



# VERMONT MAPLE SUGAR MAKERS' ASSOCIATION

189 VERMONT ROUTE 15, JERICHO, VT 05465  
PHONE: 802-858-9444  
WWW.VERMONTMAPLE.ORG

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**The Farm Show, Champlain Valley Expo, Essex, VT  
January 31, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Pam Green, Mike Emerson, Rick Kobik, Arnie Piper, Mark Bigelow, Donna Young, Don Bourdon, Emma Marvin, Gary Gaudette, Dave Folino, Megan Davis, Jason Gagne, Sam Cutting, Brad Gillilan, Jason McFarland

**Staff Present:** Matt Gordon, Amanda Voyer

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 am by Board Chair, Pam Green.

**Guest Speaker:** Dean Thomas Vogelmann was introduced to discuss the integration of Extension with the college. He stated that it is the only department in the college that continues to grow and thanked VMSMA for their support and contributions to their equipment fund and research.

He discussed Chuck Ross, in his new role as Director and that he is someone who can be an advocate for Extension and UVM and raise money, someone who can hit the ground running because of the people he knows and the connections he's made throughout his career.

He also noted that Vermont has become the center of gravity for maple education even beyond Vermont's borders and the Information shared by UVM Extension is vital to the entire industry.

Discussion was held on whether it would make sense to explore a connection between Nutrition and Food Science, and College of Medicine and Extension to do more research about some of the nutritional and health benefits of maple.

Pam thanked Dean Vogelmann for attending and welcomed him to other meetings throughout the year. Dean Vogelmann said he took lots of notes and will be meeting with Mark Isselhardt.

**Minutes:** Emma Marvin moved that the minutes for the December 1, 2016 meeting be approved, Don Bourdon seconded. Motion approved.

**Financial Report:** Matt Gordon went over the accounts. Highlights from the Income/Expense report comparing 2015-2016 included:

- Income revenue was higher in 2015 because of income received for Select Design grant.
- Royalties may be down due to tin sales.
- Advertising reflected more spent in 2016 because of grant funding received for Facebook.
- Meals and Entertainment expenses were up because of the IMSI/NAMSC International Conference in 2016.



## VERMONT MAPLE SUGAR MAKERS' ASSOCIATION

189 VERMONT ROUTE 15, JERICHO, VT 05465

PHONE: 802-858-9444

WWW.VERMONTMAPLE.ORG

- The Working Land's Grant brought up professional fees for Info Tech seminars.
- The tours were the reason why projections for the revenues and expenses for the IMSI/NAMSC International conference were off.

There had not been a lot of interest in the mobile sugarhouse sale generated by sugar makers. Advertising of its sale will now be open to the general public.

Mike Emmerson made a motion to approve the financial report, Arnie Piper seconded. Motion approved.

Mark Bigelow recognized Matt Gordon's effort for cleaning up the financials.

**Election of Officers:** Mike Emmerson made a motion to reelect the proposed slate of existing officers. Rick Kobik seconded. Mike Emmerson made a motion for nominations to close. Arnie Piper seconded. The slate of existing officers remain for 2017.

**Guest Speaker:** Agency of Agriculture Secretary, Anson Tebbetts, discussed what his role is at the Agency and how maple fits into that and turned the questions on the group to see what the current trends are with maple and the big issues we face.

Roger Brown spoke about Real vs. Fake and how it is a local, state, and federal issue. He reported lawsuits had been filed (by individuals unrelated to VMSMA), as a result of the communication Vermont has led with the FDA, building class action suits around consumer fraud in MA, NJ and CA. He discussed wanting to continue pushing enforcement of the issue. Anson would like a presentation of some of the more egregious examples of companies breaking that law. Anson commented that public awareness may be what is gained even if legal action isn't successful. It will start to create a skepticism with the public view.

Anson asked where technology is going next. Brad Gillilan reported the focus now is largely on the acceleration of good technologies that currently exist. He also stated that some of the challenges sugar makers face include the ability to haul sap even when roads are posted in the spring, as well as water quality and forest management issues, and working with the agency on receiving information. He expressed a desire for open dialogue with the industry to maintain the growth of the industry in Vermont as technology has supported that growth, while keeping the sustainability protected. Further discussion was held on where does maple fit, is it ag is it forestry? As more and more land is transferred from timber management to sugarbush management, what are the recommendations and standards recommended for maple? How does careful stewardship of the land mesh with modern technologies?

Anson encouraged continued communication with the agency and state government on maple issues.

**2017 Budget:** Discussion was held on the proposed 2017 budget. Mike Emmerson made a motion to pass the budget as proposed. Jason MacFarland seconded. Motion passed.

**Annual Meeting Update:** Donna Young made a motion to have Emma Marvin and Arnie Piper form a committee to plan the annual meeting and next board meeting. Mike Emmerson seconded. Motion



## VERMONT MAPLE SUGAR MAKERS' ASSOCIATION

189 VERMONT ROUTE 15, JERICHO, VT 05465

PHONE: 802-858-9444

WWW.VERMONTMAPLE.ORG

Passed. Pam Green and Don Bourdon volunteered for the committee as well. Directors were given a survey to answer questions on the timing, location and structure for the annual meeting and needed to respond to Amanda Voyer by Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Don Bordon made a motion to adjourn. Emma Marvin seconded. Motion passed.

**Next Meeting:** May 9<sup>th</sup>, Three Stallion Inn, Randolph, VT.