



NHMPA October 20, 2021 Monthly Meeting Minutes 7pm via Zoom

Members Present: Dave Kemp, Andrew Chisholm, Alisha Powell, Darrell Fisk, Doug Byam, Chris Olsen, Bud Taylor, Andrew Mattiace joined via phone at 8:33.

Members Absent: Charles Hunt

Meeting called to order at 7:06 by Dave Kemp

1. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates

- a. 8/2, 8/5 revised with updates from input given last month by Alisha. A motion was made at last month's meeting to accept these with those updates. If anyone would like a copy of the final, request from Alisha.
- b. 9/1 monthly meeting by Alisha: Motion to accept by Doug, seconded by Andy, all in favor.
- c. Next Monthly meeting date?: Monday November 15? This date is ok with the group.

2. Fair Update/Wrap Up - Andy C/Bud:

Bud: Deerfield fair net was in the range of 15K. When compared to last time (19), we broke records for sales. The big thing that people asked for were Donuts, Maple Milk, and Ice Cream. Several people helped. Jim Davis and Darrell did a lot of education. Andy did a magnificent job, it wouldn't have happened without him. Bud also appreciates a lot of help that came from Nick. Bud feels we should continue in the future. There is word that someone else wants to use the sugar house building in the future; Bud is hoping to meet with the fair association to discuss our future plans there. As far as the Big E, we lost the fee we had paid unfortunately. Ben's was able to supply a lot of the product. There were other producers that supplied product as well. Gail hired the help. It's hard to say if we would be able to do the Big E again in the future.

Lancaster Fair would like to see us do something next year. Hopkinton would be another one to continue in the future. Alisha is going to be the Maple Superintendent for the Cheshire Fair next year as well. Darrell noticed that the candy should have been in NHMPA boxes and other packages; this could ruin the integrity of our own program. Darrell would like to make a motion that any producer who sells



maple syrup, maple cream and maple candy for sale at the fair, it should be NHMPA packaging. Andy turns down the motion, based on the fact that as long as a producer is packaging it properly, it should be admissible. There was no second to the motion. Bud: Would like to tread gently through this. His perspective as someone who worked on fairs this year is that he feels that some producers didn't want us taking a percentage of the profit. There are also NHMPA members selling and competing against the association at times at various fairs. Bud's perspective as a new member and small producer is that he came into this for mentorship, education, collaboration but finds that in general many members seem to be in competition. Darrell shares some history of the NHMPA based on his longstanding time with the association. He shares that Ben has over time devoted a lot of time to supporting NHMPA at the fairs. Ben had even been willing to take over all the fairs, with devoting a portion of the profits to the association. Then, board members changed their minds about that. He feels you can look at it from both ways—why members go behind the back of the association, and vice versa. Darrell asked why a rumor has been spread that Ben buys syrup from Canada. Bud thought that he had personally witnessed a truckload of maple syrup with the destination of Ben's sometime in late 2016. Update to this discussion: Darrell shared that Ben went through his records and found there was a load of glass that came through from Canada at that time.

a. Carlisle – Fair Judging Results?

Marty won at the Deerfield Fair, but we're not sure what other winners there are. Someone needs to contact the department of Ag to find out who the top three winners are, and those winners need to receive a letter to let them know that they can bring their entry to the annual meeting. Bud thinks we need to talk with all the fairs to find out what the requirements were. There were varying requirements for bottling samples and whatnot. We will need to address this soon.

Someone needs to take on this responsibility.

3. Fundraising and the lack of help: What is the way forward? - Dave

Dave discusses that it may not be possible to make a profit at the Big E with high expenses. Dave ideally would like to focus on the fairs in this state and do a good job at those. Bud agrees based on some of the expenses that are incurred with doing the Big E may be prohibitive.

4. Container shortages – Dave



Dave spoke with Susan Connor at McClures today. They hope to have our order complete by the end of the year. They are starting to ship out quarts. Dave is also a member of the Vermont association and they are having very similar issues and have formed a committee to deal with this. Their container inventory is very low.

Additional topic for discussion: New memberships: should we give them carry-overs for the 2022 year? Doug feels that it would be a good thing to give that to new members. Bud spoke with some people at the Deerfield fair who were interested in joining. Doug makes a motion to allow people who register after October 1st to not have to pay for the following year. Dave seconds. All in favor, none opposed.

5. Farm and Forest Show – Dave

We have had a presence there in past years. It was possibly Hank Peterson who was involved and ran it. Darrell suggests that it may be better to do it as an educational opportunity as there are others who sell maple products there. Darrell suggests to table the discussion until the annual meeting and discuss to see if there are any members who would like to volunteer. Andy C has considered it for his own products but didn't feel it would be worth it.

