Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society

Board Meeting Minutes---501(c)3

Prairie Fiber Arts Center, Moorhead, MN.

October 18, 2018, 10am-4pm

**Consent agenda:** roll call/approval of the minutes of 9-11-18

**Roll call:** Les Miller, Roger TeSlaa, Krysti Mikkonen, Gretchen Harvey, Annie Carlson (Skype) Virginia Scannell & Verna Kragnes. Arrived late morning/by noon: Sean Hyatt, Owen Trangsrud & Lynn Brakke. Guests: Patrick Kirby. Absent: Curt Petrich

**Conference Planning Report: Verna**Rather than going over all progress made re: conference planning to date, Verna drew up a list of questions that needed some discussion for her to move forward. We spent the morning addressing these questions.

* **Tag line for the conference:** board members brainstormed ideas and will come back to this later for final decision.
* **Connection with ND Culinary Arts Institute:** Verna summarized meetings with Margie Bailly, the leader behind this project to bring a NDCAI to Fargo. The concept agreed upon is to bring a food-themed film to Fargo’s historic arts theater about 2 weeks before the conference to generate local interest in the conference event, especially the Thursday night event. Committee working on this includes: Verna, Gretchen, Margie, and Travis—more are welcome to join by calling in.
* **Pre-Conference:** Verna asked board to consider filling one of the open slots with the director of sustainable agriculture at Maharishi University-Fairfield, Iowa, Dr. Thimmaiah. He could offer a session in Nepalese for Bhutanese residents in Fargo with strong interests in agriculture. He could also offer a workshop on small-farm approaches to soil regeneration. Currently, there are 3 of 5 possible pre-conference slots open. Board members were supportive of this idea. Other ideas for presenters also shared with Verna at this time.
* **Organic food and values statement:** robust discussion of what members expect and how to support sustainable agriculture by what we purchase, where we purchase it, and what is served (and how it is labeled) at the conference.
* **Fundraising event Thursday evening:** There was a robust discussion about how much of a fundraiser the Thursday night event (introduction to the conference) should be—and exactly what audience(s) this event is designed to address. There was a discussion about speakers, who might offer brief presentations with ticket prices being lower for members, drawings for artwork, kids’ activities (pool party), working with college students to provide educational activities for children, etc.
* **Other topics discussed:** musical entertainment, workshop topics, new farmer mentoring opportunities, silent and live auction events, and many more details that Verna had questions about or wanted board input on.

**Financial Report: Roger** handed out a packed that included a recent P & L for our review. He noted the purchase of CDs now in place, discussed exhibitor slots that have been reserved, and Virginia shared information about other donations and offers to help with the conference that have come to the Iowa office. Also distributed was a 2019 conference budget based on last year’s actuals.

**Action:** Motion made and approved to accept the most recent proposal from Patrick Kirby of ***Do Good Better*** (shared on email 10-17-18) to develop an effective fundraising plan for NPSAS over the next 4 months. .

**Action**: Motion made and approved to accept treasurer’s report as presented.

**NPSAS Structural Questions: Verna** raised some important structural questions: Does NPSAS wish to continue its membership in ND Association of Nonprofits? All agreed this is a worthwhile connection to have for NPSAS. Also, Verna requests permission to register to do business in MN as an important step to allow NPSAS to tap resources in this state. All agreed she should proceed with this registration. Lastly, there seems to be some problems with organizational status recognition as a result of filing mistakes made on 990s in the past. Verna will do more research and report back to the board on this issue.

**Visit to Nicole’s Bakery: Gretchen** and Verna met with Nichole on Tuesday to discuss how the mill set up is going and plans for its use. We also discussed ways in which Nichole could participate in the Thursday night event. Krysti reminded us of her suggestion that we should ask Nichole to decorate a 40th anniversary cake as part of the artistic theme of the night. We will follow up with her at our next meeting about what might be possible. Her costs for mill electrical set up still need to be determined, as well as the price we will charge her for a 50# bag of Dylan wheat berries that Gretchen delivered to her on Wednesday. NPSAS agreed to pay half of her electrical set-up costs, up to $500, to help with the mill’s relocation to Fargo. Lynn and Curt shared some research they have done on bags needed for retailing fresh-milled flour. Gretchen will share this information with Nichole at their next meeting.

**Grain and Flour in Storage: Les** asked for ideas and discussion re: how to move this aging inventory.

**Partnership Report: Verna**

* **Dakota Rural Action:** Did not receive the farm beginnings grant
* **Partnership4Health Grant for Special Project:** This idea (see handout) is a shovel-ready partnership project that Verna brings to the board for consideration. It is a 4 county project that is looking for partners. The project manager is inviting proposals this year with the expectation that the funding would be spent in 2019. The project could allow NPSAS to support the expansion of its research agenda (FBC work), along with the New Roots farm incubator project (already in development), designed to help train a new generation of sustainable farmers. The Board agreed that the conversation should continue and follow up on what role this nonprofit could play in the project and how the partnership would benefit NPSAS. Some wondered what the time commitment would be for Verna. All are interested in hearing more and agreed that a statement of interest would be appropriate.

**Fundraising Plan Development—Patrick Kirby, Do Good Better Consulting:**

* What does NPSAS do & why would someone want to support the organization: A robust conversation followed for the purpose of refining a vision.
* Inspire to Improve = emerged as a popular concept from much brainstorming
* A Taste of agriCULTURE emerged as most popular Thursday night event tagline

**Next Conference Planning Report:** Verna will preparea visual report to let board members know percentages of slots filled/vacant for vendors/exhibitors, pre-conference workshops, and breakout sessions. Her meeting with the chef to establish a menu was postponed by the chef but once it takes place, she will be able to begin looking for donations of food items to support the menu.

**Action: motion made and approved to accept the consent agenda.**

Lynn noted the importance of establishing a nominating committee to prepare the ballot for the annual meeting in 2019.

**Adjourn 5:25** **pm**

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Harvey

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, November 13, 2018 Fargo Public Library- Dawson meeting room, 102 3rd street north, Fargo, from 10am-4pm.