



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Governor's Council for Agricultural Development



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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AUGUST 30, 2012

I. CONVENE MEETING

Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky, council chair, called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m.

In addition to Chairman Reviczky, the following council members were present: Allyn Brown, III, James Guida, Jason Hoagland, Herb Holden, Jr., Jamie Jones, Michael Keilty, Shelly Oechsler, Kevin Sullivan, Jr., Henry Talmage, and Dr. Greg Weidemann. Council members Erica Andrews, Winter Caplanson, George Hindinger, and Greg Veneziano were absent.

Also in attendance were presenters Joe Geremia, William Rees, Michel Nischan, Dr. Robert Kennedy, and Stephen Ritz; state representatives Larry Butler and Elaine O'Brien; and numerous guests.

II. REMARKS BY CHAIR

Chairman Reviczky welcomed attendees and provided an overview of the council's strategic planning project. He announced that Governor Malloy was planning to stop by during the afternoon, and reminded participants that the meeting was being broadcast by CT-N. (Video coverage by CT-N is available at <http://ct-n.com/ondemand.asp?ID=8123>.) He then introduced the five presenters and explained that they would participate in a panel discussion and Q+A session after their presentations.

III. PRESENTATIONS BY PANELISTS

Joe Geremia from Geremia Greenhouse spoke about on indoor food production, research and technology, and producer training. He was followed by William Rees from Green Power Solutions, who gave a presentation about on-farm energy production. Next, Michel Nischan of Wholesome Wave and the Dressing Room talked about aggregation and distribution of farm products, food security, and different sources of funding. Then Dr. Robert Kennedy from the Board of Regents for Higher Education spoke about education and workforce development for agriculture.

The first four presenters took questions from council members.

IV. VISIT BY GOVERNOR MALLOY

Governor Dannel P. Malloy arrived at 1:43 p.m. and addressed the group. He praised Commissioner Reviczky and his staff for their work and the work of the council, and talked about the importance of agriculture and initiatives such as the Farmland Restoration Program, enacted through legislation passed during last fall special session. He concluded by saying, "There is nothing but upside for Connecticut in agriculture."

V. PRESENTATIONS BY PANELISTS

Stephen Ritz from the Green Bronx Machine gave a presentation on ways to bring crop production into the classroom and beyond, with an emphasis on education, health, and workforce development.

The panel discussion and Q+A with council members resumed.

VI. DETERMINE NEXT STEPS IN PLANNING PROCESS

After a brief recess, Chairman Reviczky provided an update on the strategic planning project, noting that 55 interviews would be complete by week's end. He reported that the online survey had gone out and 142 responses had been received to date, and that invitations letters for working group service had been sent during the week.



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Chairman Reviczky also reported that Governor Malloy had toured the Hartford Regional Market on August 6, 2012, and that the Infrastructure Working Group Chair, Herb Holden, had joined Commissioner Reviczky on a tour of the new 700,000-square-foot Philadelphia Wholesale Produce Market, the world's largest fully refrigerated wholesale produce marketplace, for ideas and information on what might be done in Connecticut.

The council discussed the regional listening sessions to be held during the fall and came to consensus that four early evening sessions should be scheduled between the dates of September 18 and 27, 2012, in the following locations: Norwich, Wallingford or New Haven, Torrington, and Windsor.

Next the council discussed the topic-focused meetings to be held in October. Members reported on their choices for topics for further study. The council came to consensus that the topic-focused meeting should be held between the dates of October 11 and 17, 2012. Topics will be selected from those submitted by council members.

The council then discussed the date for the statewide summit at which a draft of the plan will be presented. There was consensus it should be held on December 17, 2012, at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

VII. NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The council came to consensus that a special meeting should be scheduled between October 17 and November 13, 2012, noting that the next regular quarterly meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2012.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Chairman Reviczky adjourned meeting at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Piotrowicz
September 4, 2012