NHMPA 2/1/22 Monthly Meeting Minutes

7pm via Zoom

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

**Members Absent:** Charles Hunt

Meeting called to order at 7:16pm by Andrew Chisholm

1. **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates**
2. 12/15 Monthly Meeting Minutes: Motion to accept by Darrell, seconded by Doug, all in favor.
3. 1/11 Monthly Meeting Minutes: Motion to accept by Chris, seconded by Darrell, all in favor.
4. 1/15 Annual Meeting Minutes: Motion to accept by Dave, seconded by Darrell, all in favor.
5. 1/15 Board Meeting Minutes: Motion to accept by Dave, seconded by Darrell, all in favor.
6. Next Monthly meeting date?: Tuesday March 1 at 7pm
7. **Participation, Recruitment, Organization and Clarity of Roles, Committees/Subcommittees:**

Andrew and Alisha attended a Zoom meeting with the Nashua-West Rotary today. They may be able to help us in the future with recruitment of volunteers and help. We also mailed out the paper renewal form which has begun to arrive at people’s homes. Hopefully this will help with the renewal issues we have been having on the website.

We are working on making sure that the roles of the committees, subcommittees and board members are more clear for the future. Sue is working on writing up a list of what she did previously.

1. **Treasurer Transition Update:**

Stephanie from MAC has been meeting with Sue every Wednesday, and Andy gets an update every Thursday. They are working on transitioning over all the various tasks and roles she was doing. There have been some questions regarding the address change of the association to New York. We have discussed this in the past, and we just weren’t able to find anyone who was able or willing to take this over. Sue thinks that she will be completely relieved of her duties by late March/early April.

Darrell is wondering about the transition of the bank account. He heard from Bruce Treat that he had been contacted about it. Andy notes that as we have transitioned accounts over to Stephanie, there were some issues because there have been multiple names on the accounts over time. It is good we are going through this process and getting things smoothed out.

1. **Website issues, renewal issues, Paper renewal mailing.**

Andy discusses the issues we have had with the website. There have been many problems. It doesn’t function well as an e-commerce website. In the future, the paper mailing for renewal is promising. There has already been a lot of interest in sponsorship of the paper renewal form, with coupons offered as deals for the producers, similar to the way Farm Bureau does their mail-in renewal card.

We have had some questions about the address of the association being listed in NY, now that we are transitioning over the Stephanie and Margaret from MAC handling treasurer duties. Unfortunately we looked into mail forwarding, and it is cost prohibitive. Darrell wonders if there could be other options to go through Fedex or UPS for some kind of forwarding service. Andy notes that it would likely be very expensive. Andy and Alisha have discussed the issue, and decided that for now we will list the NY address; if there is a lot of criticism of this, then we will change it to either Alisha or Andy’s home address and manually forward mail.

1. **Jug Shortages: Discuss Bacon Jugs, possibility of CDL Jugs.**

Andy notes that Will Streeter from CDL asked if we would be willing to consider using their jugs. He thinks he could have them ready and to members by May. Darrell wonders if he needs to get in touch with Bacon to get an update regarding how far behind we are and what the status is of the shortage.

Andy wants to get everyone’s input on CDL jugs. They would be different; they would have a sticker rather than screen print, and would be square in shape. If we did 27 pallets of quarts, we could at least get them to people by May. Will Streeter thinks it would be cheaper than the current jugs. At this time, it seems like our options are to continue dealing with the Bacon Jug shortage, or try this option.

Darrell expresses a concern about the square jug and how they move, look on the shelf.

Andy agrees that the square jug isn’t as good for him and his customers either; he has customers that prefer the traditional NHMPA jug and if he has customers like this, our other members must, too.

Darrell thinks that the big slow down is due to lithographing. They can produce enough jugs, but can’t get them through the plant quickly enough.

Darrell thinks we should put the issue out to the members to see what they think. Andy will get an idea of a jug mock up from CDL; what it would look like, pricing, etc. We will discuss at the next meeting.

1. **Promotions Committee Update**

There have been questions about the promotions committee’s plan for promotion during maple month. Specifically, we have heard feedback regarding the lack of ads planned on WMUR and in newspapers. To clarify the plan for everyone, Andy explains that we will have ads in the Union Leader. We decided to go with Town Square Media to manage the bulk of our promotions because of the large scope of their company and their reach. They are able to target ads to people based on their search histories. The benefit is we are not paying a website to host just one ad. These are interactive geo-targeted ads which will be far more beneficial. There are also 550 radio ads on several stations planned as well. They are strategically being targeted to appeal to southern audiences in the beginning of the season, and shifting northward toward end of March/April. They are also going to do DJ ad shout-outs. Stephanie looked into WMUR ads; the cheapest one is $5000/month for a website ad which is 1/8 page on their website. The next level up is $8000/month.

Alisha mentions that she agrees this is a great ad campaign, the geo-targeting will work really well. The demographic aim is people just like her; 30s-40s with young kids/families. This demographic relies heavily on social media and digital ads.

Andy had a small video put together that will be part of this ad campaign as well. This ad campaign is also trackable and we will get feedback about how the ads are working, who they are targeting, etc so that we can improve upon it in the future. The cost of the overall promotions will come up a little shorter than our prior budgeted amount of $40k.

**Follow up to prior conversation regarding jugs:**

Nathan also adds that he thinks it would be worthwhile to look at the CDL jug options, so that we can continue to have something to offer to our customers. Andy agrees, but also has customers that are very particular and want the particular NH jug that we already use. Andy will get a quote and mock up, and Darrell will get an update from Bacon to find out where they are at so that we can make an informed decision.

**Misc:**

Darrell is wondering about cream labels and where are we at with that. Dave said the price was thrown out, it was higher and the interest went flat on the issue so he dropped it at that time. Also, Dave sent Andy some information about hydrometer clinics. The State is short staffed and not planning on doing any clinics, but they are doing a few drop off points for hydrometer checks. There will be an email going out to the membership to inform everyone of the times. There were a few new producers interested in signing up for Seal of Quality at the Annual Meeting as well.

**Website issues/other volunteers:** Alisha has been in touch withseveral different people who are interested in being on the Face of NH Maple social media campaign. Along the way there have been a few people who have mentioned interest in helping us with some website issues and other things. There have been several interviews done for it that will be posted to the social media. Andy has also spoken with Bud about whether he would be willing to come back onto the board again, he is considering.

Darrell is wondering if there is anyone interested in helping out with NHMPA in the Lebanon area; he has talked with Heidi Bundy in the past. Alisha has met with a few people in that region and has a few potential connections.

Andy also mentions that we are going to need to have the summer meeting, and then vote next year at the Winter annual meeting on whether or not we would change the timing of annual meetings per the bylaws. Darrell wonders if it could be moved to fall, he would rather see that timing over May. Darrell also notes that people were surprised with the timing, always expecting the annual meeting to happen on the third weekend of January in the past.

**Misc:**

Time was spent discussing conditions about our impending sugaring season; our weather conditions, where we are at with our progress on sugaring so far and what we are anticipating for the season.

Andy also says that there are some free promotion opportunities that are happening coming up: An article in Maple News, as well as one in the Farm Bureau Communicator.

Dave notes that NAMSI did a presentation last month about the history and development of maple tubing. There is a lot of interesting information about the changing technology. It can be found on Youtube. Andy also saw a recent video on information about tapping red maples. Proctor Center found that the sap is less sweet, but they produce more of it.

Next meeting planned for Tuesday March 1 at 7pm

Motion to adjourn by Darrell.

Seconded by Nathan.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:24pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Alisha A. Powell, Secretary