

# MICHIGAN BLUEBERRY COMMISSION

Trevor Nichols Research Facility  
6237 124<sup>th</sup> Ave Fennville, MI 49408

## MEETING MINUTES

June 29, 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  
Elizabeth Weier, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Dave Trinka, MBG Marketing  
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  
Heather Throne, MDARD, Participated via cellphone

### Call to Order

Chairman Jacob Clemons called the meeting to order at 10:11am and presented the meeting's agenda. Rufus Isaacs requested time on the agenda to address MBC visit to MSU in the fall. Cheryl Sullins requested discussion on obtaining an EIN for establishing a bank account.

**MOTION: Creela Hamlin moved to approve the agenda, Steve Hunt seconded, motion was carried by unanimous verbal vote.**

The Chairman presented the meeting minutes of June 8, 2017.

**MOTION: Creela motioned to accept the minutes as written, Dennis Vander Kooi seconded, motion was carried by a unanimous verbal vote.**

### Reports of Committees

Research Committee – Creela reported no action items since last meeting and passed out MBBAC's research priorities for review. Everyone reviewed priorities.

**MOTION: Shelly Hartmann moved to adopt MBBAC's list of research priorities as MBC's with a review in the fall to submit to MSU in October. Dennis seconded, Motion carried by unanimous verbal vote.**

Chairman noted that there is still funds available with the Foundation for Food & Ag Research with matching funds that was set up in a previous farm bill which can be a priority for the future Executive Director.

### Open Issues

Executive Director: Creela, Cheryl, and Dennis spoke with several commodity groups for advice in regards to their experiences with hiring an Executive Director. The next step is writing a job description. Discussion about E.D. options. Chairman tasked the Executive Director search committee with writing a job description, emailing it to the Commission for review and bring any edits/suggestions to next meeting for finalization.

MSU Liaison- Chairman will draft a copy of MBC's MSU Liaison to the Dean of MSU and distribute to Commission for review and discussion at next meeting.

Funds- Chairman received an approval letter from MDARD Director for borrowing start up operating funds from MBBAC. Chairman received communication from Antonio Leduc stating that the MBBAC board approved a \$2,000.00 (two-thousand) loan. Kelley Reenders, Treasurer of MBBAC, will issue one check in the amount of \$2,000.00 to the MBC. Cheryl updated everyone on her mission to procure a banking facility but is need of an EIN number to complete. Shelly was tasked with obtaining an EIN number for MBC asap. Discussion regarding bank options and the need for at least 2 signers on the account which will be Cheryl Sullins and Shelly Hartmann until further review.

**MOTION: Creela moved for Cheryl to open an account at PNC bank, Jim Sumners seconded, Motion carried by unanimous verbal consent.**

Discussion regarding the need to establish a mailing address for MBC.

**MOTION: Steve made motion for Cheryl and/or Shelly to obtain a Post Office Box in Grand Junction for the MBC. Jim seconded, Motion carried by unanimous verbal vote.**

Expense and Compensation: Secretary Shelly Hartmann passed out a rough draft of the policy for the board's review to be discussed. No form to pass out until all items are agreed upon. Discussion of the policy and that expense forms can be submitted via email, mail, or in person.

**MOTION: Steve made motion to adopt \$75.00 (seventy-five) as the per diem rate & accept the edit to the expense policy that all incurred expenses be submitted to MBC Treasurer within 30 days.**

Handler Form and Letter: Shelly and Jennifer reported that the First Handler Memo, First Handler Reporting Form, and Blueberry Industry Pack Size and Weight Chart was mailed to all First Handlers on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

Policies and Procedures- Discussion on collection policy. After bank is established, send memo on where to send assessments to Handlers.

## New Business

Set Initial Research Priorities- Discussed earlier in meeting during Reports of Committee.

Ambassadors for USHBC- Discussion about USHBC's Ambassador program to send 3 Michigan representatives to the USHBC meeting in October.

**MOTION: Shelly made motion to elect Steve Hunt, Creela Hamlin, and Jim Sumners as Michigan's Ambassadors, Dennis seconded, Motion carried by unanimous verbal vote.**

Shelly will submit names to the USHBC.

MBC email accounts- Discussion about the necessity of a group email account for the Commission.

**MOTION: Shelly made motion to have Chairman set up a Gmail account for the Michigan Blueberry Commission. Steve seconded, Motion carried by unanimous verbal vote.**

Disseminating Information- Discussion about timing of meeting announcements and agenda items.

**MOTION: Steve moved to table policy discussion regarding disseminating agenda prior to meetings and meeting announcements to next meeting.**

Rufus Isaacs' requested agenda time- Dr. Isaacs reported that the optional times for MBC's visit to MSU would be either October 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> or November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup>. He will confirm date and email Commission. At conclusion of tour/visit, MBC will have October's meeting in procured venue by Dr. Issacs instead of at TNRC.

### **Public Comments:**

Lorrie Merker posed question about how meeting notices are publicized. Heather noted that they are posted at MDARD's building but other commodity groups have websites. Chairman relayed that he has begun framework for a MBC website. Discussion about grant funds available through October 2018. Jim volunteered to assist Chairman in procuring those funds to assist in the development of a MBC website. Meeting minutes will be posted there for public view but until then, public can request copies of minutes from Commission. Discussion regarding MBC doing a press release in Fruit Grower's News for future meetings until website is established.

**MOTION: Jim moved to adjourn meeting, Shelly seconded, Motion carried by unanimous verbal vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47am.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Shelly Hartmann