MICHIGAN BEEKEEPERS’ ASSOCIATION

MINUTES

Saturday, April 06, 2013


Meeting called to order at 10:04am.

Changes an additions to the agenda called for. Agenda approved.

Secretary's Report (D. Schram): All beekeeping clubs in Michigan are now up to date on the MBA calendar. The majority of the clubs were current as of the last board meeting, however, all non-responsive clubs have been contacted again and responses have been posted.

Motion made to approve minutes, and was approved. Corrections noted by Mike Hansen (below) are taken into consideration.

Cheri Ayers is the Executive Assistant to the commission of Agriculture and also works for Director Jamie Clover-Adams. Director Cover-Adams is the correct name Agriculture Commission meetings are open to the public. If you want to give a presentation it's best to contact Cheri Ayers in advance to get on the agenda. However, the commission always has an opportunity near the end of their agenda for the public to offer comments. It should be understood that a Commission is a policy level organization. As they receive comments from the public, they will listen and may ask questions for clarification, but because they have an entire department of subject matter experts, they will use the departments skills, not a quick response to address the public.

Treasurer's Report (S. Tilmann): $7018 in Spring Conference expenses. $14658 in revenue. $3000 grant to MSU. $505 MBA liability insurance policy.

Current balances: $26,749 in checking at PNC. Paypal is $1.00. Certificate of Deposit is $15,000. Paypal has been slow on releasing our funds, but Steve is working on it.

Income streams are member dues $6740, Spring Conference $14658, Advertising $936 and Product sales $331.

Expenses are $392 in bank fees, website $302, spring conf $7018 (Larry Connor's speaker fee was $1000, supplies $583, and facilities $5435), Fall Conference expenses are currently $500 for a deposit on the facility. AV for the conference was a major expense for the Spring Conference, and needs to be worked on.

Total membership decreased because of 2010 lapsed memberships fell off the number count (184). 104 new members.
Spring Conference attendance is a 17% increase over 2012, for 576 in paid attendance, over the 493 attendees last year. This does not include vendors, comped people and speakers.

Terry Toland will meet with the Kellogg Center later this week and provide them with these figures. Roger Hoopingarner noted that the College of Agriculture should also be notified of this data to help support ANR Week in the future. The more data they have, the more strength they have. Hoopingarner noted that we are becoming close to one of the largest conferences in the country. SEMBA is another large conference and is currently experiencing a state of flux with their conference venue, which has been Schoolcraft College in Livonia in the past.

Compensation for the Microscope class amounted to about $2000. MBA had no particular expenses, and Zachary had concerns for the funds given to him. It was clarified that we are not paying him as a speaker. We are making a donation to the university.

**State Apiarist's Report (M. Hansen):** Please notify your membership of the Bee Informed Partnership survey. This information is very helpful to help get a handle on bee losses and management. Once 300 people from Michigan participate, they will give us a breakout of data just for the state of Michigan.

We will be getting the dollars to do the National Bee Survey this year. The reports are stalled, because of the BIP survey.

Apivar, Veto Pharma SA is a French Company, has hired Phil Craft is a state apiarist from Kentucky. This is another state apiarist who has joined the ranks of private business.

Sucrocide is still available in California, but has fallen off the EPA approval list of approved mite-a-cides.

The department has received a few Right to Farm calls this spring. The department does not have the personnel to argue the point for the individual. However, they will provide one the tools to argue one's point for themselves.

GAAMPS will be revised later this year for 2014. Suggestions will be taken by the department. Hansen feels the document is pretty good, even though it's a modified version of the Maine state GAAMPS.

Commercial beekeepers from out of state have been calling and there has been interest in placing out of state bees on Spotted Knapweed. This posed an interesting point, and a bit of a discussion within the group.

**Media Committee (D. Anthony):** Anthony needs to create a master schedule for advertising the monthly bee activities.

This past year, there was a problem notifying Bee Culture. Secretary Schram will take the responsibilities for the journals (ABJ, Bee Culture and Speedy Bee) back from the committee. In the future, contacting the journals is the Secretary's responsibility.

Anthony has been informed that the committee can focus their efforts on other activities.
Spring Conference Recap: Tilmann noted that people liked the new facility. The vendors seemed to be happy also. Tilmann would like to send a note of thanks to the vendors, but needs to get the list of vendors and their addresses from Don Lam. Tilmann would also like to see a total dollar value of sales from the vendors derived from the conference. A master list of vendors would also be valuable for contacting them for tables at future conferences.

