Approved NHMPA Board of Directors Meeting

July 28, 2020 via Zoom

Present: Dave Kemp. Darrell Fisk, Win van Mourik, Bill Cheney, Sue Folsom, Nick Kosko, Andrew Chisholm

Absent: Chris Olsen

Guests: Brenda Noiseux, Dale Smith

Meeting called to order:7:26pm

Dave asked for minutes to the last meeting to be read. But then since all received them in the email for the meeting Darrell Fisk made a motion to accept the minutes as printed: Seconded by Andy Chisholm. All those in favor:

Dave Kemp, Darrell Fisk, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom, Andrew Chisholm. Minutes from 5/26/20 approved.

**Fall Promotion** – Nick said the committee is moving forward with a Facebook and website. Would be looking at some financial support to cover the website and maybe a manager in the amount between $200-$500 dollars. One state would facilitate all the billing. NY is doing the artwork for free and Nick says it’s beautiful. They are still looking at the week around Columbus Day in October but is up to each Association to set their own dates. Also mentioned was that participants need to be getting a separate insurance rider for the event regarding possible Covid exposure to customers. However, the promotion group is waiting until the end of August to decide yes or no on going forward with the Fall Event. Discussion was had about waiting until then to lock in advertising during an election cycle. Advice on that from Brenda was that we’d be lucky to get slots and they would be quite costly due to the election ads that would be bought and running. We have credits on account with Binnie Media, iHeart Radio and WGBH from funds we obligated for Maple Month that were not used due to the Covid lockdown. Additionally, the exposure to Covid to members and customers during a promotion is a concern as well as whether an increase in cases in NH would require closing things down again. If we don’t use the credits, we lose the money tied to the contracts. Nick suggested using the credits to promote NH Maple Products as gifts, buy local etc. Andy agreed that a late November promo around Black Friday, small business Saturday would be a good idea. Dave asked for a consensus from the board on this idea. Agreed were Dave, Andy, Bill, Sue, Darrel and Nick. Andy Chisholm made a motion to ‘Use the credits available for promotion this year.” Darrell Fisk seconded. All in favor: Dave Kemp, Darrell Fisk, Andy Chisholm, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom. Discussion followed about what dates we wanted to use the ad dollars for and reach out to those media companies. The sooner we have a date(s) to use the promotion funds, the more likely we’ll get the time slots we want. The timeline we’d be looking towards would be prior to Thanksgiving.

After further talk, the consensus was to target the ads during the week of November 16th. Darrell Fisk made a motion “To go forward with the promotion for the week of the 16th if available.” Seconded by Andy Chisholm. All in favor: Bill Cheney, Darrell Fisk, Dave kemp, Andy Chisholm, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom.

**Awards – Felker** – Dale Smith spoke about the Felker entries. He met with Nick and they had a total of seven different projects. A few were homeschoolers.

And provided the names for 1st Place – Kaylin Emerson who wrote about maple flavors; Second Place - was Cecelia LeBlanc from Fremont NH who made a poster @ 8x8’ with sugarhouses on it and Third Place – was last years’ winner, Trevor Gaudet, who created an activity book of things to do during the Covid Stay at Home times. The plaque has been ordered from Saymore. Dale’s thoughts on presenting the award was to meet with the first-place winner at their sugarhouse to get a photograph. Dale will provide Sue with the names and addresses of the winners so the prize checks can be mailed out. He’ll also get the info and photo to Brenda so she can send out our normal publicity on this program. Dale volunteered be our Felker Coordinator again next year. It was agreed Dale should continue as the Coordinator.

**Carlisle** – Dave asked members what their thoughts were about it. It was discussed how the logistics would affect the contest without any fairs to prequalify an entry. How many entries would we get? How long would it take to judge them? Some thought we’d get the usual amount and others thought we’d could get quite a lot without having a fair placement to qualify.

It was brought up that the rules to the Carlisle would have to be changed to address holding a competition this year without the state fairs to prequalify entrants. Dave asked how would we get the info out to the membership? Nick said to just send the info out through all our normal channels, i.e. Facebook, newsletter and regular mail. Darrell and Bill will look into it and they will report back at the August meeting.

