NHMPA 6/13/22 Monthly Meeting Minutes

7pm via Zoom

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

Members Absent: Nathan Adams, Chris Olsen

Meeting called to order at 7:03 by Andrew Chisholm

1. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates
2. 5/10/22 Board Meeting Mins: Motion to accept by Kelly, seconded by Doug. All in favor.
3. Fair Update: Bud Taylor: We are planning to participate in several fairs—Deerfield, Cheshire, North Haverhill, Hopkinton, and Lancaster. He has made contact with several people at the various fairs. We will be signing several contracts for the fairs coming up soon. Andy mentions we are all set to move forward with the Big E. Gail Jellie retired, and we are now working with Lynne Blye. Gail’s replacement is in process. Andy is planning to meet with all of them at some point. Bud got the current list of Seal of Quality members so that we can reach out for product for the various fairs. Bud feels very positive about our fair planning and participation so far. He hasn’t heard from anyone at Lancaster yet but has reached out to them and is hoping to hear back soon.

Bud also notes that we need to settle our rules for fair competitions, since the winners of the fairs can compete for the Carlisle.

1. Felker Award Update: Dale Smith-Dale wasn’t able to sign into the zoom meeting tonight so we will discuss at our next meeting.
2. Container Update: Andy shares that we are now caught up on our orders for containers for the most part right now. The container committee met last week. Bill Cheney was planning to do the order for 2023. The plan was to add 10% more containers to the order so that we would have a small surplus. We were so far behind on orders this year that it was hard to gauge how many orders we were behind on and whether they were from 2021 or 2022. We are only a little behind on quarts at this point.
3. Summer Meeting Update: Alisha spoke with Barb and Matt Patch; we are all set to hold the meeting on Saturday July 30 at Patch Orchards. Barb said a lot of the caterers she uses for events are already booked. She suggested having a pizza lunch that could be ordered just ahead of time from a local place. This would be less expensive overall; board members agree this seems like a reasonable plan. We also may arrange a sugar house tour afterward at Harding Hill Farm; Alisha has been trying to touch base with them, but they have been busy lately. As far as a speaker, Andy has been working on that and has a few potentials. Darrel notes that he has heard from a few producers that it would be good to hear about timing of tapping. It would also be great to find out about the tubing set up they have up there since they have expanded. Will Streeter may be able to participate with that as well. Doug went to Will Streeter’s open house and they had a lot of good info there.
4. Grant Money Allocation Discussion: Andy shares that we received a check from the state for about $15,000. We have to decide where to allocate that. We have been thinking about promotional material and signage. John agrees that it would make sense to do that. Andy says that we could potentially come up with another sign that’s educational and promotes NH Maple. Kelly mentions that with fair season coming, maybe we could allocate money toward advertising for fair season. One idea had been to promote Maple Weekend during the fair season.

Alisha mentions we haven’t met with our promotions subcommittee for quite awhile and we could do that sometime soon. Kelly wonders about using any money from the grant for updates on the website, and whether that would qualify to fall under the budget for the grant money. Andy believes that some of the money could be used for that, but we definitely need some volunteers on the website subcommittee to do some leg work on that. We have been looking at the Upper Valley Hudson website as a potential model. Kelly has noticed that the functionality of that website overall isn’t exactly what she thinks we need. The map function is really the part of it that we had been looking at. Kelly has found some websites that could be more functional, that have been specifically designed for associations like ours—and at a reasonable cost. She wants to see the website be more functional for the members. Andy notes that Kelly seems like she has a lot of good background knowledge to help take on this project and is hoping she will be willing to participate in development of a new website. Alisha suggests that Kelly compile a list of some website examples for our review, and that once we can review them Alisha will put together a Zoom meeting for the website subcommittee to go over these ideas. Andy thinks adding a deadline of trying to accomplish at least certain steps in the website upgrade process by this fall. Kelly would like to see the website work better for both producers and consumers. Kelly is wondering what the budget has in it currently related to our current website—we use Loud Canvas. Andy thinks that there may be a chance to use some of the grant money toward this.

1. Board Member Public Notice of Intent to Sell Product (fairs): There is a restriction related to non-profits in regard to board members profiting from events. To be able to have any board member provide product for the fairs, we have to publish a short legal notice publically that the NH Maple Producers Board intends to sell product at fairs. Andy makes a motion to publish this notice, seconded by Kelly, all in favor, none opposed.

Our intent in this is to make sure that we are able to supply enough product for the fairs, since the Seal of Quality pool includes many board members.

Misc.:

Andy also shares that he traveled down to congress in Washington DC to represent the association last week. He handed out quarter pint samples. It was an interesting event; He noted that he learned more about how there is a major labor shortage in agriculture; NH has 2.3% unemployment rate, with not enough employees to fill various positions. The outlook on that is not good and seems to be a trend that will continue. He also learned that supply chain issues overall seem to be improving.

Darrel is wondering about when we may get a treasurer’s report. Andy will work on having MAC create one for us to review. Andy also mentions that Bud Taylor is interested in taking on a treasurer role; he met with Alisha and Andy recently and we are in talks with him regarding that. Andy in the meantime will get a treasurer’s report from MAC and share with the board when available.

Next meeting planned for Tuesday July 12.

Motion to adjourn by 7:57pm by Darrel

Seconded by Kelly

Meeting Adjourned @ 7:58 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Alisha A. Powell, Secretary