



## NHMPA 12/5/2022 Monthly Meeting Minutes 7pm via Zoom

Members Present: Doug Byam, Kelly Byam, Andrew Chisholm, Darrell Fisk, Charles Hunt, Dave Kemp, John Kenney

Members Absent: Nathan Adams, Chris Olsen

Meeting called to order at 7:02 by Andrew Chisholm

### **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates**

- a. October 11, 2022 minutes – Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting by John with a second by Charlie; motion carried.
- b. Next monthly meeting – January 21 at The Common Man; Doug, Kelly, and John are not able to attend.

### **Old Business**

- a. Fair recap – for Deerfield and the Big E – all product checks have gone out to members. About \$92k in checks to members and about \$108k in gross sales. Andy has to separate the two fairs for some line items; Big E had \$52k in sales, \$14.5k in labor, \$37k to the Association and then wrote checks and paid booth fee out of that; the Big E is not as profitable because of labor costs. 2019 profit was \$3300 on \$60k in sales; about the same this year on \$52k in sales. Other fairs were not terribly profitable but not a loss. The Association still sent out \$92k in checks to members – Andy said it is good to get that in the hands of members who were represented at the fairs. Total gross sales at Deerfield set a record – just shy of \$71k for 4 days. \$3900 to Deerfield Fair and then all member checks but costs of sugar, cotton candy, etc. The team in the booth gave close to 12,000 samples at Deerfield. Darrel asked



about financial records at the last meeting because there needs to be good financial records – with no records, it’s hard to say where the money goes. That reminded Andy about Hopkinton Fair – Andy is making progress on getting NHMPA back there. At the Big E, there is a huge problem on accountability and records – Andy doesn’t like how it’s run. Their method of accounting is the “shoebox” method – no register, no calculator. Cash goes into a desk drawer under the counter. Josh Marshall replaced Gail Jellie at Dept of Ag – Andy talked with Josh about how to make the Big E better – they need to add a Square system specifically for the Association to track sales better, also redesign the booth; staffing is pretty good. Andy and Josh will meet again to actually do the redesign – maybe add some space (Josh is talking about redesigning the entire building). Andy also talked with Shawn Jasper about it. The Association will not make a lot of money there but can do better if the display is better; there is a good variety of products.

- b. Winter meeting: 1/21/23 at The Common Man in Plymouth. The meeting will be in a different room this year – it holds up to 150 people. A meeting invitation was sent out with the membership renewal form. \$10 fee for lunch will not cover everything so it will result in a bit of a loss, but Andy thinks charging a little less might encourage more people to attend. Taking a loss on the food might help contribute to a bigger turnout and more volunteers and committee help. The common theme is that the Association needs help and volunteers. Kelly has been fantastic with the help she has provided and has helped reduce the workload for Andy. There are also many requests for donations and articles, and Kelly fields those – Andy can’t thank her enough, but the Association needs more help like that. Speakers that are confirmed: Townsquare Media talking about radio promos, Trevor Hardy from Brookdale Farm talking about irrigation system that can be applied to maple, Adam from the Bureau of Economic Development and Commerce talking about new grant,



~~Shane~~Steve from UNH talking about new grant (Andy will work with ~~Shane~~ Steve to bring back Maple School), Glenn Goodrich, Abby Van den Burg from UVM, and Morning Ag Clips will be in attendance. Alisha is managing the Carlisle Award for the meeting for syrup judging; Connie will be doing the judging this year. Kelly needs someone to hand out membership cards since she cannot be there. Doug can drop them off to Dave so Dave can bring them to the meeting. Morning Ag Clips will definitely have one person there; if someone from the Association can volunteer at the check-in table, then MAC can send just one person to help manage the meeting. If MAC has to work at the check-in table and manage the meeting, then there will be two people.

- c. Container update – Dave mentioned that Sugarhill was sold recently – Altium is the new owner. Dave talked with a salesperson at the NAMSC in Wisconsin – they say they are in the business to make containers – happy to make maple containers, want to grow that part of the business. The salesman said the company wants to expand Sugarhill into Canada. Andy said Bacon had a small hiccup – there were no containers for about a month – but they are over it and containers are trickling out, a pallet here and there. The big distributors are the ones who are getting the most – Bascom and Sunnyside. Bascom has everything in stock except half-gallons. Sunnyside has everything in stock but will run out of quarts by January. Art at Bacon calls Andy once or twice a week. Sunnyside and the Reserve are in the same place – when Andy says to send containers to Sunnyside, some were going to the Reserve, causing confusion, which was happening in the office. Andy helped them clarify – should be all set now. Andy said the goal is to have a surplus in December and January so there are enough for all producers for maple season. Every producer who wants containers should have them. At this point, Bacon seems to understand what



we need and when it's needed. There had been a lot of turnover, but people are getting settled in.

