NHMPA 5/10/22 Monthly Meeting Minutes

7:30 pm via Zoom

Members Present: Dave Kemp, Andrew Chisholm, Alisha Powell, Darrell Fisk, Charles Hunt, Doug Byam, Kelly Byam

Members Absent: Chris Olsen, Nathan Adams

Meeting called to order at 7:32 by Andrew Chisholm

1. **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates**
2. 4/12/22 Board Meeting Mins: Dave wanted to clarify on minutes from last meeting: Dave wanted to make sure it was clear in the minutes, on the second page discussion regarding the containers, about the pricing. Dave will send a scan to us of that invoice. There have been a few discrepancies in the past, and these have been caught by various others like Sue Folsom. Darrel notes that it will likely be higher this year than in 2019. Andrew is planning to look more into this to make sure we have the correct price quote. Mike from Sunnyside is charging the correct amount, to Andy’s knowledge at this point. The problem needs to be corrected with Rice, on the invoice.

Motion to approve the minutes by John, second by Doug. All in favor.

1. Next Monthly meeting date?: Monday June 6, Tuesday June 7, **Monday June 13,** Tuesday June 14?
2. **Fair planning: subcommittee update:** We are planning to move forward with the Deerfield Fair as we did last year. We are still in the planning phases to figure out the logistics for the Big E. We have a meeting coming up later this week with the fair subcommittee to pull together more details. John is wondering what the booth is like now. We have been told that it is a little smaller as they took some of the space away. It will be syrup sales; there won’t be any cotton candy or anything like that. The kitchen will no longer be part of the booth either. We have various producers that are interested in supplying maple products, and so far several people have expressed interest in volunteering. With the hired help provided by Lynne, the cost will be very similar to what the cost would have been if we paid volunteers and put people up in hotels like had been done in the past. Darrel was wondering about how the pricing structure was working for the fairs, having heard that we would be paying close to retail. The pricing structure may seem that way to some because of the mark-up of the product on the shelf. Darrel thinks that we should average the wholesale prices of some of the local producers to pick a fair price. At the meeting Andy and Alisha had with Lynne and Gail Jellie, we did briefly discuss the pricing structure. The pricing structure that we used at Deerfield won’t necessarily work at the Big E. We want to make sure that producers get the chance to get their syrup down to the Big E, and Andy and Alisha will be drop off points for this. We still have the Seal of Quality requirement for this. We are going to have a subcommittee meeting later this week to plan out a blueprint for the fairs, and then after that we will let Lynne and Gail know more before Gail’s retirement on June 1.
3. **Summer meeting planning: July 30 at Patch Orchards, possible Sugarhouse tour to follow including Harding Hill Farm.** Alisha has spoken with Barb and Matt from Patch Orchards, and they are willing to host the meeting. They can provide donuts and ice cream, and we can work with a caterer to provide lunch. We are hoping to then coordinate a sugar house tour at Harding Hill Farm, and possibly another.
4. **Container Shortage Update, Order for 2023:** Mike Moore feels like he is finally getting caught up; he is seeing producers finally getting quart containers. We have had several pallets going out until this week; starting up again next week.

We need to do the order for 2023 containers. Darrel talked to Bill Cheney, and Bill thought that he was still the lead of the container committee. Alisha forgot to send the link for tonight’s meeting to Bill, after Darrel had asked her to at Bascom’s last week; Alisha apologized for the oversight. Darrel feels that the distribution of the containers has been unfair. Andy is happy to have anyone help do the legwork for taking care of the container issues if they are willing to step up and take responsibility and handle things; but he hasn’t heard from Bill Cheney at all and would hope that if he was still interested in being involved, that he would call him.

We discussed the recent infrastructure changes on the board, and the shift in responsibilities at the end of last year. Andy and Alisha have taken on a lot of responsibility because there was no one else at that time who had stepped up to do so. It has been very important to try to get containers into people’s hands, and that’s what we have been trying to do.

Andy is going to work on the container order for 2023, and is hoping for guidance from Dave or someone who may know. Dave adds that he agrees, and he could look back at old data, but in the last few years we have been working off a deficit of containers as well. We are supposed to have a strategic reserve area at Mike Moore’s, so that we would have a place to get containers if needed if other distributors were short or gave up orders. Dave feels that Andy has done a good job leveraging the orders. Dave notes that in the past, Bill needed a little prompting. Andy notes that when he found out that Bacon was printing McClure’s jugs and not ours, he felt that action needed to be taken, so he took it. He is talking now to Andy twice a week, and they have a good repoire. John wonders who will be on the committee for 2023; Andy notes that anyone who would like to step up and get involved is welcomed to do so. This issues regarding the container shortage was even reported on in the Maple News last month because of the economic implications. John would be interested in getting involved, and volunteers to join the subcommittee.

1. **NH Dept of Economic Development Grant Update:** Andy shares that he provided a “wishlist” to Adam from the government office. They liked our list, and they have submitted the application for the grant. Adam is confident that it will be successful. It would involve trips to Asia, Singapore, Germany, and Japan to promote NH Maple Syrup. These are areas that are targeted as major importers of Maple Syrup. The grant would be $400,000 to start in 2023. It is a federal grant.
2. **Website Issues:** We are still having web issues and need to address this. Kelly, John, Chris and Charlie Levesque are all going to participate in helping with this improvement. Kelly started to look into some new platforms as an idea for these. They are planning to meet sometime soon to go over that.
3. **Misc:** Kelly is going to do a presentation for Rivermead, a nursing home/assisted living. She is working on putting together a presentation and will be scheduling that at some point soon.

Darrel asks if Bud Taylor has expressed interest in becoming treasurer? Bud has mentioned it to Alisha and Andy and they are planning to meet and talk.

Next meeting planned for Monday June 13 at 7pm.

Motion to adjourn by Kelly,

Seconded by Darrel

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:39pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Alisha A. Powell, Secretary