

Minutes
VCC Executive Committee Meeting
Held April 7, 2010
At Provisions International
White River Jct., VT

Present: Laini Fondiller, Rachel Schaal, Sebastian von Trapp, Eric Johnson, Mark Fischer, Lisa Battalana, Linda Miller

Treasurer's Report: RBEG. Sebastian and Rachel met with Karen Lynch to see how money can be spent. We have only spent \$8,000 to date. Discussed using RBEG for salary. We have a money market account and \$84,000 in the checking account. ACTION: Lisa will help investigate how to get a higher interest rate than we are currently receiving.

As of March 11 we had \$2,600 in membership.

ACS Sponsorship: \$6,000 Bronze. Cabot, Jasper Hill, Grafton, VBC

Question on Festival, Andy said that there is a separate checking account for the Festival. Has that been done?

Sebastian went through the estimated upcoming expenses. ACTION: He will provide an updated balance sheet for the next meeting.

Eric moved that we accept the Treasurer's Report. This was seconded and approved.

Discussion on web site administration. Rachel is able to use the eNewsletter program that Elysa has been using. We will leave it up to Rachel to work with Elysa on taking on more responsibility for the web site.

Coordinator Update: Rachel has spent the bulk of her time answering phone calls, emails from folks interested in coming to Vermont. Some calls from cheese shops, wedding questions, working on printed newsletter and enewsletter, Taste of Vermont in Washington, DC, other events as well.

ACTION: We need to separate Principal members from Associate members. Rachel will make that clear for Chris.

Membership paid after X month will include the next year. Discussed pro-rating. The goal is to increase membership so that when we apply for grants, we can show a good membership list. Discussed having a sharp deadline for members in order to be listed in the brochure.

ACTION: Rachel will explore the use of PayPal for membership dues collection.

Mark suggested that we just reprint the current brochure and announce a date that we will have a new design and inclusion of new members. We will need to end out notifications in early December that membership is due by the third week of January with a reminder. We agreed to use this as our timeline. If a member joins after March 1, then they will be included on the web site, but not on the printed brochure until the following year. Small inclusions can be made on reprinting with no guarantee that this would happen.

ACTION: We will need to address the “Open to the Public” issue for the next reprinting. Perhaps we should entertain having an Open House date/weekend.

Laini suggested linking the Distributors on our website so that the public can find the stores that sell our cheeses. **ACTION:** Rachel will link the Associate Members websites of they choose to do so.

We currently have a cover letter that goes with the membership form to go to the Associate Members.

Discussed Associate Member ListServe. **ACTION:** Mark asked that Lisa use the ListServe to notify the retailers that we have an upcoming workshop.

ACTION: Need to set up a Membership Committee to include Laini, Rachel, and recruit Calley to help to design a new member packet with cover letter and brochure, review mailing list by early Fall. Send out to retailers by September. Report in to the Executive Council periodically.

The hope is that if we allow PayPal, then we will gain Friends for \$25 each. Lisa suggested that we offer the public a choice of becoming a Friend at the Vermont Cheese Festival. Then we need to give them a reason for doing so.

Revision of Logo and we need a slogan (Laini suggested “Give Cheese a Chance” and Mark suggested “Milk is the Medium”). We want something that will promote the Cheese Council. **ACTION:** Eric offered to look into having a local art school or someone else help. Perhaps having a competition at UVM arts class and then have public choose at the Festival.

Rachel stated that we have 12 confirmed and 2 potential participants for the sensory workshop scheduled for Wednesday, April 28 at Provisions. It was suggested that we cut it off at 15 total participants. The limiting factor is that we won’t have enough time to evaluate many cheeses. The morning will be to develop the vocabulary and then the afternoon session is to evaluate the products. **ACTION:** Mark will be in touch with Montse to make sure that the plans are all set from her end.

Other ideas for workshops are for Retailers how to sample or handle cheese. It was discussed that we could invite Ann Saxelby to demonstrate. Peter can come and do a workshop on cheese defects. Will offer these in the fall.

FDA discussion is that they are now working with Dan Scruton to be more reasonable when setting up inspections. Traceability is most important to them to include what rennet and culture was used to make the cheese.

ACTION: Linda will send the email from Hanover Co-Op regarding the proposed GAP regulations.

Sheep dairy need to use the antibiotic testing kit. This is very expensive since only one test was validated. Mark has been meeting with others. They have worked out that they can send milk to the state lab for testing and are asking FDA to have other test kits validated.

Discussed the VIAC scholarship applications. ACTION: Plan to put this on the web site.

ACS sponsorship includes a pass to the event. Rachel is interested in attending. All were in favor of this. The sponsorship also includes a membership to the ACS. Perhaps raffle it off at the Festival. There are 34 Vermont cheesemakers signed up for the Festival.

Send minutes to Eric Johnson at:
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