

1/25/2020 NHMPA Annual Meeting held at Common Man in Plymouth NH

Called to order at 9am by President Nick Kosko

Pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Commissioner Shawn Jasper, discussed challenges and shared the many uses of maple syrup he has had as a sweetener in coffee, maple bacon so many great opportunities for the industry, Dept is willing to help. Bring in young people this is a fun industry and many opportunities are available in agriculture. Discussed Dairy Premium program efforts the Ag dept has been a part of and what they are up against in Corporate collusion. Government is starting to get involved 85% of consumers want local dairy and stores are fighting. Commissioner Jasper thanked NHMPA for allowing him to be a part of the organization, he always enjoys the ride from Hudson to Plymouth. Encouraged all sugarhouses the importance of keeping sugarhouses clean for the industry.

Debbi Cox, NH Ag in the classroom update: continues to make great progress, Commissioner Jasper recently joined the board and there are a number of programs from Schools to Farm to Hosting events to Ag literacy program. This year the book is *Right this Very Minute*. Continued Tucker Mountain Challenge this year, last year 850 students participated: 1st place Fuller Elementary School, 2nd Place Rochester Middle School, and 3rd place Robert Lister. In Portsmouth this year all 3rd grade classrooms will have the opportunity to be part of the Maple sugaring classroom. Registration just about to close and 1,100 students signed up so far. Special Thank you to Treat Sugarhouse who fully funded the whole project this year with the help from Bascom Maple Farms. The Ag program was able to provide 2 sets of starter kits and 2 RO bucket kits to school programs.

Paused meeting at 9:20 to discuss Maple Museum Nick Kosko made the motion and Bill Cheney 2nd. Sue Folsom gave report for the museum.

9:24am meeting resumes Nick Kosko thanks Sue for all of her time with the Maple Museum as well as her NHMPA duties. Requested volunteers interested in helping with Maple Museum to contact Sue Folsom.

Business Portion:

Treasurers Report by Sue Folsom: had some challenges but did well overall financially. Conference Income skewed the income. Good membership numbers and sales from cookbooks, etc. Net profit $1243 fiscal 2018 $5000+

Financials reviewed in the accounts TD Bank $133,592 PayPal $89 Westfield Bank $1,338 Total of $135,000 Inventory $30,000 Sunnyside Maple Reserve and Big E

No questions regarding financials

Container Report by Bill Cheney In stock plenty of containers. Will there be enough containers? Bacon assured Bill that there is a good supply. NHMPA has taken advantage of the 10% discount period if placed early. Dealers now own their inventory association does not do an inventory. Reserve Supply of containers is located at Sunnyside Maple in a trailer. Maple Cream, candy boxes in sizes 1.4 and 1.5 are available at Sunnyside as well contact Mike Moore.

Question: Will the NHMPA start to carry Stainless Steel Barrels? At this time the Assoc does not have any plans to do this. Glassware is often asked for as well but again this is not planned at this time. Years back Assoc had looked into purchasing stainless steel barrels but it was not feasible financially. You can use the NHMPA logo is you are a member in good standing on your own custom glassware, you can get this logo from the Assoc by emailing the assoc.

Promotion: currently has 3 members $20,000 spent for Maple Weekend last year there was a slight change, all print ads were pulled but 1 up North. Maple Weekend was deemed to have a good turnout overall last year. Promoting in Northern Mass also encouraged people to stop by NH sugarhouses. A handful of people in the audience saw the WMUR ads which cost $5,000 this is not the best use of funds… reallocate money to radio ads and WMUR will be invited to Governor’s tapping in March.

Maple phone common complaints is regarding information not updated on website to accurately reflect the hours of the sugarhouses. The end of this month the website will have a purge, those that have not paid will be turned off. The “Great Purge” will happen after Maple Month.

Website is the best driver to get the info out to consumers. $40 is a good value. Most people, 95% get their info from the website. Updating the website is your best way to get your info out. Draws people in the following are web stats: Over a quarter million people visited the NHMPA website. Recently received a solicitation for advertising on the website. Interactive Map is much more challenging but access is available on their smart phones.

Encouraged people to volunteer for committees & you do not need to be a member to be on a committee, meetings happen via phone, email and some in person meetings.

