

NDFMGA Board Meeting Agenda– October 16, 2016
Cobblestone Inn, Harvey, ND
Agenda

Call to Order – Hero Barth

Roll Call – Holly Mawby

Present: Hero Barth, Roberta Hunt, Bonnie Munsch, Daniel Rugroden, Stephanie Blumhagen, Mike Pretzer, Holly Mawby

Not Present: Roberta Thorson, Myra Olson, Janelle Anderson, Bob Nowatzki, Jamie Good

Approval of Minutes from Last meeting – Hero Barth

Motion: Daniel Rugroden

Second: Stephanie Blumhagen

Motion passed

Treasurers Report – Mike Pretzer

Motion to approve: Stephanie Blumhagen

Second: Roberta Hunt

Motion Passed

Old Business – Hero Barth

- **Cookbook - Bonnie Munsch** – Bonnie spoke with Pam Anderson about the return of the CD for the cookbook software. Pam said she had misplaced it and could not find it, she indicated she would return it when she found it.
- **Bylaws changes – Holly Mawby** – Holly reported that the bylaws had been updated and the new version was posted to web .
- **Annual Training for Board members to include bylaws and a sign off sheet – Holly Mawby** A discussion about the draft of the board member training manual was held. Board members felt it was kind of long but that it did serve as a good manual for the overall association and was good information. Holly will work on making a checklist of necessary items for new board members to read and sign off on and the rest can just be for their information. Several other changes were suggested by board members. Holly will make those changes and send out the second draft to board members for their review.
- **Grants - Holly Mawby** – Holly reported that thus far the association has given out 42 new vendor grants, 23 market grants and 4 farmers market manager training stipends. There were 16 market managers that signed up for the online training but only 4 have completed all paperwork and sent it in to receive a stipend. Holly indicated she would give them more time to complete it. Holly also reported that the membership mailing list is now up to 560 members which is more than at any other time.

Motion by Daniel Rugroden: A motion to extend the time limit for farmers market managers to complete the online training and receive a stipend to Wednesday, November 23rd.

Second: Bonnie Munsch

Motion passed

- **Red River Farm Network update** - **Jamie Good/Holly Mawby** – Jamie had sent a message to the group with a list of those radio spots that had already been completed. He also asked for suggestions for the remaining three spots in the season. The board members suggested a lefse lady from Fargo and Alecia Pretzer as possible speakers on the radio. The board would like to see one of the last spots be from a value added producer or baker. The board would also like to see these spots featured at the annual conference somehow, possibly played before or after general sessions and the banquet. Daniel reported that he had received comments from other farmers (conventional farmers) about how good he sounded on the radio so the group felt that people are hearing them and they may be playing a role in accomplishing the mission of raising awareness in the agricultural community about small farms and market production. A small discussion was held regarding doing them again next year and the board felt this should be tabled for another meeting.
- **ND Living ads** – **Holly Mawby** – The board indicated that had seen the ads. All ads have been placed and published for the year.
- **Report on Booth at ND Grocers Conference** – **Roberta Hunt/Bonnie Munsch** – Roberta and Bonnie reported on their experience at the ND Grocers Conference. It seemed to them that the conference had more vendors and food wholesalers than grocers in attendance. There was a good showing of Pride of Dakota people as well. The morning speaker and one other break out at the conference spoke to the option of purchasing local produce so it was a good year for the NDFMGA to be there. There were not a lot of grocers that stopped by the booth but one or two very interested ones did. There seemed to be more interest by small towns rather than big towns/stores. The board felt that when it comes time next year a conversation should be had as to whether or not we should participate again. They felt it was good for the NDFMGA to have a presence but that the ROI was not great.
- **Update on Rural Grocers Initiative Conference** – **Holly Mawby** – As noted in the previous meeting minutes the association has voted and approved a \$100 sponsorship of this conference. Holly will take care of paying the bill. The conference will be held in Jamestown at the NDFU building on January 26th, 2016.