**Tucker Mtn** cancelled due to Covid-19

**Financials** - Sue reported the financial situation is flat. The budget projected net profit from the two fairs to be 20K which we won’t have. Container sales are lower than last year. We have about 116K in the bank as of June30th and have not had a serious deficit for the first half of the year. But we need to be careful and spend our money cautiously. Dues only net us 7k in income so along with container sales and fair income we will be down from last year. Without normal revenues we can’t support 20K fair income losses and still function in the long term. Dale asked about other sources of income for a non-profit like us. Like the Covid funds or other entities that could give us money. The State Covid funds won’t allow us to apply as a 501(c)-6 and most others require a non-profit be a 501(c) 3. Could we change to a 501(c) 3? Sue said she doesn’t know what’s involved in that and not sure it could be done quickly. Nick commented that you have to define what the organization will do so the by-laws would have to be amended. He suggested asking our accountant, Linda Spinale, about what she knows about this process. It would allow us to get charitable donations.

**Containers** – Bill Cheney says he’s getting copies of invoices. Some orders have been going out and will continue through August and the fall. Dave said we were uncertain what was happening with FW Webb since Will Streeter left a couple weeks ago. Bill said he will reach out to Will for a name to contact and be sure they still want their order. Bill indicated that we needed more cream containers and Mike Moore placed an order about 2 weeks ago. It would be only a pallet of containers. Much less than the last order. Dave asked Sue to comment on container prices. Sue indicated she did a comparison of container prices. The concern is our gallon prices are lower than they should be. We are making next to nothing per case after shipping costs are included. Bill asked about making it 56.00 a case instead of 54.00. And Sue said that would be a good price that we could implement as of Jan 1st. Bill Cheney made a motion “to raise the case price of Gallons to 56.00 each as of the first of the year.” Seconded by Darrell Fisk. All those in favor: Dave Kemp, Darrell Fisk, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom, Andrew Chisholm. Motion approved.

**Penny per Container** – Dave Kemp says this was a program Hank Peterson signed us up with the NAMSC as an Alliance Partner. The program asked for a penny per container sold that would go to the NAMSC Research Fund. We haven’t paid this money to them since 2018. We got a reminder email about that a little while back. Since we are being conscious of costs Dave wanted to bring this up to the board for a decision about whether to pay. They don’t send a bill for the jugs but Winton Pitcoff had sent us a reminder of owing these funds. Dave suggested we could tell them we can’t pay until our funding situation improves. And we could rejoin once our revenues are better. Win asked how much was due and that we should pay what we owe since they had a commitment from us. Sue indicated she thought that it was between $1,200 and $1,300. And our approved budget has a line item in it for the penny per of $1,000. Darrell asked what year my calculation for and she replied 2019. Bill felt if we are behind we should pay them so we don’t get further behind and Andy indicated he felt we should pay them too. Dave asked if we want to continue as an Alliance partner or withdraw. Andy asked if we would have to remove the logo and Dave thought that was not an issue because we still pay dues to the NAMSC. Bill made a motion “to pay up for this year and discontinue paying after that.’ Seconded by Andy Chisholm. All those in favor: Dave Kemp, Darrell Fisk, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom, Andrew Chisholm. The motion carried. We will pay the 2019 amount and then have them remove us as of 2020 as an Alliance Partner.

**Summer Meeting** – Dave spoke to the fact that we tried very hard to get a summer meeting together so the NHMPA members would know what we are doing for them. But the logistics were an issue with finding appropriate social distancing. Dave asked if anyone felt we needed to still try and hold a summer meeting this year. Win made a motion “to cancel holding a summer meeting this year.” Seconded by Bill Cheney. All voted in favor. Motion approved. Dale asked if there would be something to inform membership what’s going on. Dave said that Sue and he had discussed doing another Gathering tank for this purpose. Dale said communication has always been an issue with members which is why he asked. And Dave said we tried to have a meeting with having had a location picked just for that purpose but the safety of folks was more important. Bill made a motion “to put out another Gathering Tank to the members.” Seconded by Andy Chisholm. All those in favor: Dave Kemp, Darrell Fisk, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom, Andrew Chisholm. The motion carried. We will put out another Gathering Tank after this meeting.

**Fairs** - Dave indicated that for the 2021 Fairs - we need the income and we will still likely be dealing with Covid-19 issues. We may need new fair formats, training, new contracts, mission statements or more unless Covid-19 somehow goes away. Fairs as we knew them may no longer exist and we’ll have to reinvent them. Dave said the Big E indicated prior to being cancelled that each vendor would have to write up their own standard operating guidelines i.e., money handling, sanitation, training protocols etc. and they’d have to be pre-approved before they could enter the building. The email with this info came from Gail McWilliam Jellie about a week to ten days before they eventually cancelled the Big E Fair. Win asked how many fairs might survive. Darrell thought Big E and Deerfield should be viable. But there is still a lot of unknown due to the virus. Maybe if everyone has a vaccination by then it may change but that is still an unknown.