Fair report by Darrell Fisk and Nick Kosko Darrell reports out on BIG E did fairly well. Sales could have been better. Issue with ice cream machine, they were not allowed to use a wet ice cream machine that water would run on the floor, Ice cream machine would need to be a dry machine and this will have to be rented or seek out a member that has one. Thanked Liz Bascom, Dave Boudrias, Jeff Moore and Dave Westover and Sandy Salo. Reached out to Future Farmers to help and hired some local help. Hotel used was the same as previous year but La Quinta should be looked into again this is where Vermont stays and it would be nice to hang out with common groups.

Nick Kosko provided the Deerfield Fair update; he was the manager of the fair and it was set up differently. The right side had all the sales and the left side was the educational and the evaporator. The flow seemed to work well. Volunteers seemed to not be a problem except for one night but overall the Deerfield Fair Assoc seemed to be pleased with the changes that occurred with the Sugarhouse set up and the emphasis on the educational part.

Hopkinton Fair question… why did the NHMPA lose this fair? Fair Assoc were unhappy with the management of the fair previously and had concerns based on rumors heard. NHMPA submitted the same fair agreement as used for 20 years with no changes expected. NHMPA was under the impression they would continue with the fair but received notification a few days later that a change had been in who would run the sugarhouse and NHMPA was not the winner. Fair wanted more of an emphasis on education as well and less on sales. Other sugarhouse participated in the Hopkinton Fair this year with a private sugarhouse. Typically, there is a difference at the fair between a nonprofit and a private party, but this does not seem to have been the case this year. Also discussed was Assoc had reached out to obtain all items that were left behind in the sugarhouse that the Assoc had left and they were not provided the opportunity to obtain those items prior to the fair. It is unknown if Hopkinton has plans to reconsider NHMPA for the sugarhouse in the future.

State of the Association: Positive year and thank you to the members. Thank the present board members for their volunteerism. Association needs more help. 10 board slots and 4 executive board members, 5 director spots open currently. Any interest in being a director? No one responds.

Challenges to run a nonprofit= people to help. Dale Smith who has been on the board for 8 years is thanked for his service. He does not wish to remain on the board. He will consider being a part of the Felker Award still, he enjoys working with kids.

Organization is looking good for the future, Assoc numbers are slightly down but always goes up and down typically based on containers. Assoc is historically 350-400 strong. As of June 2019, 317.

Election of directors: No one from the floor volunteers. Chris Olson not present has requested to remain on the board. The responsibilities of the directors are explained executive board spends about 20 hours per week.

Motion made for Chris Olson remain as a director and a 2-year term accepted.

Website presentation made by Win van Mourik: promoting maple syrup, what drives maple production, how to advertise. $1,200 spent 3 years ago for the Gathering Tank mailing. Mail chimp is currently used to send out the Gathering Tank to members, Winter Gathering email was opened by 278 members 148 clicks out of 512. 28%.

Emails go into promotion on Gmail, drag it into your inbox tab then you should see it.

Website info not updated about Winter Meeting; Gathering Tank however is located on the NHMPA website.

Counter is behind the scenes on the website for each sugarhouse to show number of clicks, sugarhouses can email Assoc if they would like to know this info.

Handicap accessible icon on website for sugarhouses? Need to check with Web designer.

Bathroom icon? Check with designer

Find a sugarhouse on mobile app can filter a list to make a maple trail? It is a significant cost for the NHMPA at this time it’s a way for the members to advertise to consumers but this added link would be too expensive.

Guest Speaker: Pam Green IMSI President. Next meeting for IMSI is Feb 5. Government regulations, IMSI has our back. The alliance gives the states a platform to brainstorm and talk about what is happening. Discussed the importance of educating consumers about making better choices, make consumers understand the value of maple syrup and give good stories about your farms, sugaring to allow consumers to react to the hard facts so they can relate.

Lunch followed by a presentation by Will Stewart of Stay, Work and Play NH. NH is the 2nd oldest state in the country. Need a digital presence this makes you legit. Connect, Advocate, Brand and promote are the strategic initiatives. Encourage consumers to buy local, use social media to get your info out. Internships are excellent opportunities and guides available online.

Door Prize winners announced.

Regional Meetings have not been scheduled yet information on this will be emailed to the members and posted on the website and Facebook page.

Carlisle Award presented by Steve Roberge

5th place went to Don Lassonde

4th place went to Atkin’s Sugarhouse

3rd Place went to Journey’s End Sugarhouse

2nd place went to Charlie Hunt

1st place went to Jen Scarinza

Motion made to adjourn meeting. Meeting concluded at 2pm