Daniel Rugroden Motioned: A motion to pursue having an exhibit/education table at the conference

Mike Pretzer Moved to Amend the motion: An amendment to the motion to pay a fee if there is one to have the booth/table

Daniel Rugroden Seconded the Amendment

Amendment passed

Roberta Hunt Seconded the original motion with amendment

Motion passed as amended.

- **Update on USDA Value Added Producer Grant and NIFA Food Safety Training Grant** – **Stephanie Blumhagen** – We did not receive either grant so the association will not be responsible for any of the matching grants or in kind that was previously proposed to support these grants.

New Business – Hero Barth

- **2017 Local Food Conference** – **Jamie Good, Holly Mawby** – Jamie Good sent the following information for review and action by the board.

Topic ideas from 2016 Conference surveys for board input:

- Specifications on washing etc. and preparing greens for the customer - **yes**
- Controlling diseases and pests, Pest and disease ID and how to treat. - **yes**
- Alternative veggies for market – **yes, including how to educate customers and get them to buy**
- Lynda from Minnesota – **definite yes**
- Virtual Farm Tour – Have an established farmer share with attendees the equipment they use, crops they grow, timeline of event, etc. – **not as a breakout but at roundtable discussions during break/lunch**
- Wendell Berry – The value of farming - **no**
- Sharing research that is going on with new high tunnels at NDSU stations - **no**
- Using cover crops on small acreages – **yes/no they were undecided, it was a yes if someone new – not the same person as last year was the speaker**
- Apple growing and small fruit production both trees and bushes. – **yes, they really like Kathy Weiderholt from Carrington Research Station**
- No-till gardening - **no**
- Cold storage options – **yes to include other post harvest handling tips or set ups**
- How to build a high tunnel, company recommendations - **yes**
- Tax implications on the farm - **no**
- Grant writing – **yes to include the availability and application to information**
- Chiwon Lee - NDSU Vegetable Variety Trials – **no, only because he is difficult to understand, does he have a research assistance that could present along with him?**
- No till gardening Panel – **no but would like this as a roundtable discussion topic**
- Jim Meyer – Oregon State, Specialty crop breeding – **no**

Other ideas as posed by the board:

Permaculture – what is it and basic design ideas

We NEED some things for small livestock producers, meat folks, egg folks, value added folks and bakers/bread makers. The list above is ALL produce, we need to diversify our offerings to meet the needs of our members. One suggestion was a bakers roundtable discussion (Different from the table discussions at lunch – more formal, more targeted – more like a panel.)

They would like the RRFN sound bites included in the conference somewhere – maybe play them before and after general sessions.

Ideas from Jamie

- Adapting to a changing market – I have had conversations with producers that because of the change in the economy their good customers are not there anymore and they are having to develop new markets or explore previous markets they were once selling to, “Turning the stone over again” type of situation. - **No**
- How do you compete with FREE – Producers have been calling me telling me that in their area some growers have been giving away produce or selling it really cheap and they make it extremely difficult for others to make a living. (I know this is nothing new but it seems like this year I really have been getting the calls about this and it might be worth a discussion about value added items or growing something unique that does not compete with the FREE produce? - **maybe change this one to ‘resolving conflict within your market, vendor to vendor – (how to overcome the ‘old guard’ who do not want things to change, how to approach the vendor who sells too cheap or gives things away, etc.)**

Suggestions for this year from last year’s conference evaluations:

- Liked earlier banquet time – **if it works in the schedule that’s fine**

- People introduce themselves and 1 big thing they are working on for the upcoming year. – **no, this would take too long – but maybe ask them to start table discussions with this at the banquet, encourage them to sit with people they do not know and take a minute at the beginning of the banquet to encourage this**
- Have conference on a Saturday and Sunday - **no**
- More time for networking with attendees – **we always keep this as a consideration – do the best we can...**
- Stretch breaks – **that's what break time is for**
- Have a trade show – **yes but don't put a huge effort into making this happen**
- Personal phone calls to members to attend - **no**

Action Items to discuss:

