



NHMPA 4/14/2023 Monthly Meeting Minutes 7:00 pm via Zoom

Members Present: Andrew Chisholm, Charles Hunt, Dave Kemp, Kate Stanley, Will Streeter; Stephanie Kelly (Secretary), Lila Nolan (MAC)

Members Absent: Doug Byam, Kelly Byam, John Kenney, Chris Olsen

Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm by Andrew Chisholm.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes/Upcoming Meeting Dates

- a. March 1, 2023 minutes - motion by Will with second by Kate; motion carried.
- b. Next monthly meeting - Monday May 15 7 pm via Zoom.

Old Business

- a. Container update - Andy has been in touch with the new container company and Bacon Jug; Bacon has not received any jugs since mid-January. There was a change to the formula for the resin, which caused dimpling in the containers, and the caps were popping off. Bacon hired a third-party company to look into the issue, and they should be providing an answer next week. All dealers that have containers now are ok but will run out of pints in about a month. As soon as containers come back out, all dealers will need a lot. Sugar Hill has had some turnover and might have lost an order? NHMPA has put in another order for cream containers. Andy is working with Adam for grant money to buy the die that cuts the boxes and get a third box. Adam will get back to Andy next week. Rice Packaging would produce the boxes. Currently



NHMPA has to go through Ben Fisk, but Ben would be fine with the Association creating its own boxes.

- b. Website update - Adam's office said money cannot be allocated to the website from the existing grant since it was not earmarked in the original grant request. USDA loves the idea of the website but needs a new grant written for that \$30k for the website; the window for that third grant is currently open. Adam has started on the new application and will finalize with Andy this week. This will delay the work but not stop it.
- c. Andy and Stephanie had a call with Feast Global two weeks ago to discuss global marketing of maple. Andrew and Marianna are planning a trip to NH to get an understanding of the maple industry. The bulk of the grant is for international marketing and promotion of NH maple, which they can help with. A major point of discussion that came up is traceability, which producers do now with their address or zip code on the bottle. With the new website, all sugarhouses might get their membership number (from membership spreadsheet) as part of their code on the bottle that would be traceable on the website so consumers could find the exact sugarhouse and trees where their maple product came from.
- d. Maple Month/Weekend report - Andy discussed the Survey results that were shared with all Board members. Overall comments were very positive. Many producers said the results met or exceeded their expectations. Many comments in the survey were related to the lackluster condition of the website and the need for an interactive mapping feature.
- e. Results of a question about scheduling Maple Weekend 2024 were included. The majority of respondents want Maple Weekend on the third weekend even though the dates are much earlier than usual in 2024 (and will be even earlier in 2025).



- f. Survey - pricing question - in the past, the Association has asked members to provide anonymous data about pricing, which some members have said violates antitrust laws. Andy asked MAC to research this; MAC found that with surveying for pricing, results cannot be shared with the Board. And a question about pricing has to be asking for past pricing, not future pricing. The survey must be anonymous and voluntary and can be ignored with no repercussions. Dave said previous data was reported only in the NH Ag publication as an average of prices to give members a broad idea of pricing with no risk of price fixing. Survey data will also be reported to USDA for grant purposes. Future results will not be shared with the Board - only with USDA and NH BEA.
- g. The Governor's tapping went well and was well attended. Governor Sununu proclaimed March as Maple Month in New Hampshire and did a radio interview with Andy.
- h. Andy contacted Bacon Jug about redesigning the screen printing on the bottles to possibly add other foods rather than just pancakes and waffles to the bottles as well as adding that Maple Weekend is the third weekend of March. Dave brought up how the containers need to be copyrighted or have a disclaimer added that they are for use by members only. There had been discussion about weights on candy boxes also - some producers said it is not necessary, but NH SOQ inspectors said it does have to be there.
- i. NH Food and Forest Expo - The Association has committed to being present in the sugarhouse at the Expo. Fair contributors have been contacted. Heidi Bundy and her daughter committed as well as Deb Locke, Mike Moore, Shawn & Kathy Atkins, Marty and Amy from Journeys End, and Stuart Page. Andy is waiting to hear from Larry Moore and Dave from Ledge-top Barbecue. There are two volunteers who will run the register. Andy will be there to oversee setup on 5/4 in the evening and will



be there for the duration of the event with his beef cattle (in another part of the fairgrounds). Both advanced tickets and vendor spots are almost sold out. Andy would like to see a Board member helping out - Will may be able to help on Friday 5/5. Heidi and Deb are working together to figure out how to divide the supply of candy that will be needed.

