
Joint Fall Board Meeting Minutes

Sept. 30 & Oct. 1, 2019 • via webinar

Attendees: Lori Tonak (SD), Jennifer Smith (MN), Tina LeBrun (MN), Pauline Van Nurden (MN), Myron Oftedahl (MN), John Jones (MI), Mark Wood (KS), Laura Powers (KY), Anthony Barrett (NE), Alex Medina (NE), Tina Barrett (NE), Jim McCabe (IL), Eric Hofland (IA), Bob Rhea (IL), Mike Harer (WI), Carla Doubet (IL).

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order on Monday, Sept. 30th at 1:13 pm via Zoom webinar meeting. Laura Powers was selected as meeting chair and Pauline Van Nurden as secretary.

June 9, 2019 Minutes reviewed. Jennifer Smith moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Eric Hofland. Motion passed.

Review Memorandum of Understanding.

Travel reimbursement and meeting costs: limited costs because of virtual meeting. NFRBMEA send to Myron.

2021 Conference: Anthony, Alex, and Tina shared a presentation on the proposed 2021 conference site – Hilton Head Island, SC. Conference would be June 14-17, 2021. Proposed registration cost of \$425 with hotel room cost of \$139. This would continue with the Monday afternoon to Thursday afternoon conference schedule. This is an ocean front property and selected for affordability and family friendliness. Discussion ensued around contract obligations, conference format, location, and other logistics. Concerns were noted as well. Mark Wood moved to table the discussion until more information could be gathered. Myron Oftedahl seconded. Motion passed.

National Farm Viability Conference: Conference will be Oct. 22-24 in Red Wing, MN. Several MN FBM instructors and CFFM are presenting at the conference. Jennifer Smith will connect with Ela Chapin at the conference to learn more about future partnership opportunities. Our groups have promoted their upcoming conference and assume the continued conference cross promotion will continue in the future.

NAFBAS State Leaders Meeting: This was held Aug. 27-28 in Altoona, IA. Mike Harer, John Jones, and Jim McCabe reported back. Feedback from meeting was it is good to connect with other leaders and compare notes on common topics, such as staffing issues. Gaining perspectives from other programs is always valuable.

Farm Financial Standards Council: Jonathan Shepard has served as a liaison to this group. He is no longer with KFBM. No one attended the meeting as a representative of this group. Therefore, no costs involved. Will seek an interested individual to attend and be involved with the FFSC. Mark Wood would be willing to attend the 2020 conference in Amarillo, TX July 29-31. Pauline Van Nurden attends the conference as a CFFM rep and serves on the Technical Committee and Executive Board. The coming year will include a review of the financial ratios and measures recommended by FFSC. Anyone interested in serving on the committee and providing input should contact Pauline.

Committee Reports: No reports given.

Scholarship Program and Conference Sponsors and Vendors: Tina LeBrun the conference scholarship program hinges on available funding. No funding secured currently. Any prospective supporters of this program should be brought to Tina's attention. The goal is to start this program again. Tina reported conference sponsor/vendor materials are ready to send out. Culvers is considering being a national sponsor. Other potential national sponsors were suggested – Farmers Business Network (FBN), Conservis, and Magnify. Discussion centered on FBN and Conservis being potential sponsors/vendors as their work aligns with farm management more. Magnify (a service of the Farm Credit System) may have funding available, but is likely a competitor. Other local and national sponsor/vendor ideas should be brought to Tina's attention.

2020 Conference Planning: Myron reported the Hilton in Fort Collins, CO is selected venue for next year's conference. Colorado State University faculty are connected and engaged in conference planning. The new format adopted at last fall's board meeting will be in place for 2020 conference – Monday pm board meetings; Tuesday full day conference proceedings with vendors; Wednesday morning includes two break out tracks on legal and tax issues; Wednesday pm tours with evening family event; Thursday morning speakers/workshop offerings. Current speakers include Dr. Kohl (via

webinar), Temple Grandin, Laura Gentry. Myron also shared other speaker options being considered. Plated meals versus buffets, more cost effective. Discussed promotional ideas like using social media more (Twitter, Facebook), contacting Extension and Farm Bureau, and submitting press releases to regional publications to spread the word. Looking to have Tuesday as a one day registration option. May see local people interested in attending for the day. The early career training opportunity will continue. Myron Oftedahl moved to set registration at a maximum of \$400 for the conference. John Jones seconded. Discussion ensued. This included raising the ceiling in case funding is needed and the goal to lower registration cost with the shorter conference format. Jim McCabe amended the motion to raise the registration ceiling to \$450. John Jones seconded. Motion passed. NFBMC promotion: goal will be to update social media and website with the revised agenda, new location, and registration maximum in the next month. Goal will be to highlight things like Temple Grandin as a confirmed speaker, etc. to begin getting conference interest.

Registration System: Discussion surrounding the continued use of CVENT, looking for a new system, or returning to CFFM for registration. Reviewed costs of CVENT and reporting options. CFFM can provide registration system at no cost. This would move the sponsorship provided to in-kind. Mark Wood moved to stay with CVENT as the registration system for the next two years. Alex Medina seconded. Motion passed. Discussion regarding use of CVENT for NAFBAS trainings and events. Agreed NAFBAS to pay \$4 per registrant for use of CVENT and the associated credit card fees.

2021 Conference Update: Hotel was contacted during the meeting and agreed to minimize the deposit requirements. An initial concern of group, as upfront payments larger than previous conferences. Decision to continue tabling.

NFBMC Logo & social media: discussed using the conference logo on all conference related materials. With the tentative agenda and confirmed speakers, initial promotion can begin now. Similar messaging between the website, Facebook, and Twitter will be the goal.

