding “flashiness” in deference to the subject matter. This approach did not play out well, having resulted in a bland flyer. Rudy Escalante offered help create a more appealing tri-fold and Loretta Foley will be called on as well.

Inquiries were made pertaining to the website. It is the desire of the committee that the website provides the opportunity for homeowners and hunters to sign up on-line. Sesto will follow up with this request.

Merrill, Escalante and Foley will look into the opportunities to undertake e-blasts. [Merrill will also draft a letter to the editor on the 2012 hunt plan in an effort to highlight the 2012 hunt plan and get homeowners to come forward and have an hunter assigned to their land.](#)

Escalante inquired about speakers and the ability to broadcast the presentations. Sesto indicated the Annex meeting room is equipped to do this.

- IV. Sesto reported on her presentation to the Board of Selectmen. Her presentation highlighted the changes in this year’s plan, namely researching the suitability of sharp-shooting and allowing hunting on Saturdays and most holidays. Selectmen focused on the sharpshooting. There was some discomfort with the idea this would proceed this year. Sesto reaffirmed that this planning year would be dedicated to finding out more about the option and what the tolerance of the public is. Education will be a major focus for the committee. Cost seemed to be a discouraging factor for a selectman, leading Sesto to conclude that this committee’s research needs to include the cost of carry an overabundant deer population. A study exists regarding costs associated with car accidents and landscape protection. The Board of Education will be contacted to see if costs associated with long term Lyme disease are quantifiable.

Sesto explained the article in the paper following this meeting was not generated by her or any particular committee member. It is normal for the press to cover matters presented to the Board of Selectmen. The committee

will follow up with two press releases; the first on the 2012 plan, and the second on sharpshooting.

The existing FAQs document was considered and there is a desire to get this on the committee's webpage.

Russnok introduced Kevin Clark, a resident interested in joining the committee. Kevin Clark reminded members that he had attended a meeting late last year. He followed up with a letter of interest to the selectmen, but did not hear back. He described himself as being interested in promoting the work of the committee, willing to work on either the hunts or public outreach. He is a bird hunter, not a deer hunter. Mr. Clark was encouraged to resubmit a letter of interest to the selectmen and this committee will endorse his candidacy.

With no further business, the committee adjourned at 7:40 p.m.