**MBC Meeting Minutes**

**October 7, 2025**

**Laracha Farms, 640 North Block Road, Reese, Michigan**

Those Present:

District #1 Kevin Noffsinger

District #2 Ted Bauer, Vice-Chair

District #3 Chris Creguer (Virtual)

District #4 Mark Shaw

District #5 Allen Bischer

District #6 Chase Voelker, Treasurer

District #7 Jessica Rader

At Large Steve Ewald, Chair

Shipper Representative Neil French

Executive Secretary Joe Cramer

Those Absent:

District #1

District #2

District #3

District #4

District #5

District #6

District #7

At Large

Shipper Representative

Others Present:

Scott Bales MSU-MBC Dry Bean Specialist

Stevie Glaspie MDARD

Chairman Ewald called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. and thanked the group for being flexible and making time for the meeting. After taking role, Ewald declared a quorum was present. Chairman Ewald shared a thank you card received from the Family of Lawerence Sprague for flowers. Larry passed away on September 13, 2025.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: Minutes from August 19, 2025, Commission meeting were presented and reviewed. Rader moved to accept the minutes as presented. French supported. ***Motion passed.***

**FINANCIAL REPORT**: The financial report included a current balance sheet, credit card and check registry through August 2025 and a P&L report including a budget comparison for FY 2024-2025. Cramer went through the highlights of revenue and expenses as compared to budget. Following discussion, Bischer moved to accept the financial reports as presented. Voelker supported. ***Motion passed.***

Cramer discussed the expiration of the three-year agreement with Neitzke & Faupel, PC for auditing services and presented their one-year proposal for the year ending August 31, 2025, at a cost of $6,500. Commissioners favor a multiyear contract, but Nietzke & Faupel favor an annual agreement. Shaw moved to enter into the agreement with the caveat that Nietzke & Faupel will tell upon completion of this audit in December that they will or will not perform the audit the following year and that they will share the cost of that as soon as possible but not later than the beginning of our budget process each May.  Rader supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

**FY 2025-2026 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Chairman Ewald recommended the formation of a Crop Insurance Advisory Board. Following discussion, French moved to form that committee, Noffsinger supported. ***Motion passed.***

* Chairman Ewald then proposed the following assignments:
	+ PRAB – Voelker, Ewald, Rader, Bauer, Shaw (A), and Creguer (A)
	+ SVREC Advisory Board- Cramer and Voelker
	+ USDBC – Ewald and Bauer
	+ CIAB – Voelker, Noffsinger, and Aaron Reinbold.

Voelker moved to approved the assignments as presented. Rader supported the motion. **Motion passed.** (Committee assignments are posted under the About Us tab on the website)

(It should also be noted that former Commissioner, Clint Stoutenburg continues to serve on the USDBC Executive Committee.)

**MDARD UPDATE**: Stevie Glaspie

* State of Michigan Budget is in place. MDARD took a 7% budget reduction and a small reduction in FTE’s.
* Commodity Execs are meeting today.
* Grant Agreements are expected late this month or next month.
* Cramer thanked MDARD for continuing to publish the annual Stocks on Hand Report. It’s an important report that industry stakeholders’ value.
* MDARD is hosting Board Member Training on November 18th. Commodity board members are strongly encouraged to attend.

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

* Neil makes it a point to chat with other shippers before offering his reports/updates.
* In general, buyers are comfortable with their various levels of coverage which has led to very limited trading.
* Shipments are steady.
* Harvest is 90-95% done here as well as Minn Dak.
* Yields are below average, and the new crop quality is good. The quality of the carryover might be suspect.
* Grower bids in Minn Dak are $20 to $22 for black beans and pinto beans. Navy Beans in Michigan are $28 to $30. Small Red Beans in Michigan are $32 to $36. Light red and dark red kidney bean prices remain strong.
* Manitoba’s pinto bean and black bean acreage was up versus last year.

**DRY BEAN SPECIALIST REPORT – Scott Bales**

* Bales asked growers to comment on their respective harvest. Comments shared touched on harvest progress, yield, quality, and harvest challenges.
	+ Most in the group have completed their dry bean harvest. A couple have a few acres of later beans to finish.
	+ Yields varied wildly depending on rainfall.
	+ Most feel they harvested excellent color. Some beans are smaller in size.
	+ Dry down after desiccation seemed to affect everyone with one report of 19 days from spraying to combining.
* A discussion followed covering weed control, white mold, and green stem.
* Bales started harvest on September 3rd and concluded on October 3rd.
* Planting dates continue to be studied.
* Harvest included several mechanical issues with the combine. Bales explained several of the issues sharing his concern with the current machine going forward.
* Bales is grateful for the existing partnership with MSU and USDA. He will continue to carry his own staff as well.
* Cramer offered a review of plot tour attendance, cost, etc. More will be done next year to balance the presentations at each plot.
* Cramer also highlighted a plan to involve attendees at each of our December Dry Bean Research and Outlook meetings in establishing a long-range vision for research. This should give PRAB more direction and focus.
* A schedule of the December meetings was shared.

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

* Cramer highlighted the September IPM-EPA Tour held September 17, 18 and 19 and the Pod to Plate Influencer Event held September 23 and 24. Both are good events that help establish/build up relationships. Social media is hard to evaluate but necessary. Cramer hopes to supply the board with data that is still pending.
* Cramer offered comments of the pending government assistance that has been in the news. He is confident that dry beans will be included despite being a non-program crop.
* Planning continues for the Michigan Bean Industry events in Mexico City and Costa Rica the week of December 1st. Commissioners Noffsinger, Voelker, and Shaw along with former Commissioner Greg Ackerman will participate along with Cramer and Bales.
* Cramer will participate is a USDBC Trade Mission to Italy in November.
* Cramer *neglected* to mention that at the August plot tours, Noffsinger, Voelker and Rader were nominated to represent their respective districts for another term.

**USDBC UPDATE**

* Ewald, Cramer, and Bauer updated the Commission on the US Dry Bean Council. The Executive Committee, including the newly established Finance Committee has been meeting weekly. A budget has been recommended by the Finance Committee. That budget includes a -$66,000 bottom line.
* Commissioners discussed the process of getting to unified direction and passing a negative budget as well as the potential impact that may have on the MBC budget.
* Commissioners have many questions but are in agreement that the Council should continue in some form as the unified voice of beans.
* Commissioners agreed that by naming Ewald and Bauer to represent them at the national level they empowered them to speak and act on behalf of the Commission and therefore Michigan’s grower base.
* Commissioners aren’t all ready to pay additional dues without more of a plan.
* The Council plans to meet on October 15th.
* Ewald, Bauer, and Cramer will attend the USDBC Winter Meeting and LatAm Conference in Mexico February 9-14, 2026.

Chairman Ewald thanked everyone again for their time and flexibility. With no further business, he adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully,

  **Joe Cramer**

Joe Cramer, Executive Secretary