- Possible topics/ Speakers — **see board member interests above – the board members realize that these are just suggestions and that the ability to have these topics will be based on the availability of speakers.**
- Does the NDFMGA want to pay every speaker a stipend? –
 - o In the past the NDDA has paid for keynotes speaker travel expenses within state guidelines and when possible a stipend.
 - All other speakers got their registration to the conference paid for. If the speaker did not ask for other expenses to be covered I did not offer to pay. Some speakers may have had other sources of income to pay for their travel.
 - o Paying every speaker a stipend may not be in the NDDA's budget for the conference.
 - o Last year we had 16 speakers at the conference.
- **The NDFMGA will pay \$200 stipend to all speakers, mileage at the state approved rate and per diems at the state approved rate for all breakout speakers.**

Motion by Mike Pretzer: A Motion to pay breakout speakers mileage plus per diems at state approved rate plus \$200 for the conference

Daniel Rugroden Seconded the Motion

Motion Passed

- In addition, the board members discussed the outcome of the September 3rd phone meeting where a quorum of board members were not present so no motions were made. On the phone meeting all present agreed to pay up to \$7,500 towards keynote speakers and choose Lynelle Vasichcek as the main keynote speaker. Additionally, there were two board members' opinions counted in via email (Hero Barth and Mike Pretzer indicated via email they were in favor of the NDFMGA hiring and paying for the keynote speaker and that the topic be motivational in nature). The board members understand that the terminology of 'keynote' means any speaker that is presenting in a general session to all conference participants. Due to a lack of quorum at the phone meeting, a vote was taken on this motion to ratify the decision.

Motion by Mike Pretzer: A motion to pay up to \$7,500 as needed to pay for keynote speakers at the 2017 annual conference.

Stephanie Blumhagen Seconded the Motion

Motion passed with one opposed.

- Does the NDFMGA want to pay for the banquet meal again? With sourcing local foods the cost per plate for the banquet may run over the \$17.50 allowed within state guidelines. Note: The last time we had it in Mandan (2015) we were able to keep it below that but we all know what food costs have done in 2 years.)

After discussion by board members a motion was made by Daniel Rugroden

Motion: A motion to pay for the banquet meal at the 2017 conference.

Second to the Motion – Stephanie Blumhagen

Motion Passed.

- Other comments on conference layout. – **none**
- Ideas for a location for the 2018 conference Grand Forks, Minot? (It was suggested to have a conference in the Western part of the state. We just have not had much luck attracting growers in that area. We need to have the conference where the growers are.) – **Minot is first choice, if not Minot then Jamestown, Carrington (research station?) were also suggested**
- NDFMGA Scholarships to attend – After discussion by board members,
A Motion was made by Daniel Rugroden: A motion that the NDFMGA will support 5 scholarships to cover the cost of mileage, one-night hotel and conference registration. NDFMGA Board members and their families are not eligible for the scholarships.
Mike Pretzer Seconded the Motion
Motion Passed

Additionally, the board wanted to note that they had previously identified a committee to assist with conference planning. The committee consists of Bonnie Munsch, Hero Barth and Stephanie Blumhagen. The committee should be consulted as needed to assist with future conference decisions.

The board also wanted to articulate a desire to have an advertisement for the conference put into the Pride of Dakota, NRCS, USDA Rural Development and Farm Service Agency newsletters and invitations sent to these organizations as well as to member of Pride of Dakota.

- NRCS/Great Plains Food Bank At the Intersection of Farming and Food Meeting, Tuesday, November 1st, 2016, 9 AM to 4 PM in Bismarck. Stephanie and Hero had received information regarding this meeting. It sounds like a meeting that the association should be present and have a voice at so Hero and Stephanie will look at attending and will send the information out to the rest of the board in case any of them are interested. Holly will look into having a booth at the meeting and if it is possible will send the booth materials with Stephanie. The cost to attend is \$20 per person and no booth fee is being charged.

Mike Pretzer Motioned: A motion to send Hero Barth as the representative of the NDFMGA to the meeting with NDFMGA reimbursing the \$20 admission fee.

Stephanie Blumhagen Seconded.

Motion passed with one opposed.

Adjourn the meeting – **Daniel Rugroden Moved to Adjourn the meeting**

Stephanie Blumhagen seconded the motion

Motion passed.