Michigan Beekeepers Association
November 29, 2018

Zoom Remote Meeting

Minutes:
Signed in: Norm Adams, Chris Beck, Jen Blackburn, Theresa Bristol-Miller, Kay Cease, John Davis, Charlotte Hubbard, Kido Pielack, Don Lam, Meghan Milbrath, Dave Pearce, Sheldon Schwitek, Rich Wieske, Greg Willis
Call to order: 7:35 pm Sheldon Schwitek presiding

Agenda
Motion to approve agenda: John Davis, Seconded: Chris Beck

Secretary’s Report
Motion to approve September meeting minutes: Chris Beck, Seconded: Rich Wieske

Treasurer’s Report: Kale Tissue/Theresa Wyatt transition
We have not paid for the summer picnic. Meghan has the receipts and will send them, so that expense is still to show up. Sheldon reported that the Fall Conference hotel bill is about $3300, so accounting for our $1000 deposit, that bill should be about $2300. He also spoke to the hotel about our inability to set up Friday night due to another event going on, and they agreed to reduce our bill by $300. It appears we are going to be under budget for the year.

Accounts:
Checking: $6212.92

CDs:** $5014.63
$5029.28
$10,043.91*

Total cash on hand: $16,256.83
**CD $5013.03 cashed & deposited into checking
* Does not reflect Fall Conference hotel invoice or printing for pamphlets approx. $2700

Budget:
Fiscal year 2018/2019 Beginning 11/1/17 through 9/30/18
Budget adjusted to reflect by-laws

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1079 Members
Active/Current Members: 597, with remaining nonmember/lapsed
Increased interest/activity during conferences

Fall 2018 Conference:
Preregistered/prepaid: 132
Invoiced/paid at door: 21
At the door registration: 55
Total 208 individuals attending

Motion to approve Treasurer’s Report:
Don Lam, Seconded: Chris Beck

Sheldon noted that there should have been a financial audit done and reported at the Fall Conference. Steve Tilmann has offered to perform the audit, and would like a couple of other people to help. Jen Blackburn agreed to help. They will also work on the budget for next year, to be completed before the next meeting.

Member Communications: Jen Blackburn/Meghan Milbrath transition
Jen spoke to Charlotte regarding the next newsletter. There were a couple of technical issues, but it should be out soon. Sheldon mentioned that we might want to consider getting a security certificate for our website. We have received some feedback regarding messages indicating that our website wasn’t secure. The payment system is secure, but users have no way of knowing that.

District Representative Reports:
Greg Willis:
Kalamazoo Bee School is January 26, 2019.
Dave Pearce:
Ann Arbor Backyard Beekeepers are planning for next year’s Fall Conference. This district has a new club developing called Hidden Lake Bee Club, which stems from Lost Nations Bee Club. Napoleon Bee Club is going to have Mel Disselkoen come to speak in January. Many area beekeepers were taken by surprise by the sudden cold snap in early/mid November.
Rich Wieske:
Low mite counts and low honey production for this year, but plenty of time for treatments.
John Davis:
He made a connection with TC group, which has changed over the last couple of years. He is trying to network between them and the Petoskey group and build a better relationship. They are also connected with Crosshatch, which is doing all their Google groups for northern Michigan. Crosshatch is connected with other guilds, and also Art Meets Earth. This district is interested in lining up speakers for the new year. They had a big treatment program this summer, and are interested in seeing those results.
Theresa Bristol-Miller:
She reports her area has low honey stores going into the winter. She has had a few complaints from commercial beekeepers regarding the large number of beekeepers from North Dakota coming into Michigan during the summer, resulting in lots of competition for the forage. Maybe the Legislative Committee could work on this. John Davis would like to be
involved in this discussion. He estimates they had over 25,000 hives in his area of northern Michigan from outside the state. Since Michigan has no inspection and no regulations, there may be little we can do. Meghan reports that there has been a lot of discussion on this with the commercial beekeepers. One of the solutions that has been discussed, but would take a lot of work, has been a registration system that does not have inspections, but does have a buffer, so that hives can’t be placed next to other hives.

Joel Lantz:
He was unable to attend, but reports they have had 40” of snow so far.

MDARD: Mike Hansen
He was unable to attend, but reports no changes since the Fall Meeting.

MSU: Meghan Milbrath
She is still talking to the Michigan Commercial Beekeepers and the Department of Agriculture regarding the Bear Fence Grant. We do have funding to do it again this year. Last year, the commercial beekeepers organized it as the granting agency, but the way it was written said that no one on the board or related to anyone on the board could have access to the funds. This is difficult to achieve because it is such a small organization. They would like to transfer it to us for processing, which would not be a huge job. She would like a volunteer to help with that, and Norm Adams agreed to help.
MSU has an internal green grant program, which is how it responds to industry needs. Beekeepers have a list of high research priorities, which are updated in September. We need to apply in January, and they require a letter of support, so expect to see these requests soon. They are interested in doing more EFB research, and also overwintering indoors in sheds.

