

Wakeman Town Farm

October 17, 2018 Committee Meeting

Committee Members Present: Alice Ely, Lisa Finn, Liz Milwe, Eve Pensak, Terri Piekara, Susan Schmidt, Judy Sloan

Others Present: Corey Thomas, Ellen Goldman

1. Farmer's Report

Partnering with Green Goats and the Town of Westport to sustainably maintain Town Land adjacent to the Farm was a success. Our loaned goats have been returned and we are considering using WTF's own goats to continue the process.

Exploring the feasibility of adding webcams to our barn area. Requires bringing electricity to the large animal enclosure that will enhance the care we provide to our animals and also attract the broader community of all ages with live-streaming web-based cameras. A web cam program can reach folks who can not otherwise access the farm in person as well as engage those close by to come for an in person visit.

Raised beds in our gardens are getting a much-needed makeover. Rotting wood will be replaced, paths will be widened and bed heights will be changed for increased accessibility. The project will also incorporate changes that will make it easier to rotate crops for better soil management.

Little Farmer programs are a big hit and we are excited to give younger families an overall introduction to the farm. Older students are focused on more in-depth, age-appropriate projects and chores.

Fall workshops continue to attract large audiences, especially our recent compost lecture. We've rotated our schedule to include weekday evenings, which has worked well.

Field trips are in full swing with Staples High School health classes visiting the Farm this fall. In addition, Farmer Corey visits every elementary school providing a program for the kids during and about school lunches. Several special needs populations have also successfully brought their residents to programs at the farm.

Wakeman Town Farm continues to have a broad presence and outreach in our community: we've shared our knowledge on 'The Organic Farm Stand' call-in radio show; hosted National Charity League and Builders Beyond Borders volunteers; contributed tables at Slice of Saugatuck, Toquet Hall Volunteer Expo, and Westoberfest; partnered with new library employees; participated in a panel discussion on food waste at Green Farms Academy; and hosted local Scouts for an old fashioned campfire.

2. Fundraising and Financial Update

Harvest Fest was another huge success for the Farm continuing to outdo past years and raise much needed and appreciated funds for our ongoing operations and programs.

The WTF Fundraising Sub-Committee will be meeting regularly to map out a long-term strategy for community engagement and corporate and private donor support of the Farm's mission. To that end, they have defined several areas of focus including historical data collection, fundraising goal-setting,

modernization of donor information collection, and enhanced corporate connections. They will also be working on ways to recognize and thank our past sponsors.

The WTF Finance Sub-Committee has also begun to review the farm's finances, planning and to brainstorm general financial operations and reporting. In particular, the Farm's use of QuickBooks is proving very useful and we anticipate its continued expansion as a tool that can be used by all WTF committees and programs.