MICHIGAN BEEKEEPERS’ ASSOCIATION

MINUTES

Saturday, April 05, 2014

Members in attendance: Don Schram, Terry Toland, Stephen Tilmann, Ann Leonard, Sheldon Schwietek, Zachary Huang, Joan Mandel, Rich Wieske, Mike Hansen (hansenmg@michigan.gov), Don Lam, Mike Risk, Anne Marie Fauvel, Cindy Dudock, Meghan Milbrath, David Anthony, Clay Ottoni, Sid Risk, Norm Adams.

Don's “What You NEED To Know”

- Spring Conference wrap up. Best attendance in years.
- Conference Vendor changes! See below.
- MBA Summer Picnic info finalized.
- Heartland Apicultural Society 2015 will be held in Albion, MI.
- MBA close to Freemont Foundation goal of $100K.

Future Meetings:

- June 7, 2014 – Board meeting, 10am, E. Lansing
- July 12, 2014 – Michigan Honey Festival, Frankenmuth
- July 26, 2014 – MBA Summer Picnic, hosted by SVBA, Octagon Barn, 6948 Richie Rd., Gagetown, 1pm
- August 2, 2014 – Board meeting, 10am, E. Lansing
- October 24 and 25, 2014 – MBA Fall Conference, at Holiday Inn Gateway, Flint

(Additional board meetings will be scheduled once the MSU football schedule is announced.)

- March 13 and 14, 2015 – ANR Week, Spring Conference, E. Lansing

Meeting called to order at 10:10am.

Changes and additions to the agenda called for. Agenda approved.

Secretary's Report (D. Schram): It was noted that the widow of Jim Dodder, Wilda Dodder, had expressed disapproval with our memorial contribution to the Freemont Foundation in Jim's name. She felt that the contribution should have gone to a more local cause. While sympathy was expressed by the board, it was a gesture the board felt was appropriate and was a memorial contribution and not a gift.

State Apiarist, Michael Hansen, noted that GAAMPS ARE BMPs (Best Management Practices). And the travel inspections will need to be charged for in the future, as they won't be performed in conjunction with the National Bee Survey.

Financial Report (S. Tilmann): Tilmann reported that we have collected $7910 in dues, and $11,620 from the Spring Conference. Expenses were $7862 along with $505 for insurance. There were $398 in
PayPal transactions and 28 checks received. These amounts do not include cash/checks received at the door for the Spring Conference. Current balance for checking is $42,003 and Paypal $1 and CD at PNC $15000.

Expenses noted were Bank fees $474, Website fees $700, Fall Conference expenditures of $7862, Grants issued $500, and an expenditure of $743 (which was explained as a larger than typical amount for a projector we bought for the conference), Honey Sticks and Coloring Books $1429, and the previously noted Insurance at $505.

**Conference Report (Tilmann):** We had a total of 716 registered attendees for the conference, with an additional 111 people who attended as speakers, volunteers and vendors. **Total number of attendees for the conferences in 2012 – 493, 2013 – 576, and 2014 – 716.**

Registration brought in $11,210, Vendors $2427, Silent Auction $511, Live Auction $647, and the Microscope Class $1200.

Expenses at the conference: Lodging $989, Printing $145, AV Equipment rental from the Kellogg Center $2178 (broken down as 5 power strips @ $10 ea, 3 microphones @ $25ea, projectors, podium, screen, laptop @ $200, Vendor Lunches $2151, Refreshment Table (coffee service) $1080, Handouts $71, and the speaker fee of $500.

There was a short discussion regarding the outrageous costs of renting AV equipment and how it would save the board money to own our own equipment.

**Motion to gift $1200 to Zachary Huang, which was income from the microscope class,** made by Mike Risk and seconded by David anthony. **Passed unanimously.**

**Motion to buy 2 projectors by the spring conference,** by Don Lam and seconded by Norm Adams, with another projector to be purchased as needed each year. Discussion was had. **Motion passed.**

**Vendor Room: (Tillmann):** There were 28 vendors in attendance, with 47 total tables sold. In a poll, there were $71,705 in gross vendor receipts sold at the conference. This equates to the average family spending $157.

Revenue is $2427 from 47 tables. Cost of lunches was $2151. Cost of refreshment table (coffee service) $1080. Netting us an $804 loss. A discussion of the low cost of the vendor tables was had with Cindy Dudock commenting that John Miller noted that our table fees were very low. Joan Mandel mentioned that giving people the option to buy lunches, which a low volume vendor would probably opt out of. What followed was a lengthy discussion on how we can't provide lunches (conference center rules), but people and vendors can bring in a sack lunches.

