**MBC Meeting Minutes**

**May 15, 2025**

**MSU Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center, Frankenmuth, Michigan**

Those Present:

District #1 Kevin Noffsinger

District #2 Ted Bauer, Vice-Chair

District #3 Chris Creguer

District #4 Mark Shaw

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

District #5

District #6

District #7 Jessica Rader

At Large

Shipper Representative

Others Present:

Scott Bales MSU-MBC Dry Bean Specialist

Denise Studder MDARD

Chairman Ewald called the meeting to order at 8:00 am. Following roll call, Ewald declared a quorum was present.

Chairman Ewald welcomed new commissioners Mark Shaw and Chris Creguer and thanks Clint Stoutenburg and Greg Ackerman for their many years of service to our industry locally, nationally, and globally. Stoutenburg began his tenure with the Commission in 2007. Ackerman started in 2013. Both continue to be great ambassadors for our industry.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Cramer asked to add FSA State Committee appointee as item f in the executive director’s update.Creguer moved to approve the agenda as presented. French supported the motion. ***Motion passed.***

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: Minutes from March 11, 2025, Commission were presented. After reviewing, Noffsinger moved to accept the minutes as presented. French supported. ***Motion passed.***

**FINANCIAL REPORT**: Cramer went over the Monthly Assessment Report, FY Balance Sheets through April 30th, March and April check registry including credit card expenses and the FY Profit and Loss Report as compared to Budget including PRAB. A motion to accept the reports was made by Bischer and supported by Bauer. ***Motion passed.***

Cramer then proposed budget amendments for FY 2024-2025 recognizing an increase in assessment revenue and adjustments in expenses that should cover actual expenses through the August 31 year end. See attached. Creguer moved to accept the amended budget as presented. French Supported. ***Motion passed.***

Cramer also presented a first draft budget for FY 2025-2026 using 215,000 acres producing 22 bags per acre.

Voelker encouraged Cramer to look at alternatives to the pricy on-line Intuit QuickBooks option.

**MDARD UPDATE** – Denise Studders

* MDARD audit team has a new auditor starting soon. They plan to do oversight audits over the next few months.
* The Farm Produce Insurance Authority is fully funded. PNC Bank is holding/managing the investments. They will meet on June 10, 2025.
* MDARD will host commodity group leaders for training including Open Meetings Act, FOIA, etc.
* SCBG applications are moving forward.

**MBS Report** – Neil French

* Shipments continue to be steady, however inventory on August 31, 2025, is expected to be higher than August 31, 2024.
* Planting decisions are in place. Very little switching is expected at this point.
* 2025 acreage in Michigan is expected to be down slightly. The Minn Dak region is expected to be down as well.
* Markets have softened over the past few months.
* Tariffs talk has had an insignificant impact on shipments.
* Minutes of the April 25, 2025, MBS Trustee meeting is included in the meeting packet.

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

* Bales is eligible for promotion this year.
* Bales work in 2025 will focus on variety Performance, Agronomy, Crop Protection and Variety Development. The research will take place within 6,626 plots. Performance Trials will include ten plus classes of dry beans spread over five cooperator locations in six counties. New this year will be the start of a strip till research project, heavier involvement in an organic research project (due to massive cuts at USDA). One area that will see significantly less entries is white mold.
* Bales is addressing his labor shortage by adding Kaleb Ortner as his technician. Ortner started in late March and will be a nice addition.
* Equipment is ready for planting which started on May 12could start mid-month weather permitting.

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

* Cramer very briefly commented on the following:
  + MSU Dry Bean Specialist review
  + MSU Advisory Committee
  + EU Tariff meetings
  + Bush Bros.
  + Cindy Brown’s retirement as CEO of Chippewa Valley Bean Company
  + USDA, FAS, USDBC meeting in Mexico City.
  + Meeting with Congresswoman Rivett and her team at the SVREC
  + Beans @ Brody
  + Meeting with Dr. Luis Barbosa, University of Costa Rica
  + Media event with Senator Slotkin
* US Dry Pea & Lentil Council will be doing business at USA Pulses as of July 1st.
  + Cramer and Ewald plan to attend their board meeting in June.
  + Commissioner Voelker will represent Michigan on a dry bean panel at the USA Pulses Summit in July if wheat harvest doesn’t get in the way.
* 2025 Pod to Plate Influencer Event will take place September 23 and 24 in cooperation with the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education and Country Ridge Bean Company. Commissioner Rader and Cramer plan to co-host the group.
* Northarvest Bean Growers has decided to fund studies to identify the pros and cons of opting to identify dry beans as a “Program Crop.”
* PRAB approved funding a MSU Rojo Seda breeding project.
* FSA State Director is seeking candidates interested in serving on the state FSA committee.

**FARM PRODUCE INSURANCE AUTHORITY**

* Commissioner Steve Ewald is completing his second term as the dry bean industry representative on the FPIA. Ewald asked Commissioners if anyone was interested in serving. After discussing the responsibilities, board turn over, etc. the board was supportive of Ewald serving another term.

**USDBC UPDATE – Ewald, Bauer, Cramer**

* The USDBC Executive Committee is meeting weekly, which has really helped communications and activity.
* A member survey is underway.
* The Summer Board meeting will be held on July 18th in Denver.
* IPC Trade Mission applications have been shared. Applications are due by June 27, 2025
* Cramer will participate in the USDBC booth at IFT First July 13-16, 2025
* Cramer will participate in the delegation representing the USDBC on June 9 and 10 USDA Food Aid Showcase in Washington DC.

**OTHER**

* May 19 – Grower Roundtable with Detroit Mayor, Candidate for Governor Mike Duggan
* August 20 – Grower Roundtable with Senator, Candidate for Governor Aric Nesbitt
* Michigan Potato Grower position paper limiting potato production on land that was covered with solar panels.
* How do farmers best manage confrontations with (aggressive) members of the public, neighbors, etc. when farming?

With no further business, Ewald adjourned the meeting at 9:58 AM.

Respectfully,

**Joe Cramer**

Joe Cramer, Executive Secretary