- d. Website update – Now that the container issue is settling down, this is the next major fire that needs to be put out. Loud Canvas informed us that the site is so far outdated, that it cannot be updated without significant cost. There is one major plugin that will require \$25k and 15 weeks of work to resolve. Andy asked Townsquare Media if they could redesign the website – they said no, it's too far gone. There are almost 500 member listings on the site, some with duplicate listings, plus all of the other pages to be redone. The Association is really at a crossroads and needs to decide if they should invest in the existing website or start over. Where will the money come from? Andy said the BEA grant could possibly be used – Andy would have to talk with Adam about it. The grant is to help promote and educate about maple, and a website would do that. Kelly had spent hours doing research on websites and found sites that could do what we want. Townsquare told Andy that going to dynamic content could cut down the cost a bit. The Association is currently paying \$5200 a year for hosting fees, which Townsquare said is reasonable. The Association could consider charging an annual fee for different levels of member listings on the site – basic level for free and then advanced level for a small fee, maybe \$50. There had been discussion in the past about splitting into two websites: one for consumers and one for members. The new site will have the Square system for membership renewals and so may not need an actual membership login. Doug asked why we need a page for each sugarhouse versus a link to their own website. Andy said in order to have photos and the “About Us” section requires giving them a webpage. Kelly will try to find and resend the research she had done. It would be best to be able to start working at the end of March and have the new site up by the end of summer. The budget will probably be in the neighborhood of \$20-30k. Andy



asked Townsquare about advertising – they said it opens up the site to the possibility of viruses, and it requires more backend work on the hosting side. John's friend is definitely interested in helping with anything that is needed related to the website. Andy will be sending an email tomorrow to all members about the issues with the website and encouraging them to renew with the form that was mailed.

### **New Business**

- a. 2023 budget projection – Stephanie will present the budget to the membership at the Annual Meeting. For 2023, the budget is projecting a loss of \$18k. The cost of MAC is over \$20k for Treasurer work and soon-to-be Secretary work, which reinforces the need for more help and more volunteers. Sue Folsom resigned because of how much work it was. Alisha just stepped down because it required too much time that she couldn't devote to it. We need helpers and committees to help with this work. It is not a need for a single person but for multiple people to do a few small hours here and there. Kelly was offered more work but said she had enough and did not want to take on more. Everyone else should just do what they can – don't do too much and then have to resign. There should be 2-3 people on each committee. Kelly will print off a small note with the list of committees that need help and include it with the membership cards when she mails them. Andy said there will be a member survey going out in early January so he can discuss survey results at the Annual Meeting. The Association will lose money if there aren't people to help with the work. There will be a small stream of revenue by ordering more NHMPA apparel, which will need to happen soon. John mentioned he knows someone who has a strong background in doing Secretary/Treasurer work for nonprofits – Andy said to put her in touch with him. Andy was reminded that he got a phone call today about a grant for \$5000 for photography work for a specialty crop. Motion to



present this budget to the membership: Kelly with a second from John. Motion carried.

- b. Open Board seats/Board members up for re-election – Andy doesn't know who is up for re-election. Andy has someone who is interested in joining the Board but is still on the fence – it is Will Streeter, and he will attend the Annual Meeting.
- c. Regional meetings for 2023 – Andy said these will be done the same way in 2023 as they were done in 2022. He would like the same hosts and similar dates for the meetings – Dave Fuller, Andy Chisholm, the Pancake in Henniker, and Stuart & John's in Westmoreland. Dates are TBD based on the hosts' availability. There was a good showing at them last year; Andy thinks he saw about 125 members last year. Andy will reach out to Connie and Shane about doing hydrometer clinics this year; he will see if it can be done at the Annual Meeting (rather than the drop-offs at the regional meetings).
- d. Charlie asked about merchandise at the winter meeting. Andy said there is a little merchandise left in the trailer, which is at Charlie's. Andy would like to get rid of all of the old merchandise that is in the trailer. He is hoping to have some new merchandise at the Annual Meeting. There will be signs and posters. Andy is getting a quote for new clothing with the logo from the containers. John said the place that made the signs can do apparel too – John will get a quote to compare.
- e. Dave said he is trying to keep everyone informed about what happened at the NAMSC/IMSI meetings this fall – lots of good information. Research from NYS Maple about how to market maple is very interesting.
- f. Kelly is wondering about signs that people ordered on the membership renewals – Andy said they are in the trailer at Charlie's. Mike Moore has a lot of signs also – it might be easiest to get the ones he has. People could get them at the Annual Meeting or a regional meeting (or Sunnyside). They are too big to be mailed.



- g. Kelly asked about the Supporter level of membership – she would like to put it on their business website and encourage others to do the same. Stephanie suggested crafting the message and then sharing it with all members so the message is consistent to everyone who might read it. Also Kelly asked about sending personal thank you notes to people who have given extra above their regular membership. Stephanie and Andy said to check with Christa from MAC because she may have had them printed already.
- h. American Agriculturalist magazine is interviewing Andy next week.

Motion to adjourn by Dave with a second by John.  
Meeting Adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Stephanie Kelly, Morning Ag Clips