NHMPA January 11, 2022 Monthly Meeting Minutes

7pm via Zoom

**Members Present:** Dave Kemp, Andrew Chisholm, Alisha Powell, Darrell Fisk, Charles Hunt, Doug Byam, Chris Olsen, Nathan Adams

**Members Absent**: None

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm by Dave Kemp

1. **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates**
2. 12/15 Monthly Meeting Minutes: Due to late forwarding of these minutes, we will defer this until the next meeting for review.
3. Next Monthly meeting date?: Tuesday Feb 1 or Weds Feb 9: Feb 1 will work best for everyone.
4. **Dave’s Resignation-** Dave

Dave lets the board know that he has had a lot going on in his personal life, and will unfortunately need to step down from the position of President at this time. He is willing to stay on as IMSI and NAMSI rep as the board pleases. He also clarifies that he is stepping down from the Board position as well; however he is willing to stay on for a transition period if needed. Andrew states that Dave has been a great asset to NH Maple, and would be pleased for him to stay on as rep.

1. **New Board Member for consideration**: Nathan Adams from Stuart & John’s.

Motion to add Nathan to the board made by Andrew, seconded by Darrell. All in favor, none opposed.

1. **Participation, Recruitment, Organization and Clarity of Roles, Committees/Subcommittees** – Andy

We have a need for more committees and more clear roles for the organization. There have been a lot of changes since Sue Folsom resigned, and now that Dave is leaving, we need to do a better job of distributing the work around. There will always be turnover on the board. It would be helpful to create new committees to handle separate tasks. All resignations have been due to members being too overwhelmed. It would be better to split up responsibilities.

Andrew’s suggested list of committees:

-Membership

-Annual meeting

-Container

-Budget

-Fairs

-Awards

-Member services

-Equipment rentals

Dave agrees and feels this is spot on. There has been trouble with continuity of responsibilities. Andrew states that Sue was doing so many of these duties in the past, that it is hard to reallocate these to one person. Dave notes that the whole board needs to be active and helpful to take on various roles for the organization. As Dave steps down, it would be helpful for him to write up what he’s been doing. Andrew also asks Darrell to write up what has been done in the past as far as fair management. He will also reach out to Bud to write up what he did last summer for the fairs. Dave notes that there are other state maple organizations that are much smaller than our membership, but with larger boards to help distribute the workload around more. Our bylaws allow for 10 board members and we aren’t currently meeting that. The annual meetings tend to be the same group of people that attend. Ideally it would be great to engage more of the membership. We had a member complain recently about having been a member for a long time, but never have a board member come visit his sugarhouse. Alisha is planning on reaching out to offer to go visit his sugar house and interview him for the Face of NH Maple social media campaign.

1. **2022 Budget, Treasurer Transition** - Andy, Alisha

Dave notes that Sue has been able to transition things over for Stephanie; the banking portion of the change over is nearly done. Stephanie and Sue are meeting weekly to work on all of the transitional work. Stephanie received records from Sue that someone needs to go through. Stephanie plans to do the Treasurer report at the annual meeting this upcoming weekend.

1. Increase postage- mail membership renewal rather than online?
2. Website work needed to modernize website

We have had a lot of problems with online renewal, with a lot of complaints about how this process works. Our website with its current set up is not amenable to this process. Andrew notes that the Farm Bureau has a process of membership renewal where they send out a renewal card in the mail, and this process runs smoothly. He suggests that we adopt a similar process. The farm bureau uses this as a paid advertisement as well, which helps to fund the process. Another thought is to add different types of membership options, such as apprentice level, etc. Our current system restricts people from joining as separate entities, or as supporters of the maple industry as well. In the past the association used to do this on paper; Dave believes that we may need to bring this before the membership at the annual meeting. Either way, our website is a problem. It has been looked at and noted to be outdated and inefficient by a few different folks that Andy knows. We can discuss this at the upcoming annual meeting.

Chris Olsen knows some of the history of the website; he was involved somewhat with the development of the site. The intention to be about content rather than e-commerce. It was meant to be a listing of NH sugar houses. The website would crash because it was not supported well. It is a Wordpress website. Loud Canvas is the company that currently hosts it and facilitates updates to it. Andrew has spoken to tech people he works with that estimate it would take $55k+ to redo the website. Chris notes that the website used to work with Paypal. Andy states that Paypal does not work for dues renewal. Nathan notes that it would be worthwhile to do the best we can to update the site to make it more user friendly to appeal to younger folks. Andy feels that we should have our current website become geared toward the members, while nhmaplemap.com should become aimed at the consumers. Chris is interested in this topic and may want to be involved in some way. Andy explains that an interactive NH maple map is what were are aiming for.

1. **Winter Annual Meeting Planning** – January 15, 2022. Andrew C, Dave
2. Carlisle Award – Bowls, Judging, Qualified Members:

The bowl is done, Dave will be bringing it to the meeting. We have a judge secured for the meeting as well; Steve Roberge; Dave will be checking in with him to make sure. The qualified members whose names we got from the State of NH Dept of Ag who won fair competitions have been notified.

1. Meeting Agenda, Plans: Stephanie from MAC is working on putting this together. Andy will check in with her to solidify plans for the meeting agenda and possible speaker. It has been very difficult to find a speaker, we have asked many people and been turned down by many. Dave asked if someone from Bacon could speak about the ongoing jug shortage; so far he hasn’t heard anything. Chris notes that he was told quarts wouldn’t be available until June. Dave says that it has been attributed to plastic materials shortages, staffing shortages, etc.

Dave also notes that it would be good to discuss with the membership to possibly changing the annual meeting date to May or June? Chris feels it would be a great idea to do the annual meeting in the summer. Dave is wondering about door prizes; Will Streeter will be there, but Andy notes that Maple Equipment Reps are not able to attend due to covid restrictions. There are a few things that Dave can round up for door prizes before the weekend.

There was some discussion regarding the Governor’s tree tapping ceremony as well.

**Budget Discussion:** We all received and reviewed the updated budget document that Andy shared with us all earlier today. (Document name “NH Maple Budget vs Actual Jan 2022”, Excel.) Despite this budget stating that we would come out -15k, Andy feels that it will likely be close to even/balanced due to a few over/under estimations to plan worst case scenarios.

Some discussion was had regarding doing a video clip to promote NH Maple, as part of the grant money we will be getting.

Darrell remembers an old video that was made at one time and wonders if anyone has it. Andy has a copy of an old ad from 2014. Andy hopes to create a new video clip that could be less dated, more universal for usage.

Darrell hopes that someone can find an old copy of the old video that had been created in the past.

The grant money is spread out over three years. Stephanie from MAC was very helpful with putting together the budget.

The budget for Maple Month/Weekend has been increased to about $40k. There will be a lot of direct targeted advertising. For the first two weeks of Feb it will be targeted south, throughout March targeted throughout, and then toward the end of sugaring season it will be targeted up north; radio ads, internet, etc. There will be geotargeting on google searches. MAC will handle the social media aspect of advertising. Radio ads will be around $21k. The internet ads are around $9k. The rest of the budget is some over-allocation, and can be used if needed. We will likely come in a little under budget on this. To clarify there will not be banner ads, as those are outdated and not as well targeted. The geotargeting is the best way to advertise to the population of people looking for sugar houses. Nathan agrees that this is a great way to broaden the audience of people who will be reached.

Next meeting planned for February 1, 2022.

Motion to adjourn by Darrell.

Seconded by Andy. All in favor, none opposed.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:39

Respectfully Submitted,

Alisha A. Powell, Secretary