**MBC Meeting Minutes – June 22, 2021**

Those Present:

District #1 Kevin Noffsinger, Treasurer

District #2 Ted Bauer

District #3 Greg Ackerman, Chairman

District #4 Clint Stoutenburg

District #5 Allen Bischer

District #6 Ross Voelker

District #7

At Large Steve Ewald

Shipper Representative Neil French

Executive Secretary Joe Cramer

Those Absent:

District #1

District #2

District #3

District #4

District #5

District #6

District #7 Jessica Rader

At Large

Shipper Representative

Others Present:

Scott Bales MSU Dry Bean Specialist

Chairman Ackerman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He thanked the group for being flexible this time of the year as we schedule our meetings around weather and workload.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** With no additions, a motion was made by French to approve the agenda as presented. Noffsinger supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chairman Ackerman used the Public Comment space to hear a crop update from each Commissioner. To summarize, Commissioners agreed that despite very dry conditions in nearly all areas of the Saginaw Valley and Thumb crops are off to a good start. App. 90% of the dry bean crop in that same area was planted in the first half of June in very good (but dry) seed beds. There are very few growers that have had to re-plant. Weed control is the focus at this time. Large-seeded bean growers are wrapping up planting this week. Conditions are dry as well. Commissioners agreed that they prefer dry conditions over wet conditions to start a crop. Spotty showers have been helpful to those lucky enough to receiver them but rain is most necessary in July and August. Rain is in our forecast this week.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: Minutes from February 11, 2021, March 17, 2021 and May 6, 2021 were reviewed. A motion was made by Bischer to approve the minutes as presented. Noffsinger supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

**FINANCIAL REPORT**: Cramer presented MBC and PRAB YTD revenue and expenses through June. The size of the crop has put assessment revenue well ahead of projections. COVID-19 has caused so many promotional activities to be cancelled that expenses are down significantly. The projected loss that was expected and planned for will not be realized but rather a more favorable finish to FY20-21. A brief discussion followed.

Cramer then presented an amended budget (attached) that recognizes the higher than expected revenue and lower than expected expenses. Increased acreage with an above average yield has resulted in a higher than expected assessment revenue. COVID-19 related cancellations has resulted in lower than expected expenses. The proposed budget amendment includes a $110,000 increase in assessment revenue. Minimal promotional activities and USDBC related expenses are the bulk to the $18,628 reduction in expenses. It is worth noting that USDBC annual dues are one area that is higher than budgeted expense. This is due to an accrual that will be addressed by the auditors. Grant reimbursement total was reduced by $26,574.72 and grant expenses were increased by $3,602.84 due to the timing of the various projects. The budgeted -$23,628.13 bottom line is amended to $84,527.99.

A lengthy discussion followed. A motion was made by Ewald to accept the report and budget amendments as presented. Voelker supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

Cramer presented a FY 21-22 budget for discussion only. He will update for the next meeting.

**MDARD UPDATE –** Our meeting date change led to a scheduling conflict so there was no report.

**MBS UPDATE -** Shipper Representative Neil French

* Buyers appear to have the coverage they are comfortable with given current market values. The same seems to be true with sellers.
* Shipments continue but without the pressure felt during the height of the pandemic.
* There are beans shipping to Mexico but its difficult to tell if they need to purchase more or if they have adequate coverage.
* Seed sales indicate a significant reduction in acreage. Very little was sold beyond initial orders.
* MBS and MBC are going to discuss hosting a fall activity for bean buyers and quality assurance people.
* French encouraged Cramer to plan a Commission meeting at an end user.
* French also noted that there have been very, very few seed related issues this year.
* Chairman Ackerman urged Cramer to get a meting date on the calendar for a joint meeting with the Shippers.
* Cramer mentioned that French’s term expires this year noting that there are no term limits.

**RESEARCH GRANT POLICY**

* The meeting packet included a draft research policy for Commissioners to consider. The discussion that followed focused on/questioned the need for such a detailed policy and, if adopted, the exposure created by adopting such a detailed policy. The existing policy was then reviewed. A motion was made by Ackerman to clean up our existing policy and to include a sentence that reads: *USDA funded research will comply with the federal requirements necessary to receive reimbursement.* Bischer supported the motion. ***Motion passed*.**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

* Cramer expressed his frustration with the lack of progress with this project. We can make flour but we don’t have the ability to sift to specific particle size yet. He will continue to work with Enagon and MSU to move the project forward.
* The Bean Flour project at the FPIC went well. Next step is the final report.
* Cramer met with the contractors working on the Communications project. Its an exciting time given the consumer interest in nutrient dense dry beans.
* Work is underway to better understand the benefits and cost with the development and implementation of a consumer facing website. Ackerman wondered if this would be better suited at the national level. Cramer is planning to meet with other regional organizations before and during the USDBC Summer meeting in Denver next month.
* The 2022 Dy Bean & Sugar Beet Symposium is being planned. This event has been held at the Horizon Center for several years. Planners are considering other sites.

**DRY BEAN SPECIALIST REPORT**

* Bales informed the group that all research trials were planted in a very timely manner given the dry spring conditions. All trials were planted between May 31st and June 11th for 2021, this is one to two weeks ahead of the historical average and may serve as an indicator for commercial planting progress. Given the dry spring trials are in excellent condition with ideal emergence.
* Bales also discussed upcoming field days and education events for MBC/MSU. Currently plans involve a return to in-person programing and include events at SVREC (an MSU facility). Meeting dates were discussed and the group encouraged Bales and Cramer to move dates ahead one week due to the early planting of the 2021 crop.

**USDBC UPDATE**

* USDBC will hold its Summer Meeting in Denver this July. This will include the first Executive Committee meeting is over a year.
* IPC activities have been on hold since February 2020 however many are planning in person activities for 2022. Trade Team selection will be discussed at the summer meeting.
* The Bean Innovation committee recommended that the USDBC fund a sponsorship at the World of Flavors event in November. Board members approved the spend. This event attracts an estimated 600 chefs annually and well as the food blogger community. Ackerman plans to attend. This postponed the $5,000 MBC contribution approved at the previous MBC meeting.
* Cramer commented on the need for and importance of timing of Food Aid tenders. He will continue to press the USDA and The Food Aid Committee for action.
* Cramer commented on the activities taking place at the GPC. They are planning to meet in Germany in mid-October and hold their annual convention in February.

Chairman Ackerman reminded Commissioners that in addition to French’s term expiring at the end of 2021, Bischer, Stoutenburg and his term will also expire. All are eligible to be re-appointed. Ackerman also reminded Commissioners that governors have historically preferred to have two names to consider when appointing. He also mentioned that he is actively looking for good candidates to serve his district since he will have held the seat for three, three-year terms.

With no further business, he adjourned the meeting at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully,

**Joe Cramer**

Joe Cramer, Executive Secretary