Toland received positive comments also, along with a few negatives, such as rooms being small for some sessions. B. Sirr commented that when attendees arrive on a Friday, they are missing day of pay. That's why many attend on Saturday. Tilmann presented a slide that contradicted this, as on-site registration shows 73 on Friday, and 58 on Saturday.

Toland also felt that multiple people should work on different aspects of the conference. He noted that Lam is the only holder of the vendor list and we should have a two-deep leadership in place, even though Lam is doing a good job. Barb Applebee volunteered to assist on a vendors list for future conferences.

Applebee asked about holding classes later in the afternoon on Friday and stretching into the evening. This was explained as not possible, as well as Sunday classes. One of the compensations for the larger rooms we enjoyed was that we had to be out of the some of the rooms by 5pm on Friday. Next year, Toland added, we would like to move our Auditorium activities to Big 10 B/C and use that space for our large gatherings.

Brody Hall was considered to be excellent for dining, once again.

Summer Picnic (D. Schram): Tours, live hive demonstration, smoker competition, forklift demonstration and test drives. Bonfire later at night. Primitive camping available for both RV and tents. Motels available in Ionia. Sunfield airport is available for fly-ins. Please bring a dish to pass and maybe your own chair. ABJ, Bee Culture and Speedy Bee have been contacted.

Hansen mentioned that using the Summer Meeting to reincorporate the commercial beekeepers. The Honey Festival is also a good venue for the commercial beekeepers to interact with the rest of the MBA.

Schram will ask Oren Best if he would like us to run a registration for the Summer Picnic. Schram will also provide MBA a write up for the website, along with a list of motels in the area.

Fall Conference (T. Toland): The Fall Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Gateway Center October 25 and 26th, 2013. These are the hard dates and we have a deposit on these dates. He is having difficulties working with the venue. Hoopingarner handed out maps of the Best Western Plus on Cedar as a possible alternate venue. This is a large facility with good access. The center auditorium will seat 400. Hoopingarner will get prices within the next couple days and pass it on to Toland.

Motion by Anthony to send a letter to Holiday Inn corporate telling them how displeased we are with their service. Seconded by A. Leonard. Schram says we should vote with our feet. Discussion. Motion failed.

Motion to change venues from Gateway for 2014 and 2015 to Best Western Plus, as long as the costs are within 10% of what we are currently booked at, made by D. Schram, seconded by Hoopingarner. Tilmann said that we should maybe consider Ann Arbor, as he has been solicited by a
venue there. Toland suggested having a meeting in one month's time with all the data and prices in place. **Motion rescinded.**

**Motion to decide on May 4, in a conference call, on the venue for 2014 and 2015, and revoking the past motion for Gateway 2014 and 2015, with Toland to sign a contact for 2014 and 2015 once a decision is reached,** made by D. Schram, and seconded by L. Stevens. **Motion passed.** Conference call will be on May 4 at 10am. *(Secretary's Note: Due to technology problems, this conference call was not held.)*

Honey judging by Norm Adams is on tap for the Fall 2013 conference. There will also be a photo contest and Zachary Huang is excited to judge it. Details will be given at a later date. Winners will projected on a screen in the large auditorium-like room. Different categories will be offered. A 4X6 print is the smallest size, with no maximum size. Photos will need to be mounted but not framed. Ribbons were decided on as prizes.

Breakout sessions will be decided when we get room counts and rooms decided on at the Gateway Center. Toland will contact Ken Schramm about presenting.

Schram had a question regarding the low attendance numbers at Fall Conference. “Should we have big speaker in fall as a draw, or save them for the spring?” M. Risk says we should maybe get an advanced speaker, as the membership is more advanced at the Fall Conferences.

Schram also sought advice regarding the board's request for more than one keynote speaker at our 150th Anniversary in 2015. Schram had been investigating the logistics, with special attention to Dadant's multiple speaker event last summer. The board reiterated that for the Spring Conference 2015, held March 13 and 14, 2015, 2 speakers would be good. Different speakers were suggested. For Spring 2014, March 7 and 8, 2014, 1 speaker will be sufficient. However, the board requested a large draw speaker for the Fall of 2015 to conclude our 150th Anniversary.

Last year's Fall Conference social event was good. The board will try a wine tasting at this year's event.

