**MBC Meeting Minutes**

**October 14, 2024**

**DoubleTree Riverfront Hotel & Conference Center, Bay City, Michigan**

Those Present:

District #1 Kevin Noffsinger

District #2 Ted Bauer, Vice-Chair

District #3 Greg Ackerman

District #4

District #5 Allen Bischer

District #6 Chase Voelker, Treasurer

District #7

At Large Steve Ewald, Chair

Shipper Representative Neil French

Executive Secretary Joe Cramer

Those Absent:

District #1

District #2

District #3

District #4 Clint Stoutenburg

District #5

District #6

District #7 Jessica Rader

At Large

Shipper Representative

Others Present:

Scott Bales MSU-MBC Dry Bean Specialist

Jeff Haarer MDARD

Chairman Ewald called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. and thanked the group for being flexible and making time for the meeting. After taking role, Ewald declared a quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Bischer moved to approve the agenda as presented. French supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: Minutes from the August 6, 2024, Commission meeting were presented and reviewed. Ackerman moved to accept the minutes as presented. Noffsinger supported. ***Motion passed.***

**MDARD UPDATE**: Jeff Haarer shared some new assignments within MDARD, updated Commissioners on the challenges with the poultry industry, and went on to review and summarize the timetable and status of the various grants currently being evaluated. He also shared some grant opportunities that will open an application period in the next few months.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**: The financial report included a current balance sheet, credit card and check registry through September 2024 and a P&L report including a budget comparison for FY 2023-2024. Cramer went through the highlights of revenue and expenses. Following discussion, French moved to accept the financial reports as presented. Bischer supported. ***Motion passed.***

**PRODUCTION RESEARCH ADVISORY BOARD –** Chairman Ewald has expressed his desire to bring relevance and purpose to the Production Research Advisory Board during his tenure as chair of PRAB. Cramer gave a quick review of PRAB and offered some ideas that will hopefully engage the board more and provide more vision and direction for all stakeholders.

* Cramer proposed a new meting cycle that includes hold a research meeting in December so members could provide/have more input in the next grant application cycle, hold an annual meeting in the first quarter of the year to present a summary of the research that was funded, and hold a meeting in the growing season on site that focuses on one or more of the research projects underway.
* Cramer will also be sure to include all production research related revenue and expense to the PRAB account for better transparency.
* the PRAB will propose/review and approve research projects as needed.
* Cramer will work with Michigan State University to create the necessary conduit to fund projects for the betterment / improvement of industry stakeholders.

**FY 2024-2025 Budget Amendments –** Cramer proposed that Commissioners consider:

* amending assessment revenues to reflect 250,000 acres as per the October USDA Crop Production Report with an expected state average yield of 22 cwt per acre.
* amending the PRAB budget to include net zero production related grant revenue and grant expenses
* amend the Commission budget to exclude net zero production related grant revenue and grant expenses.

Ackerman recommended that we also amend assessment revenues to reflect the increased acreage noted in last week’s USDA Crop Production Report. Our budget was set in early August assuming 220,000 acres yield an estimated 22 cwt per acre which is $484,000 and $48,400, respectively. USDA increased their acreage estimate to 250,000 acres which, using 22 bags per acre is $550,000 and $55,000 respectively.

Ackerman moved that we accept the proposed amendments and include the increase in assessment revenue as discussed. (This increases Commission total income to $607,000 and PRAB total income to $120,000. It also results in Commission expenses increasing to $660,949.98.) French supported the motion. ***Motion passed.*** (Worksheet attached.)

**MBS UPDATE – Neil French, Shipper Representative**

* The port strike would have been disastrous had the settlement been delayed. The disruption didn’t affect shipments going east through Montreal.
* Some elevators have prices available right now. Most growers are selling given the opportunity. This is good since the industry needs to actively participate in order to keep product moving even when sales opportunities are slow.
* The Minn-Dak region has a decent crop. Some pinto bean yields are really good in the more northern area.
* Seed production in western states is in the bin. Quality is good and supply is adequate.
* French shared some average yields from defined acreage and class. 21.6 average on small red beans. 22.1 average on black beans. 22.6 average on navy beans.
* Cramer noted that the stocks on hand reports or North Dakota and Michigan are included in the packet. He is currently in communication with USDA-AMS to make sure they are receiving responses from first receivers during the revenue insurance price discovery period. He recently shared an updated contact list with them.

**DRY BEAN SPECIALIST REPORT – Scott Bales**

* Bales shared the 2024 Dry Bean Performance Trial yield results. Commissioners discussed the possible factors affecting the yield ranges within the various plot locations, classes, and varieties. Everyone is impressed with the high end of the range with one irrigated black bean entry in Montcalm County coming very close to 60 bags per acre!
* Cramer and Bales explained the challenges of this growing season focusing on improving efficiency next year. The partnership with Evan Wright is working very well. Bales intends to continue that relationship and possibly expand it to create more support for both programs.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Joe Cramer**

* MDARD announced the results of last month’s referendum which passed by 94%. Those voting in support of the continuation represent 99% of the volume.
* Cramer named those nominated at the August and September research plot tours. Nominees include:
  + District 3 - Chris Creguer
  + District 4 – Mark Shaw, Jamie Dale
  + District 5 – Allen Bischer
* On behalf of the 2015 navy bean growers engaged in the suit against USDA-RMA, Attorney Tallman has filed another suit in Federal Court in Bay City.
* Cramer plans to attend SupplySide West 2024 at the end of the month.
* Beans at Brody will take place on November 12, 2024
* Cramer is planning a customer visit December 4-6, 2024

**USDBC UPDATE**

* Executive Committee
  + Strategic Planning continues.
* IPC
  + Cramer complimented the USDBC, NHBGA, and NCBDA for hosting a successful Worldwide Trade Mission.
  + The Committee is meeting tomorrow to review the activities planned for the balance of 2024, review the program schedule for 2025, the intentions for RAPP funding and the status of the applications for round to of RAPP funding.
  + Cramer is participating in the planning of the January 23-25, 2025, bean conference in Mexico.
* Innovations Committee
  + Cramer is working with Inland Empire to see if they can identify interest in a couple of products they have created.
* Food Aid Committee
  + A few members of the committee continue dialog with USDA discussing supply and availability, budget estimates, timing, logistics, etc. The Administration and USDA seem committed to food aid and the dollars needed to support the commitment.

**FY 2024-2025 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Chairman Ewald recommends the following assignments:
  + PRAB – Ewald, Rader, Bauer, and Ackerman with Bischer and Noffsinger as alternates
  + SVREC Advisory Board- Cramer and Voelker
  + USDBC – Ewald and Bauer

Chairman Ewald noted that PRAB will need to elect a new chair the next time they meet. He also recognized that Stoutenburg’s position with USDBC will likely extend past his current term as a commissioner.

Ackerman moved to accept the recommendations. French supported. ***Motion passed.***

**(**Committee assignments are posted under the About Us tab on the website)

Chairman Ewald thanked everyone again for their time and flexibility. With no further business, he adjourned the meeting at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully,

**Joe Cramer**

Joe Cramer, Executive Secretary