

MICHIGAN BLUEBERRY COMMISSION

Trevor Nichols Research Facility
6237 124th Ave Fennville, MI 49408

MEETING MINUTES

June 8, 2017

PRESENT:

Jennifer Spears, True Blue Farms, LLC
Shelly Hartmann, Secretary, Michigan Blueberry Commission
James Sumner, Michigan Blueberry Commission
Jacob Clemons, Chair, Michigan Blueberry Commission
Rufus Isaacs, Michigan State University
Mark Longstroth, Michigan State University
Brad Deacon, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Steven Hunt, Vice-Chair, Michigan Blueberry Commission
Cheryl Sullins, Treasurer, Michigan Blueberry Commission
Creela Hamlin, Michigan Blueberry Commission
Dennis Vander Kooi, Michigan Blueberry Commission
Lorrie Merker, MBG Marketing

Call to Order

Chairman Jacob Clemons called the meeting to order at 7:06pm and presented the meeting's agenda.

MOTION: Steve Hunt moved to approve the agenda, Dennis Vander Kooi seconded, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.

The Chairman presented the meeting minutes of May 30, 2017. It was noted by Treasurer Cheryl Sullins that the following corrections were in order:

- Page 3, Election of Officers, the correct motion should read: "Shelly Hartmann nominated Jacob Clemons for Chairman, Steve Hunt seconded, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote."
- Page 4, Meeting Schedule for 2017, the correct appointees to the subcommittee to fill the role of Executive Director or Administrator should read: Cheryl Sullins, Creela Hamlin, and Dennis Vander Kooi.

MOTION: Cheryl motioned to accept the revisions as noted above, Secretary Shelly Hartmann seconded, motion was carried by a unanimous verbal vote.

It was noted by Brad Deacon that since MDARD took the notes at the first meeting, they will correct and redistribute the corrected minutes.

Reports of Committees

Chairman requested the report from the subcommittee to fill the role of Executive Director or Administrator. The committee reported that they have reached out to industry affiliates as well as prospective candidates in order to fill the role. There is some interest on the part of Kevin Robson of Farm Bureau and Val Vail-Shirey. After a job description has been approved, both interested parties will submit a proposal. The committee is currently drafting a job description for this position as well as meeting with other commodity groups for further insight. They are actively seeking out additional candidates.

Comments by Dr. Rufus Isaacs, MSU

Dr. Isaacs gave a brief overview of MSU administration and their relationship with commodity groups. He extended an invitation to the MBC in the fall for a priority, goal, and vision setting session. This includes a tour of the campus, laboratories, and meeting colleagues involved with the blueberry research programs. Dr. Isaacs recommended thought be given to and future discussion on the need for infrastructure and improvements to the current fields and facilities utilized by researchers.

Open Issues

Executive Director: no further discussion as was discussed during the reports of committee.

Expense and Compensation: Secretary Shelly Hartmann passed out a rough draft of the policy for the board's review to be discussed at next meeting.

Handler Form and Letter: Secretary passed out First Handler Memo, First Handler Reporting Form, and Blueberry Industry Pack Size and Weight Chart for review.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Steve Hunt moved to accept the weights and pack sizes listed on the Blueberry Industry Pack Size and Weight Chart, Seconded by Dennis Vander Kooi, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.

Discussion about the need for a point of contact person noted on the First Handler Memo until an Executive Director is hired. Secretary Shelly Hartmann volunteered.

MOTION: Treasurer Cheryl Sullins moved to send a packet to the First Handlers including the First Handler Memo, First Handler Reporting Form, and Blueberry Industry Pack Size and Weight Chart, Seconded by Vice-Chair Steve Hunt, Discussion regarding necessary legal disclosures on said forms; Brad Deacon will follow up with an email containing necessary verbiage. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Financial Institution: Treasurer Cheryl Sullins is continuing to evaluate our options and is not comfortable making a recommendation at this time.

Policies and Procedures:

MOTION: Secretary Shelly Hartmann moved to table this topic to be discussed at a future meeting, Dennis Vander Koi seconded, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.

New Business

Secretary Shelly Hartmann passed out a draft of Michigan Blueberry Commission Calendar of Events with key dates filled in. Additional dates were added to the event calendar as follows:

- June 29th, 10am, TNRC – Committee Meeting
- September 19th, 10am, TNRC – Committee Meeting
- October 17th, 10am, TNRC – Committee Meeting
- November 21st, 10am, TNRC – Committee Meeting
- December 6th, following Blueberry Program of MSU during the Great Lakes Fruit & Vegetable Expo
- January 16, 2018, time and location TBD- Committee Strategic Planning Session

MOTION: Creela Hamlin motioned to approve the calendar as discussed, Dennis Vander Kooi seconded, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.

USHBC Information and Packet: Discussed for future mailings.

Committee Operating Funds:

MOTION: Secretary Shelly Hartmann motioned to request a line of credit of up to \$2,000.00 (two-thousand dollars) with 3% interest and a remuneration due date of 12/31/2017 from the Michigan Blueberry Advisory Committee (MBBAC). Dennis Vander Kooi seconded, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.

Develop Strategic Plan: Discussed in conjunction with calendar of events.

MSU Liaison to Board: Brad Deacon explained that the MSU Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources will appoint 1 (one) liaison from MSU to serve the Michigan Blueberry Commission as a non-voting member.

MOTION: Creela Hamlin motioned for Chairman Clemons to send a letter to the MSU Dean of Ag & Natural Resources naming Mark Longstroth and Dr. Rufus Isaacs as our recommendations. Seconded by Shelly Hartmann; motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.

Research Sub-Committee: Creela Hamlin and Dennis Vander Kooi volunteered to serve on research committee. Chairman Clemons appointed them as well as Dave Trinka of MBG Marketing.

Governance Sub-Committee: Cheryl Sullins and Steve Hunt volunteered for Governance Committee. Chairman Clemons appointed them as well as James Sumners. Discussion from Brad Deacon to involve he and Heather Throne to be resources.

Oversight Committee: Tabling until future meeting

Public Comments:

Lorrie Merker congratulated the committee for the successful implementation of the Check off program. She noted the importance of securing an Executive Director right away in order to facilitate grant opportunities

soon approaching. Research and obtaining the information regarding reimbursement of the assessment for small growers is important.

In closing, Dr. Rufus Isaacs suggested we submit a press release, perhaps to Fruit Grower's News regarding the new Committee appointees. Agreement from room to invite Gary Pullano, Editor FGN to the next committee meeting, June 29th.

MOTION: Dennis Vander Kooi moved to adjourn the meeting, James Sumners seconded, motion carried by unanimous verbal vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Shelly Hartmann