**New Business**

**Membership Dues (T. Toland):** We currently have Life Memberships granted to some members, but we have been having people requesting to purchase a life membership. Toland would like to term it differently, so as not to besmirch the life dues paid for by Life Members. C. Ottoni suggested the fee be 10x the annual dues, like SEMBA. Toland would also like to see a student membership rate, as well as companies, like Dadant, being offering a “corporate” membership rate, which would allow a number of people to attend as guest of their corporate sponsor, as well as vendor table fees rolled in.

Roger Hoopingarner offered advice on how Life Memberships were done in the past, and how they operated on the concept on the number of hives “donated” and honey gathered from those hives. The failure of the system appeared to be a lack of self-sufficiency, and operating this system just sort of fell apart.

Dollar amounts for life memberships was discussed, with the amount of $500 thrown out, along with the typical longevity of a bee club member, which is typically 3-5 years. A lively discussion ensued. The question of what is the MBA is going to do with the large influx of money will be asked by the membership. The Freemont Foundation was proposed.
This item is placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

**USDA Farm Services NAP (D. Anthony):** Anthony advised that, for $250 a year, bees can be covered under crop insurance. There are reporting requirements, and details that need to be followed. Farm Services should be consulted within your particular county, as uniformity is seldom found across the state.

**Compensation for MBA business (D. Anthony):** Anthony explained how the president of the MBA travels a lot to visit different bee clubs and attend various conferences. He proposes *(motion)* that the president be compensated for mileage (excluding board meetings, ANR Week, Summer Picnic, Fall Conference as examples of regularly scheduled MBA events) (at the current tax rate) with records being turned in each board meeting, as this is only for mileage compensation to promote beekeeping and to make an MBA presence at beekeeping clubs, by D. Anthony and seconded by Hoopie. Discussion and clarification followed. Motels and airfare are not to be considered in this. This is for the President only, and not any assigns. *(Secretary's Note: As we had multiple past-presidents in the room, they were polled as to whether this would be a worthwhile expense. It was agreed that it would definitely help promote beekeeping, as well as the MBA.)* Motion carried.

**Bear Bill (T. Toland):** The DNR has asked for delegates for a discussion on compensation for bear damaged hives, with Larry Hilbert and Hoopingarner as representatives. They were out voted, in terms of asking for bear damage, by the people and groups who are pro-bear hunting. The DNR is asking for our input now. It was stated that wolf damage is being compensated for livestock losses. If beekeepers can get compensation, that would be great. Anthony mentioned the state of Wisconsin's bear bill.

**Virtual Meeting** – May 4 at 10am will be a conference call. We will attempt a virtual meeting at a later date. This may be Skype or GoToMeetings.

**PO Box (proposed by Dudock, presented by Toland):** Cindy Dudock felt that the MBA should have a post office box for its business address. The physical location of the box is an issue, as well as which board member should be responsible for checking it. Tilmann, and others, felt that we are a web based organization and society now. No motion was called for by the group.

**Project RED in Wayne County** – May 1, Rich Wieske is looking for assistance with talking to school age children and handing out honey sticks. Tilmann will forward his email request for posting on the website.

**Removal of Bees (D. Anthony):** Davison Township has an issue with a beekeeper keeping bees. He is in compliance with GAAMPS, and has been inspected by Anthony. The only issue appears to be that the beekeeper had the bee hives visible. Anthony approached the township, presented facts, and they backed off. He advises us that the MBA will be approached by more people experiencing problems in the future.

Hoopingarner suggested that we set up a model township ordinance and have a proactive plan in place. Toland would like a “drop down tab” located on the website, which would list bee friendly communities which already have ordinances in place that other communities could use as a models. Toland suggests that we avoid drafting an actual ordinance, as something like property line setbacks (as expressed in some recommendations) would hurt beekeepers in, say, Ann Arbor, where lots are smaller. This was the general feeling on the board. Pointing the townships toward Ann Arbor, Traverse City and
Auburn, along with providing GAAMPS and Right To Farm, would be useful tools for beekeepers experiencing problems within their own communities.

Courtyard Marriott (D. Anthony): Located near the Kellogg Center, the Courtyard Marriott has $104 block room rates for 2014 spring conference. We have no obligations for this block rate, other than 3 weeks prior to the event, the rooms are turned back in automatically. Toland will look at the agreement and sign it, as long as there's no obligation.

Adjourned 1:12pm.