There was a **motion that we add ten dollars to the cost per table,** made by Norm Adams, and seconded by Don Lam, and continue to buy lunches, effective today for all conferences. **Motion failed.**

**Motion to add $10 per table for all conferences,** Norm Adams by Don Lam, passed with one opposed. No comment on lunches. Comments and questions continued after the vote. Vendors being a plus for the conference was agreed upon by all. The vendor room, says Leonard, is a draw and supports the local vendors. It should be a wash. Wieske felt that the lunches should be dropped and
that vendors attend because of the number of potential sales and can buy their own lunches.

**Motion to eliminate lunches for vendors**, by David Anthony and seconded by Richard Wieske. Discussion followed, especially since we've already moved to raise table fees. There were 3 dissenting votes. **Motion carried.**

It was noted that this was a one/two punch to the vendors where the table fees were increased AND lunches were taken away. It was said that this is a topic that will be revisited in the upcoming months.

**Membership Report (Tilmann):** There are currently 733 active members. A lot of 2011 and 2012 members came back when emailed and asked. There are about 2000 in our email database.

**Website Report (Tilmann):** Popular pages are: Home Page (143 daily), Beekeepers Workshop (128), How to Build a Beehive (58), Classified Ads Show (40), Browse Classified (27), Honey Locator (28 per day).

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed.

**State Apiarist Report (Mike Hansen):** Hansen requests that all beekeepers participate in the Bee Informed Survey for winter losses. It's a very quick online survey. He asked that people who don't get online take a packet (which he provided to the group). The information gleaned is very helpful information to all beekeepers. Hansen noted that the Bee Informed Partnership works closely with the researchers at Beltsville.

Anne Marie Fauvel feels that a lot of the BIP survey is aimed at the commercial guys, but it's important to get all beekeepers involved.

General feeling is that the BIP surveys are a very good thing.

Hansen is getting reports about flood warnings. He stresses that all beekeepers need to make sure their bees are on high ground.

Doug Landis, who is the interim head of the entomology department, is beginning a new grant. There is a SARE grant he's looking at with pollinator seeds and cuttings. Spotted Knapweed (Star Thistle) will also be studied alongside other plants. Terry Klein and other commercial beekeepers are working actively with him.

Pollinator Best Management for Orchards will be released shortly, with suggestions to growers on how to protect pollinators. Hopefully this spring, we will see better information on how to protect pollinators when they're on the grower's property.

Right to Farm is coming up and changes for 2015 GAAMPS are being discussed. Definitions, such as "reasonable barrier" are being discussed. Number of colonies with lot size considerations are also another topic that is being weighed. Hansen is working on helping to clean up the language. Any thoughts are welcomed.

Hansen took samples for The National Honey Bee Survey, and the results are just beginning to get out
the people. The government shut down last year has caused delays. This year, the monies for the survey were cut about in half. As a result, the national group has asked the states to take on the costs.

On bee losses, Hansen reports that the Northern tier states are reporting about a 60% loss this winter, as of a few weeks ago. Keep in mind, these numbers are anecdotal. But, it will gives you a feel for what you're hearing in your local bee clubs. Pollination needs should probably be met, but the re-population numbers are questionable.

Hopefully, your land owners applied for NRCS moneys for planting. This program is expected to be continued for several years.

On the subject of neonics, if you go into your big box stores, you'll start seeing Bee Friendly labels on plants. They have told their growers, from the seed and soil, on up, don't use any neonic. Growers are scrambling for options. The whole nursery industry is rather nervous with controlling pests in their greenhouses.

**MSU Report (Zachary Huang):** Also on the topic of neonics, both Zach and Walter Pett are serving on a board to study the effects of neonics in the greenhouse industry. Menards has pledged that they will not be purchasing any treated plants.

There was a discussion about the 80000 colonies in almonds who were recently destroyed by spray tank mix. The EPA is struggling with how to bring in adjuvants into regulation.

Tilmann asked how the MSU apiary is looking now, since Zach had about 2.5 hives alive out of 33. Zach expressed that he is hoping to have one or two left this year.

**Old Business:**

**Spring Conference Recap (Toland):** Chuck Bauer has taken ownership of the evaluation forms and has compiled a report. Tilmann will get the originals to the individual speakers.

At the conference it was brought up by an attendee that there is a hearing impaired translator issue. This is a bridge that has never been put before us. Is this something we should provide? Just for the keynote? A discussion about the different options available to us was had.

The Childrens' Activity Room went very well, according to Cindy Dudock. There was only one minor discipline problem. Fauvel feels that they need a larger room, as well as more volunteers. There is a lot of materials left over, and it can be used for multiple years.