Multi-State Educational Programming: Discussed recent offerings including multi-state Roger McEowen seminar; Enrolled Agent training in IL; National Farm Tax Extension group; joint state NAFBAS meeting between IL, IA, and WI; C to S Conversion. These offerings were based on feedback from group and organized in a timely fashion. Also, IL is starting a program called Women Creating Opportunities for Women and provides training on financial positions, understanding and improving ratios, how to work with your lender, a tax update, and overview of financial statements. Continuing to evolve programs and look at providing new education programs for members/students.

Adjourned for the evening at 4:40 pm. Tuesday Morning, Oct 1. Meeting was called to order by Laura at 8:05 am.

Benchmarking Updates:

- Kentucky – Recent retirement and program growth led to 2 new hires. Goal is more enterprise budgeting.
- Kansas – 4 people have resigned. Association membership is flat to trickling lower. Association requiring fewer farms per specialist. Hard to keep specialists long term. Feel 5 years to break even on training, most stay two or less. Worried for the future and how to find qualified, long term specialists.
- CFFM – Continuing to work with new potential benchmarking programs/states. New faculty member provides more research opportunity. Extension's SW Association's Director retired. Long term specialist is new director.
- Iowa – added a new consultant working with PC Mars and training as a future farm management specialist.
- Illinois – continuing to work through the merger. Adding a new W2 program, CRM, and Office 365 as software. Have added new consultants as well, working to train and keep them on the job.
- Michigan – Four of the 5 district agents have been replaced, so working to get them established. Have lost 3 faculty due to health (may come back), retirement, and leaving position. Challenge of who will work with the data in the future. TelFarm has a solid group, but there has been a lot of change overall.
- South Dakota – status quo. One bank is partnering closely with the program and paying tuition for farmers. SD Ag Foundation has offered to pay tuition for 12 people for a number of years because of the difficult farm economy. Grant application is currently submitted for this. Have seen farm attrition to Magnify within program.
- Minnesota – over ½ of instructors less than 10 yrs. experience. Colleges are hiring for retirements and adding positions. MAELC grants and MN legislature provide funding and support, especially for new faculty mentoring. Second rural mental health specialist added. Organic grant received to focus on organic benchmarking.

- Wisconsin – have added a staff member due to new tax law needs and growth of program. Have added 40 to 50 farms recently. Seeing small dairies exiting, but cow numbers remain similar in area.
- Nebraska – timely rains have led to less irrigation and good crops for the year. Association is fully staffed. Implemented an apprenticeship program a number of years back that reaping benefits for staffing. Program is growing. More interest in specialized farm tax, payroll, and accounting. Grant received to help benchmarking.

Peer to Peer program – Bob sought feedback on the idea of adding a peer cohort of farms that would convene from multiple states. Be a cohort group that would have speakers, moderated discussions, etc. Similar to TPAP. All seemed interested and thought of farms that would enjoy this. Idea of HR related programming was suggested.

NCAE Update – Lori recently attended a National Council of Ag Ed meeting in North Carolina. The council looks for projects to fund for the good of ag ed. Typically curriculum related. Our group could submit ideas.

Awards of Appreciation – none suggested. Pass suggestions along to Bob.

2019 Conference wrap up – Good conference overall. Pleased with conference results and financials. Early Career Development had about 20 participants. Important program. No evals from the conference were prepared. Each group will receive approximately \$6,775 in conference proceeds. After next conference, will review the new format. Reviewed finances for this year compared to previous. Discussed attendance. NFRBMEA attendance has waned. Why? College funding challenges, out of state travel restrictions, discontinued programs, and staff turnover. Will continue to get new staff to attend. Once they attend, they come back. Hard to get initial attendance. Also, some training provided outside of NFBM conference. Not a requirement to have instructors attend like in many NAFBAS associations.

What brings attendees to the conference? Big name speakers, tools shared, Extension sessions every 3 years, idea sharing, take home pieces, networking. The goal is take home pieces to use in program all year. Also the professional development aspect. Idea to have early career members create short promo videos of why they attend. This can be distributed on the website, social media. Make a splash about the new format. Goal is a few more attendees from all states.

Registration discussion – Utilize Google Drive for sharing materials, having items centrally located for conference planners. Registration and website can mirror each other. Open communication is key. Will work to have timelier registration this year. Then “registration excuse” is off the table. See if this helps attendance. Time table for registration:

November – rough draft of registration in CVENT – allow to test/check

December – final draft preparation

Jan/Early Feb – registration available – should help with travel budgeting and planning for attendees.

Conference Facebook page – Deb/Taylor/Alex will work together to create a conference Facebook page. They will also connect to make a concerted promo effort. Deb will add a Testimonial page to the website.

2021 Conference revisit – Mark Wood and Mike Harer moved to accept proposed Hilton Head, SC location and bid. Discussion continued. If significant changes in contract, organizers will circle back with the group. Motion passed. Conference Planners slated as Anthony Barrett, Alex Medina, with NAFBAS rep. Carla Doubet, and NFRBMEA rep. Lori Tonak. Jim McCabe moved to accept these planning committee members. Mark Wood seconded. Motion passed.

2022 Preliminary Conference Planning – This will be revisited in June. North Central Extension Farm Management Committee plans to help lead planning. Will consider location, registration system, and conference format at that time.

Virtual Process Feedback – meeting attendees thought format worked well. Thought all attendees felt comfortable voicing opinions. Best when all had camera availability. Face to face is good, but this is a nice occasional alternative – more cost effective, more time effective. Doing virtual meetings more with farms, so good to use this approach in our meetings too.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 am.

Submitted by Pauline Van Nurden