**MBC Meeting Minutes**

**August 6, 2024**

**MSU SVREC, 3775 South Reese Road, Frankenmuth, Michigan**

Those Present:

District #1 Kevin Noffsinger, Chair

District #2

District #3 Greg Ackerman

District #4 Clint Stoutenburg

District #5 Allen Bischer

District #6 Chase Voelker

District #7

At Large Steve Ewald, Vice-Chair

Shipper Representative Neil French

Executive Secretary Joe Cramer

Those Absent:

District #1

District #2 Ted Bauer, Treasurer

District #3

District #4

District #5

District #6

District #7 Jessica Rader

At Large

Shipper Representative

Others Present:

Scott Bales MSU-MBC Dry Bean Specialist

Jeff Haarer MDARD

Dr. Valerio Hoyos-Villegas McGill University

Chairman Noffsinger called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chairman Noffsinger shared thank you cards from the FFA Foundation who was the recipient of the 2023 Chairman’s Choice Christmas Gift for a thank you note from Dr. James Kelly, MSU Dry Bean Breeder who retired recently and was recognized by the MBC with a plaque and a gift.

Chairman Noffsinger then welcomed Dr. Valerio Hoyos-Villegas, McGill University who has accepted the position of dry bean breeder at Michigan State University. Dr. Valerio offered a brief introduction and noted a couple of projects he has been working on and hopes to continue at MSU. Valerio plans to start mid November 2024 after wrapping up his projects at McGill University.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: Minutes from the June 5, 2024, meeting was presented and reviewed. A motion was made by Ewald with support from French to approve the minutes as presented. ***Motion passed.***

**FINANCIAL REPORT**: The financial report included a current balance sheet, credit card and check registry and revenue and expenses compared to the FY 23-24 budget for both the Commission and for PRAB. Cramer went through the highlights of each. Following discussion, French moved to accept the reports as presented. Ewald supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

Cramer then presented budget amendments for the current fiscal year. Following discussion, Ackerman moved to adopt the amended budget as presented. Ewald supported the motion. ***Motion passed. (See attached.)***

**MDARD UPDATE – Jeff Haarer**

* Department re-organization continues.
* SCBG applicants whose applications have been forwarded to USDA for approval or rejection await official word which will hopefully come later this month.
* Rural Development Grant, Underserved Grant, and Resilient Food Systems Grant applications are in various stages of processing.
* The MBC Referendum will take place in September. Cramer shared a draft of the press release and the ballot. The mailing list has been submitted to MDARD for their review.

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

* Mexico has been receiving rains allowing them to plant. Long term this potentially means less reliance on the US for product.
* Shipments continue to be steady, however trading has slowed as pricing adjusts to new crop values.
* Prices at harvest are expected to soften or be “off the board” if demand is light.
* MBS reported 230,000 acres at 22 bags per acre at this week’s US Dry Bean Convention.

**MSU DRY BEAN RESEARCH SPECIALIST – Scott Bales**

* A postcard has been mailed out with this month’s dry bean research plot tour schedule. 2 RUP credits will be available at each meeting.
* Two of the twelve plot locations may not be harvested due to excessive water damage.
* The remaining ten sites are average to above average.
* The white mold plot is nice.
* Bales stressed the value of the sprayer that was added to the lineup this year which allowed him to do so much more research.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT – Joe Cramer**

* Cramer highlighted the recent partnership between Country Ridge Beans and the Plymouth-Canton School District who is a recipient of a State of Michigan 10 Cents a Meal grant. Cramer recently delivered 1,000 pounds of four classes of beans from Country Ridge to PCSD. This is intended to be a pilot program for other districts and institutional feeding programs. Cramer will continue to connect the PCSD staff with other experts from around the country that can help expand this program.
* Cramer commented on his recent participation in the IFT First food show in Chicago.
* Cramer reminded Commissioners that nominations will take place at the Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola plots as well as the shipper representative position.

**US DRY BEAN COUNCIL**

* Chairman Noffsinger, USDBC Past President and Commissioner Stoutenburg, Ackerman and Cramer just returned from the USDBC Summer meeting. Noffsinger highlighted the USDBC Strategic Planning process and noted the many agenda items the Council is working on. Ackerman added a few comments on the new leadership now in place at the Council.
* Stoutenburg continues to stress the importance of the USDBC to help tell the story of agriculture.
* 2025 USDBC Trade Teams will include Commissioners Voelker and Ackerman and past commissioner R. Voelker. MBS members Matt Stawowy, Austin Chandonnet and Chaise Wilson were also awarded positions. Training to follow prior to travel.
* Stoutenburg recommended continuation of in person exec committee meetings take place between the summer and winter board meetings.
* During a meeting between MBC and Bush Bros., Ackerman stressed the value of “being present” as often as possible at any gatherings of dry bean growers in Michigan. There is value in hearing and understanding Bush Bros. on-going commitment and investment in our industry.
* USDBC turned down a request to provide additional funding to the broader CAP effort at this time.

**FY 2024-2025**

* **BUDGET – See attached.**
  + Cramer presented a budget proposal for next year that includes revenue based on 230,000 acres producing 22 cwt per acre.

* **OFFICER’S Meeting**
  + Areas of focus for FY 2024-2025 include:
    - Wildlife Management – work with other groups and agencies to develop policy to help growers lessen the negative economic impact wildlife has on farms across the production area.
    - Continue to engage and support the USDBC strategic planning process and change in leadership.
    - Take the MBC to Bush Bros in the fourth quarter of 2024.
    - Create a process to address fund balance concerns, opportunities, etc.
* **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**
  + Chairman Noffsinger opened the floor for nominations for chairman. Ewald was nominated. Noffsinger closed nominations. Ackerman moved to elect Ewald chair. Voelker supported. ***Motion passed.***
  + Noffsinger opened nominations for vice chair. Bauer was nominated. With no additional nominations, Noffsinger closed nominations. Voelker moved to elect Bauer. Ewald supported. ***Motion passed.***
  + Noffsinger opened nominations for treasurer. Voelker was nominated. With no additional nominations, Noffsinger closed nominations. Ewald moved to elect Voelker. French supported. ***Motion passed.***
  + Noffsinger opened nominations for executive secretary. Cramer was nominated. With no additional nominations, Noffsinger closed nominations. Ewald moved to elect Cramer. Voelker supported. ***Motion passed.***
* **ANNUAL APPROVALS – FY 2024-2025**
* Depositories – French moved that we approve PNC Bank, Frankenmuth Credit Union, and Huntington Bank. Ackerman supported. ***Motion passed.***
* Signatories – Ackerman moved that the Officers be the signatories. French supported. ***Motion passed.***
* Meeting Per Diem – Ackerman moved that we set the meeting per diem at $75. French supported. ***Motion passed.***
* Cramer presented a meeting calendar for the upcoming year. Ewald moved to adopt the calendar as presented. Voelker supported. ***Motion passed.***

With no further business, Chairman Noffsinger adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully,

**Joe Cramer**

Joe Cramer, Executive Secretary