- j. NHMPA was offered a three-year contract for the building at the Deerfield Fair; Andy requested five years, and it will auto-renew in five years. Andy will notify the Board when the contract is signed. Andy said there will be a need for more volunteers than last year and would like to see more this year.
- k. Will was in touch with Ed at the Lancaster Fair. There is a sugarmaker in the sugarhouse already who is not willing to “play nice” with the Association. Ed said he would try to find a place to put the Association in an area that will give good exposure (2023, Labor Day weekend). Dave Fuller and Will can work together for Lancaster. Will would also like to put something together for Sandwich eventually. North Haverhill last year was not worth doing again; it was only Andy and Bud and over 2 hours’ drive for each of them.
- l. Summer Meeting - Meridan Hill is committed to hosting. It is under contract to be sold, but the new owners are happy to host. Will contacted them for June 24 - confirmed. Andy will work on speakers - he will confirm with Abby Vandenburg and find others. Will said he may be able to get speakers from St Albans. Andy said it would be good to take a trip to someone else’s sugarhouse again like last year.
- m. Committee positions - not discussed.

New Business

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- a. New MAC team member: Stephanie introduced Lila, a new team member who will be supporting NHMPA. Andy wants to be sure the Association's mission of education and promotion are consistent and that maple is considered for more than breakfast.
- b. NH Eats Local graphic - can NH Maple provide a graphics resource to support NH Eats Local? MAC team could be help; Andy said the Association could share graphics. Stephanie will confirm with Colleen Stewart at UNH.
- c. Maple Sugaring Survey? sample sent by Kelly on 4/11 - has been sent out to members to provide data to student from Colby Sawyer. No further action needed.
- d. Maple Museum - There is the potential to dissolve the Museum as a separate not-for-profit association and create a committee of the Board for it; Andy talked with Mark Thompson, current President of the Museum, who thinks that is a fine idea. Treasurer Sue Folsom would like to be finished with the work as well. Mark is gathering info for how to do the dissolution. Doug (Board member) could become Chair of the Committee since he is on both Boards currently. Mark will be back in touch with Andy, who will report to the Association Board.
- e. President's stipend - Andy would like the Board to consider a Bylaws change that the President could get paid like the Secretary and Treasurer currently do. Farm Bureau provides a flat stipend to its President - no need to take the time to track and submit expense reports. The President has to do a lot more promotion than has been required in the past, and he or she should not say no to those promotion requests. This is one of a number of Bylaws changes that should be considered.
- f. Meeting with Charlie Moore - Andy met with Charlie Moore about working with Guy Fieri to promote NH Maple. Charlie and his crew were on board. Andy said it would be good to put Guy in touch with the Global Feast team. Charlie is trying to talk Guy into doing some pro bono work; instead, the Association may make a donation to Guy's foundation.



- g. Will mentioned the cotton candy machines that were in the trailer - they need to be serviced. One is only for parts, and the other two need to be serviced. Andy has been in touch with the Hopkinton Fair Association about getting back into the sugarhouse, but there is a contract with Miranda currently. Deb will do cotton candy with her own machine at NH Farm & Forest Expo. Motion by Will with a second by Dave to spend \$500 to have both machines serviced; Will will manage the servicing.
- h. Will talked with Charlie about how the trailer seems to have a leak in the roof, and Andy thinks the vent is cracked - he will check it. The new part might be in the trailer and was never installed. Also there has been discussion about getting the trailer wrapped with a promotional message and images. Andy is going to have to move the trailer from Charlie's to Deerfield, and then the Board needs to decide where it will go until the first Fair (Dave's? back to Charlie's?). It will be used at Cheshire (Aug 3-6), Lancaster, Deerfield, and possibly Sandwich.
- i. NH BEA grant - Andy and Stephanie talked through some grant spending and planned out the digital spending portion. Andy and Adam were going to work through spending the remaining grant funds. Andy asked Will to get pricing to get the trailer wrapped - Will needs the dimensions of the trailer. Net amount of grant is about \$350k; \$38k to Adam's office to administer grant. \$40k for digital, \$80k for market research and sustainability, and \$195k for outreach and promotion outside the state of NH. Grant runs through September 2025. If the grant is perceived as effective, it is renewable at the same amount. Adam's office sat down with Josh Marshall from Commissioner Jasper's office, USDA, and Dept of Ag. Adam asked if they would be interested in administering the grant; they said no, they want NHMPA to administer the grant. Adam's office does not require RFPs - they are giving control of the funds to the Association.



Motion to adjourn by Will with a second by Dave.
Meeting Adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephanie Kelly, Morning Ag Clips