**Summer Picnic (Norm Adams):** The picnic will be held on July 26, 2014. Norm Adams has a question about the number of people. (About 125-175 in attendance.) The location will be the Octagon Barn in the Thumb. The barn itself is a destination. Dean Hutchinson will bring in live hives with demonstration on proper miteacide application. There will be a smoker contest. The picnic will start at noon. And we will eat at 1pm. Table service will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass. Wieske proposed that we do an event as well, such as a tree planting. He will consult with Kay Barber on this project.
Fall Conference (Toland): Toland gave a quick recap of the upcoming conference, where David Hackenberg will be our guest speaker. Upon request by Norm Adams, there will be a wax contest this year.

At the next meeting in June, we will discuss breakout sessions.

Spring Conference (Toland): A number of speakers were proposed for the upcoming spring conference. Debbie Delaney, who is at the University of Delaware in Dewey Caron's position. Ross Conrad was proposed, as was Randy Oliver, VanEngelsdorp, Spivak, and Michael Bush. Schram will contact them. A discussion about how we'd like to structure multiple speakers, along with the unlikelihood of adding a day to the spring conference, was had.

The Michelle guest speaker options was discussed, and currently the letter is in possession of Walter Pett. It was clear that we cannot utilize the arena for anyone else.

HAS 2015 Committee (R. Wieske): Hunt and Weaver with HAS were consulted and HAS will be held in Albion. Huang, Wieske and Fauvel will be traveling to Albion in the next couple weeks. Toland and Schram would like to attend also. Fauvel and Wieske will be at this year's HAS on the Wednesday previous, to see how load in goes. Wieske would like Kalamazoo Club to be more active with volunteers and take part in HAS.

Western Michigan University is also courting us to hold HAS. A discussion was had of possibly having Western (in Kalamazoo) host our fall conference.

Constitutional Change Commitee (Toland/Schram): Sid Risk will be on the committee, as she did a great job with the past committee. Ann Leonard will also assist. A discussion and review of the motion was provided by Schram.

Toland expressed that there was also a need for cleaning up the constitutional language, as well as making the published election slate a final date, instead of taking nominations from the floor, which becomes an issue in terms of absentee ballots.

At this time, Ann Leonard excused herself, due to a prior obligation.

New Business:

Freemont Foundation (Toland and Tilmann): We are getting very close to the $100,000 mark with $93,000 currently in our account. Our money is collecting interest. Do we want to bring someone in from the Freemont Foundation to explain what's going on with it? We agreed in the past (in concurrence with past boards) that we wouldn't touch the amount until it reached $100,000, where we could then use the 6% interest per year. We will exceed that amount this year.

Tilmann spoke with the director. The Foundation money that is contributed is money that is matched, and can't be touched. Monies that have been accruing is the other part. We have never spent any of that spendable amount that has been accruing. That money can only be spent or granted to a 501(3)c organization, which the university is one of.
Next year, we will have some extraordinary expenses, because of our 150th Anniversary. Currently, we have about $27,000 of that $93,000 that can be utilized.

When discussing options, Tilmann noted that we could just write a check for the $7000, allowing us to reach our $100K goal. Or we could be more diligent in making memorial contributions, which are matched.

Toland noted that we could, as another option, do nothing.

**Pollination Stewardship Council (Wieske):** An in depth discussion about the contributions of the Pollinator Stewardship Council occurred. Wieske felt that the MBA should make a contribution to the efforts of the council. Schram expressed some concerns with the council. Instead of asking for a motion and vote, Wieske will bring more supporting information to another board meeting.

**Oral History Project (Wieske):** Wieske reports that he currently has 12-14 hours of interviews and numerous transcripts.

**Beekeeping License Plates (Wieske):** Wieske noted that other states have Beekeeping license plates. Wieske will check into what it takes to get a bee license plate. Tennessee's plates go toward funding their bee inspectors. We could do something similar.

**Correspondence (Tilmann):** Interlochen Radio was at our spring conference. The first of her installments will occur on April 8 and be available for download.

**Bear Bill (D. Anthony):** There have been problems with bears in the north, especially with commercial beekeepers. The Bear Bill currently is not what they want, but it's a start. We want a bill that allows beekeepers who suffer damage to be allowed to dispatch bears. We are not asking for a slaughter of a lot of bears, but a controlled hunt in a specific area with a purchased licensed.

Hansen feels that we need to work with other commodity groups as well. Once we get them educated, and promote a plan, we can get them to understand their role in supporting such a bill.

**Election Committee (Toland):** Looking for 3 volunteers, from either the board or from local clubs. Anthony is interested in helping. Perhaps by next meeting, we can have an election committee set up.

June 7 is our next meeting, with the picnic in July.

Adjourned 1:54pm.