

DEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Telephone (203) 563-0180
Fax (203) 563-0284



TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**Deer Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2016**

In attendance: Loretta Foley, Scott MacQuarrie, Steve White, Kevin Clark, Mike Russnok (arrived at 7:45pm)

Absent: Donna Merrill (Notified of intended absence)

Also in attendance: Mike Conklin, Director of Environmental Affairs

- I. Clark Motioned to call the meeting to order at 6:35pm, Seconded by Foley and carried 4-0-0.
- II. Controlled Hunt Survey Results –Committee members reviewed the parcel maps for the properties that were hunted in the 2015/2016 season. Russnok joined the meeting. Clark reported CT DEEP website has reported 112 deer were harvested in Wilton this season. Russnok reported CT DEEP website had posted 160 deer were harvested in Wilton in the 2014/2015 season. Russnok explained the lower harvest number is likely due to a combination of a high acorn mast, warm weather and an increased numbers of coyotes. He elaborated deer were able to feed on acorns and overlooked corn deer feeders. Deer also moved from one property to another less because the weather was warm and they did not have to travel as far to find food. Hunters have reported less deer in the woods. Clark mentioned there may be an increase in the numbers of coyotes that prey on deer.

Clark asked how the Committee can obtain Lyme disease statistics. Foley asked about the tick testing program in the Wilton Health Department. Conklin explained that apparently only the engorged ticks that are sent to the state lab are actually tested for Lyme. White mentioned he has received data on all of the ticks he has submitted to the program. Conklin explained the FCMDA most likely collects data on Lyme disease statistics and that Dr. Georgina Scholl may have updated data for Wilton. Clark found some data on the CT DPH website that suggests the Lyme disease rates may be increasing in Wilton.

Russnok reviewed each parcel hunted this season versus the number of deer harvested from each parcel. White mentioned there may be a prime hunting location off Seeley Road that is owned by the Wilton Land Conservation Trust and the Committee should consider requesting to add that location this year. Russnok explained there were minimal negative confrontations between hunters

and the public this season; a few hikers on SNEW land and two (2) game cameras were taken but then later returned. Foley asked how hunters utilize game cameras and Russnok described how hunters use the data collected by the cameras to plan when and where to hunt.

Russnok asked if staff reached out to the Wilton food pantry about possible venison donations. Conklin responded he will reach out to them this month.

Homeowner Match Survey Results – Russnok explained there were only four (4) property owners that participated in the program this season. The hunters are generally happy with the properties and they will plan to hunt those properties next season.

- III. Open Position To Be Filled - Russnok explained Ben Couch is still interested in the position. Conklin noted he will work with the First Selectman's office to move forward with filling the position.
- IV. MacQuarrie made a Motion to approve the minutes of December 8, 2015 as drafted, Seconded by Russnok, and carried 5-0-0.
- V. The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.