Conferences: Chris Beck
Surveys:
They collected 28 surveys during the Fall Conference. People heard about the conference from the Internet and their local bee clubs. No one heard about it from the magazines. He would like a volunteer to contact American Bee Journal and Bee Culture and place notifications regarding the Spring Conference. Kay volunteered to do this. The surveys indicated that most attending had been keeping bees 2-5 years, and had 1-10 colonies. Only 4 of the responders were not MBA members. Twenty-two were members of other bee clubs, and 10 were not members of any other clubs. Bee clubs were represented from all over the state. There was lots of positive feedback regarding the speakers. Two people commented on the lack of breakouts this year: one person liked not having them, and one person wanted them. Future topics were suggested, such as winter preparation, value added products, diseases, and marketing. Overwhelmingly, they indicated they would recommend future conferences to a friend. He has recruited one additional volunteer to help with future planning.

Some vendors were concerned about the small space, but those complaints were alleviated by the fact that they were getting the space for free. Keith Lazar was a huge help in arranging the vendor space.
Honey Show:
There were 23 participants, with 35 exhibits. Eleven people donated submissions for the auction to be held in the spring. It was suggested that awards be announced earlier in the meeting.

Fall Conference 2019:
A2B2’s theme is Urban Beekeeping. He does not have the exact date, but it will be in October. They have already secured a facility. The board needs to decide if it will be a one or two-day conference. They have been in contact with Rebecca Masterman from Minnesota for speaker. Meghan has agreed to host her, as well as trying to add Declan Schroeder. Mike Nardelli is planning to attend our January board meeting to update us.

Kalamazoo Bee Club has offered to do the Summer 2019 picnic.

Spring Conference 2019:
May Berenbaum is signed up to be the keynote speaker. Meghan will follow up to double check, because we are also trying to coordinate with the MSU Entomology Department. Chris plans to schedule Zoom meetings to get people involved and coordinate efforts.

The Bee Man Jay from Tennessee wants to be a speaker at the event, and has agreed to speak for free. He will probably be scheduled with a breakout class or two.

Last year, we decided not to do a microscope class. We may be able to do it this year if an instructor is available. Chris will follow up with Zach.

Sheldon will call next week to ensure that we are confirmed with the Kellogg Center.

**Becoming a non-profit:**
Sheldon and Clay plan to meet week after next, and they should have an update at that time.

**Committees:** Sheldon Schwitek
Grant Review Committee:
Presently, Sheldon and Kay are members of this committee. It would be helpful to have more members.
Legislative Committee:
This committee is just beginning. Scott Nichols is a lobbyist who is willing to help.
Constitution Committee:
We need to solidify this committee because there are some constitutional amendments we need to follow up on. We also need to work on a policies and procedures manual. Please email Sheldon if you are interested in volunteering.

There is still discussion on whether the Beekeepers of the Year are required to be members of the MBA. We are going to revisit this issue. Norm is willing to have a discussion with the District Reps and report back to the board. This may require a constitutional amendment.
Old Business:
National Organizations:
No one present at the meeting is planning to attend the American Beekeeping Federation meeting in January this year. Meghan is going to the American Honey Producers meeting this year.
There has been some discussion about starting a Great Lakes Apiarist Society (GLAS). This may enable some strategic geographical alliances, since the Heartland society is farther south, and the Eastern society is farther east.

Recognized Club:
Joel will be on the next meeting and have something drafted regarding recognized clubs.

Zoom meetings:
We now have our own Zoom account, which costs less than $15/month. It allows us to hold one meeting at a time. Sheldon and Kay will both be able to set up meetings. We will try to be available to start the call, or get people the credentials they need to start their own Zoom meeting. For the District Reps, it will be a good way to host a regional conference call and coordinate district clubs. Norm Adams has successfully done this, and has agreed to discuss it with others.

New Business:
Honey Show Participation:
A last minute decision was made allowing non-members to participate. Some think honey show participation should be a benefit of MBA membership. Also, the price to attend conferences should be less for members than for non-members. Others wanted to increase the number of people involved by allowing non-member participation. We do not know how many people participated this year that were not members. Participation was up 30% this year, compared to last year. The majority of people who participated this year were first-time participants. We are going to table this discussion until the next meeting to give people time to think it over. Chris will submit a new list of rules when this issue is decided. Meanwhile, he will submit a list of the names of participants to Sheldon and Kale to try to determine how many non-members participated this year.

John Davis recommends moving announcement of Beekeeper of the Year to the middle of the meeting, so they will receive better recognition.

No December board meeting is planned. There is discussion of a Board Retreat in early March, before our big conference. This will be on the January agenda. On-line participation appears to be very successful. Future meetings are scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Adjournment:
Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:39pm:
Chris Beck, Seconded: Norm Adams