

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes for May 21, 2014

Meeting started at 11:20

Present: Tom, Meri, Andrew, Lisa, Michael, Rachel, Anne, Susan from Boston Post Dairy, Diane Bothfeld, (arrived late Angela)

Unable to attend: Vince, Stan, Clay, Jeremy,

Previous meeting minutes were approved.

Presidents update not available

Distribution workshop: 8 purchased out of 30. It was suggested to invite the Vermont Specialty Foods association. Tom will contact Jim Harrison about this. Andrew had a few suggestions of people that had approached him with interest in attending the workshop. Diane mentioned we should\could invite the people that held milk handlers license. Tom will contact those people.

Treasurer's report: We are currently expending revenues, with not much coming in. We have already paid our ACS sponsorship fees, and invested in a few critical pieces of office equipment. Status of RBEG monies have not been received yet. There seems to be an address issue? Tom will work to resolve this. We also have approximately \$ 18,000.00, in sponsor ship fees coming in for the cheesemaker festival.

Diane Bothfeld informed us that we have received a grant of \$42000.00 from the VT Department of Ag. The VCC did not receive a disbursement in 2013, so that has been rolled into this year's grant to reach this amount. Going forward Performance and outcome is what the Dairy council bases the fund on. This grant will be dispersed throughout the year. These funds can be used for our website, marketing, & education.

Still waiting on Auditors- Meri will give Bill Gilberts contact information to Tom.

Membership update; we have 3 new Vermont Cheese Council members: Bridport Creamery, Mountain home farm, Spoon wood cabin. Tom will continue to reach out to other future potential members.

We have reimbursed 10 members for ACS membership reimbursement, and 9 for ACS competition fees. This is very encouraging representation for our Vermont cheese makers.

Festival Update: Most of the VCC members have signed up to have a table. Provisions will represent cheeses from Lazy Lady, Hilldene at the festival. Tom sent an email to the Massachusetts cheese guild to invite them. We would like to have our tables reserved by July. Diane offered to mention that there are few tables left, at her regional mtg. We have about 6 tables available.

Discussion on inviting out of state cheese makers, basically regional cheese makers, and the goal is to increase festival revenues, and perceived value of attending the festival. They are charged \$225 for a table.

We currently have 59 vendors, in addition to our cheese makers signed up for this year's festival. There are a few beer producers that have not signed up this year. Tom will follow up with a few that attended last year's festival. Tom shared the following; Media coverage, Tentatively- have asked for media passes: Martha Stewart Living, Foodies of New England, Wine Spectator, Cheese Connoisseur, Culture, Saveur, Food & Wine, Boston Globe, Seven Days, Readers Digest- travel article, Several different food bloggers. Calendars that the festival will be going in for Summer issues: Martha Stewart Living- possibly a featured event, Boston Globe Magazine, Seven Days, Globe and Mail- Canadian, Vermont Life, American Cheese Society, Dig In.

Ticket sales are still down. Tom has contacted past people that purchased tickets. Brochure pamphlets have been mailed to the VCC membership. We need to spread the word to let the "public" know of the event to increase attendance.

Executive Directors report- Tom is working on getting our new cheese trail map to the printer. He has made the requested changes to the old cheese trail map. He will send it out to the membership to review. We would like to get these printed prior to the festival.

Website development is underway. Tom will meet with Meri to work on this. Discussion on pictures for the Website it might be more feasible to actually hire someone to do this for us.

Tom will be attending the Sterling college class. (2 wk class 5/27-6/6) To familiarize himself with cheese making terms and processes. He will also be taking a Dairy based HACCAP class, in CT.

Diane Bothfeld, from The Department of Ag, provided a press release for GMO rule making. Diane will send the links, study, and any information she has to Tom, and he will forward it to the membership. A study is being done to help clarify the reading\writing of rulemaking pertaining to the GMO bill. Meri mentioned that there was an activist group contacting people regarding GMO labeling/compliance. Tom suggested we send a survey out to the membership to see where they stand. This will be put on a later agenda, after the festival

Made in Vermont label, a new label will be coming that will replace the Vermont Seal of Quality symbol. There will be some criteria to qualify. More information will be shared as learned.

Domestic export program, there is a small amount of money to help export Vermont product. This is more about building a program, rather than issuing grants, at this point.

There is a new law, expansion of the raw milk sales at the farm, sales may now be set up at the farm, then delivered only, to their customer at the farmers market. They must already be a vendor at the farmers market. You also have to become a Tier 2 farm.

Andrew on delivering our cheese to ACS. Provisions will bring our cheese to New Jersey, Peterson will deliver to Sacramento. They have agreed to bring our cheese from NJ to Sacramento, at no charge, in exchange for signage on our tables. Christopher @ Provisions is taking care of this. Contest cheese,

breakfast cheese, and meet the cheesemaker cheese, Andrew needs to get weight of all cheeses he will be shipping.

ACS breakfast; King Arthur will be donating the flour; VMSA (Vermont Maple Sugar makers Association), will find someone to donate syrup. VT smoke & Cure the meats. Tom will purchase flannel for the breakfast buffet table.

Meri: next year's ACS, encourage people to come early, offering farm tours. How would we do this? What exactly do we do? Tom will talk to Megan Smith on ideas, Vermont festival rooms – Hotel Vermont has agreed to reserve

Adjourned at 1:50 pm

Respectfully,

Anne Doe

Secretary, Vermont Cheese Council