6. Reports/updates from Subcommittees:

Promotion: Andrew C/Alisha

a. Updates on meetings with Stephanie from MAC, plans for social media promotion & progress on new social media campaign themes

The Face of NH Maple
#NHMapleOnTheMenu

We have been working with MAC to do social media posts with the above, it is going well.

b. Budget for advertising for Maple Month/Weekend

We have been starting to talk about and consider the budget for advertising. We also discussed whether we should do a Month vs. Weekend (Third Weekend of the Month). Month makes sense given the geography, varying seasons, etc. Weekend makes sense because it focuses advertising resources, and works well for producers who focus their resources on one weekend. With the pandemic going on, it may be tough to promote just one weekend because of possible gathering restrictions, etc. Andy: we will probably need about 20K to promote in a big way over that time period based on quotes we've gotten. Until May, we don't have the grant money to use yet, so this would be our own budget. Based on Sue's last email, the net profit for



this year is likely to be about 70K to roll into next year's budget. Doug: Promotion is what we're all about as an organization. Andy: dangerous to underspend because it's like throwing money away; 15-20K (or more) is reasonable. Bud agrees, this will be a big year and we have the money to spend. Andy: the foundation of what we do is to promote our members. It's about overall general promotion of the industry. Bud makes a motion that we budget \$20k above the normal budgeting figure for Maple Month/Weekend. Seconded by Doug. All in favor. None opposed.

7. **Replacement of Treasurer/Delegation of Tasks:** Need to review several tasks that were being handled by Sue, delegate. Also discuss possible communication/IT savvy position.
 - a. The NHMPA general info email account, responses. Also, Mailchimp mass emails to the membership.
 - b. See attachment sent via email listing Sue's various roles that need to be filled.

Dave: We have had no luck in finding someone to replace Sue. We may need to pay someone a stipend to do this in the future if we can't find a volunteer.

Bud: In dealing with the accountants for the organization, they do a great job. Maybe in the future the accounting firm could take over more of the tasks, with a board member guiding them.

Andy: MAC can also perform the treasurer functions if we need. They do it for some of the associations they work with in New York. It seems likely that no matter what, we are going down the path of having to pay someone to do it.

Alisha: There are many task oriented things that were being taken care of by Sue that are very time consuming, and can certainly become overwhelming.

Bud: He is aware of a person who is involved with the organization who is looking for this kind of work to do. She is in the business field. Her name is Maggie Atkins. He will look into recruiting her.

We will continue to triage the emails and other tasks for now.

8. **Winter Annual Meeting Planning – January 15, 2022.** Andrew C, Alisha:
 - Mark Isselhardt? Possible keynote speaker.
 - Add classes? Hydrometer class? Calibrate hydrometers? Janis C. involvement to do a session? Highlight Seal of Quality certification.
 - Invite NH Commissioner of Ag to attend (at least a portion of the day?) Other local legislators? Governor Sununu?
 - Stephanie from MAC to help coordinate efforts for the meeting planning
 - Booked for Jan 15, Common Man Plymouth. Space available from 9-4.



Discussion: There has been a lot of focus on seal of quality at prior meetings. Many are interested in education regarding sugarbush management, other educational topics, etc. We have gotten some good perspective from Stephanie at MAC in terms of trying to make our meeting more robust and engaging for members. Dave reminds that we need to conduct the annual business meeting, election of officers, and the Carlisle award as well, which takes up quite a bit of time as well. Dave also asks if we should do away with the County/Area Meetings. Others do feel that there is value in these meetings, for camaraderie, connections between producers in those areas, networking, etc.

Dave will email Mark Isselhardt to ask for him to speak for us.

9. Long term Plan for Annual Meetings - Andy

- Make January Meeting into a bigger, more exciting event (long term goal), maybe for 2023?

-Do we really need a summer meeting going forward? Would it be better to focus our efforts on a more robust winter meeting?

Discussion: Maybe it would be best to try to do Sugar House tours in summer time instead of a traditional meeting. Make it into a sugar house tour in a particular region; have a couple of producers host and make it into a tour.

Additional topic: Dave would like to put something together to thank Will Streeter for bringing equipment to Deerfield Fair. Andrew M. volunteers to take this on. He will come up with a proposal for the next meeting.

10. Trailer Manager Position: Implement, discuss, nominate. Rental Equipment Coordination as part of this?

Discussion led by Dave: It is currently being stored at Bud's. Dave recently transported it there. Equipment that the board has was in the past not rented out because that decision had been made by the board at that time. Dave made a list of all the equipment that we own; he has tagged it all and inventoried it all. Bud suggests that it would be ideal to have hooks and other types of organizational materials to make it more organized. One concern with renting equipment out is the condition it may come back in. However, it could be beneficial for members to be able to use the equipment; a good member benefit. A rental policy would need to be written, Inventory to be taken.

Andrew M. offers to take on the Trailer/Equipment manager.

Alisha offers to help work with Andrew M. to make sure that we can get this information added to the website so that it is directly accessible to the membership.



Next meeting planned for Monday, November 15th

Motion to adjourn by Darrell.
Seconded by Andrew C.
Meeting Adjourned @ 9:16pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Alisha A. Powell, Secretary