**Website** – Dave asked Win if he’s been able to start on cleanup of the website. He’s had family complications that have kept him occupied but once those issues are resolved he will be doing that clean up. He said he is not hearing back from Loudcanvas when he asks about updating the website but since they haven’t replied he thinks they are still in lockdown. Dave mentioned we had a comment about our website being lackluster. There are other websites from other associations that have some things that we could look at but with the finances where they are, we might not be able to. Let’s clean up the database and pay for Google maps if needed in the spring and hold off upgrades and not spend anything right now.

**UVM Proctor Training** - Dave showed us a printout of a listing of online webinars that UVM will be offering over the next month and into December via Zoom. They are free of charge to anyone that folks can tap into.

**IMSI Outreach Programs** – Dave had a Zoom meeting with Jean Lamontagne, Director of IMSI and Pam Green, President from IMSI about how they can help the local associations since they are often accused, they support just the big packers and producers etc. They wanted to know what we need and what can they do for us. The call lasted two hours and one topic of concern was about the new FDA mandates. Maybe a voluntary certification program ahead of FDA mandates should be established. One requirement they think FDA may be proposing is a sweepable sugarhouse floor. So, stone or dirt floors would not likely fit this condition. The other possibility was a mentor program and the IMSI would write the syllabus for it. One thing we always see with contests is the issue about density being off. This continues to be an issue with as many as 1/3rd of entries having the wrong density. Beginning sugar makers could possibly be of most benefit. Nick spoke up to say that NH has a mentor program run by a State agency but there was no interest. Dave said it was good to know.

**Unfinished Business** - Darrell asked if we put out a questionnaire to the Assn? Sue said it was talked about and not done because we didn’t come up with questions to put on a questionnaire. Darrell said he thought the members up north might like to see the new Assn logo, which he said Nick did a great job with, updated with the Old Man of the Mtn on the smokestack as well as change the leaf shape to a sugar maple. That it might be more acceptable to go on a jug or glass jar. Could we change the winter meeting date to stop the conflicts with the Vermont meetings in January since we lose members to those meetings. And could others on the board think of other questions we could put on a questionnaire? Bill agreed with most on the possible change to another date. Darrell said he’s thinking he’d like to go on a committee to research glass a little more. Nick said anyone can use the logo on their own containers if they want to have them printed. Sue said the minimum order from Artisan Printing is only 120 units (10 cases). Darrell asked if a royalty would have to be paid. What are the rules for this? Nick said he could speak to the rules that as a member you have the ability to use the NHMPA log as you wish. VT gets a royalty from Sugarhill for any container sales for their Assn containers and they don’t tell the dealers what to sell them for, they just have an MSRP and they get 5%. Darrell said as of right now if a member wanted to put our logo on their containers, they would not have to pay a royalty but if they sell them to other producers, they would need to pay the NHMPA a royalty for using our name. Bacon was approached in the past about royalties and they would not get involved in that process. Some companies don’t want to be responsible for handling the extra cash. You’d have to get into a dealership agreement with whoever you use for printing. Nick looked into this when he was the container chair years back and it’s up to the individual container company. Bill thought the association in the past didn’t say they wouldn’t do it as much as it was a logistics issue of distribution. Bill thought this would be a good question for the questionnaire or Gathering Tank. What styles would people want? Not everyone wants the same glass. Most of these questions about glass seem to come from a few sources and not the members at large. Nick said if we wanted to set up this royalty program all of the burden goes on the person that wants to carry them. It depends on who wants to sell them as to how much if any money we would make. Bill Cheney said he’d talk to Bacon and Artisan Printing to see what he can find out.

Finally, Dave mentioned that we should be thinking about our January meeting date as well as possible speakers for that meeting. If we wait too long, they will all be obligated to other meetings in January. Are there any other comments? None we offered. Nick then spoke up to say that NH has a mentor program run by a State agency but there was no interest. Dave said it was good to know.

Darrell made a motion to close the meeting. Seconded by Bill. All those in favor:

Dave Kemp, Darrell Fisk, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom, Andrew Chisholm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:53pm

Smf