

Fall 2019 CT-TACF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Phil Arnold, Richard Bailey, John Baker, David Bingham, Florian Carle, Chas Catania, Stan Chandley, Jay Coles, Kendra Collins, Ryan Date, Keith Johnson, Ron Hanser Jr, Bert Malkus, Jack Ostroff, Ginny Patsun, Jack Swatt, Mark Vollaro

President Jack Swatt called the meeting to order at 10:08 am

Moment of silence for John Blossom, one of our board members. Jane suggested to plant a chestnut tree in his parish.

Approval of the Minutes

On a motion by John Baker, seconded by Bert Malkus, the minutes of the Spring Membership and Board meetings were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report – Jim Gage

The CT chapter currently has a balance of \$43,569. On a motion by John Baker, seconded by Jack Ostroff, the treasurer report (attached in appendix) was unanimously approved.

Jim wants to step down of his role of Treasurer next year. **TASK:** We are looking for a volunteer to take over the role of CT Chapter treasurer.

Most of the bills have not been submitted to the Monton grant (April 1 to March 31). Please send the invoices, documents, receipts... if you have orchard expenses by February to Jim. So far \$600-700 have been spent, on a total of \$5000. The grant will be requested again next year. The grant report will be sent in February by Kendra.

We passed the financial audit for last year (see audit report by John Baker attached)

Jack Swatt is looking for our state ID to set up a tax-exempt account with Home Depot.

Review of TACF Annual Meeting – Jack Swatt, Jack Ostroff and Kendra Collins

Jack gave a review of the annual meeting. The information shared by Jared at our Spring 2019 meeting was presented again in more details.

The restoration committee had a discussion about the type of trees to be return to the forest (characteristics, resistance, American character, survival rate...)

Regarding the ecological effects, the transgenic tree went through a battery of tests to be approved. Other trees (hybrids, crossbreeds) will be tested and compared to make sure the transgenic tree plays the same role than American chestnut tree.

TASK: Please read the external talking points to make sure our messaging is constant all across the organization. This was developed with a PR team and make sure anyone talking to the public can talk about the program. This is available on the intranet of the website (Use chapter login

password: ask Florian, Jack, or Kendra). Talking points and the pitch card were sent by email to the board members by Jack.

When the USDA opens the 60-day comment period (Feb 2020), all chapters' members are encouraged to leave comments if they wish (your comment will be public). Guidance will be provided from headquarter to make sure each comment is counted. We need to show support to this application to counterbalance the people against who might be very vocal.

TASK: Kendra, Jack Swatt and Jack Ostroff will be drafting the *Chapter specific science plan*, a two-page outline for the scientific work performed by each chapter. It's a work plan for each chapter, to keep track of actionable items. A committee composed of board members volunteers will edit and discuss the plan, to be finalize by the end of the year.

Orchard Reports

Kendra wants to create/update a running table of the selection of each tree in the orchards to keep track if they were phenotyped or genotyped

The dog park plans at the orchard at Woodbridge were cancelled. All the trees there are sick but look good (especially 34, 35, 36). The nuts harvested were brought to the meeting

Backcross Breeding Orchards

TASK: Kendra will schedule with David Bingham the breeding selection for his orchard in 2020.

Ginny Patsun's orchard will be done in 2021.

TASK: Kendra will reach out to the science teacher at Great Mountain Forest to have his forestry class do an inventory.

Orchard ladders can be ordered on the Monton grant and left on specific locations in the state for everyone's use.

Seed Orchards

Pretty good shape on inventory for this winter.

Inoculation is done when the whole plot is 1-inch in diameter at 18 inches. Might be getting close in Ginny's Orchard.

Germplasm Conservation Orchards

Potential for a couple this Spring: Dave Morse from Woodstock, and Ron Hansen from Wallingford

Kendra, Jack and Ron will discuss about the design in a chain email (size, trees, fencing...). Possible 1-2 acres on Blue Hills in Wallingford. reimbursement from the Monton grant could be applied to a ratio of 2 acres (cleared section of 5 acres, and 11 acres)

Lot of reports of trees coming out (see 2019 American chestnut harvest data).

Interest in making a northern southern GCO

Outreach and Education – Jack Swatt

Durham Fair had a good turnout, but low in volunteers. Next year, the booth will be in the environmental section (free of charge).

Jack gave a couple of well attended lectures in the Fall and made some connections with land trust organizers. Talks about a seed or GCO.

Eastern Connecticut should be targeted for a next fair.

Future plans for 2020

- Flower and Garden show in Hartford in February, will need volunteers.
- Regional Grafting workshop in Portsmouth with Hill, with back up plans in CT.
- ID and collection workshop/hike to have people learn how to do it.
- Hikes in July: go see the American Chestnut in Nehantic State Forest, and walk in the Bull Hill Preserve in Thompson
- Old Lyme: Tree planted in front of the Public Library. Clearly blighted, but new growth at the top. The library is undergoing renovation and is created an educational/conservation garden. They will be happy to have a new sign next to the tree to educate. This tree is a good candidate for pollenating, and genotyping. Talk possible there too.
- Yale School of the School of Forestry at Yale - Possible internship to help with the data entry for the CAES orchard.
- UConn students might help with the identification of the American chestnuts they found there.
- Send a representative at the Connecticut Land Conservation Council - First weekend of March. Or organize a workshop in 2021.
- Ginny wants to be involved with the Connecticut Plant Science Day in August 7, 2020

Committees

Nominating committee: we will keep the same committee from last year

Communication committee: Florian Carle will help with the annual newsletter. People are encouraged to write on their work to include in the newsletter. Highlight the work done locally, photos, president letters, announce events, ask for volunteers...

Help with annual meeting Ginny/Florian

Old Business

Update website/Social media

Bill developed the website. We are updating the broken links

Florian will ask about creating a subgroup.

New Business

Invasive species

- Ginny wants to bring to our attention the danger of jumping worms which are making their way up north (invasive species).
- Spotted lantern fly was seen in CT. Jack will ask Michael to draft a letter.
- Ambrosia beetle, with exotic species particularly bad for chestnut trees.

On a motion by Jack Swatt, seconded by John Baker, the meeting was closed at 12:14 pm.

CT-TACF Treasurers Report – Jim Gage

Nov. 22, 2019

Webster Bank Checking Account	\$8,567
Fidelity Brokerage Account	<u>\$35,002</u>
Total	\$43,569