

**Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association
Annual General Meeting
February 16, 2019
Best Western Glengarry, Truro, 10:45 am**

Meeting Minutes

Call to order

Lauren Park called the meeting to order at 10:45 am and thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

Approval of agenda

It was moved by Shelly McDermott and seconded by Robert Morash to approve the agenda as circulated. Motion carried.

Approval of March 3, 2018 Annual General Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Kevin Spicer and seconded by Shelly McDermott to approve the minutes from March 3, 2018 as circulated. Motion carried.

Business Arising from Minutes - None

President's Report

Lauren Park presented the following report:

I love the unpredictability of bees and of farming. Just when you think you understand the weather patterns or a hive's behavior, something changes. Every year it seems like the most reliable thing in our industry is the unpredictability!

I would like to start off by acknowledging this is the first AGM in many years not to see George Foote., who passed away not long after the AGM last year. George was a past President and always an active member of this association. He's missed, and we are grateful for his contributions to the NSBA and our industry.

The 2018 bee season was off to a great start with a healthy bee build and weight gain before the frost in early June. The frost was so bad that several commodity groups and department of agriculture staff refer to the event as a 'deep freeze'. As we know, bees can withstand cold temperatures no problem, but it did result in hives tapping into their stored honey with some hives requiring feed. In some areas, the bees bounced back beautifully, while in others, the summer months were too dry, providing long dearths. The weather in autumn was fair but brought heavy rain in many areas. Mite levels seemed to be low in many places across Canada. I hope that was true for you too and your bees are enjoying their well-deserved rest.

As I mentioned yesterday, the NSBA has a long legacy of being the general beekeeping organization of Nova Scotia. Now, 126 years after the first bee meeting in Wolfville, it is my pleasure to share a few of the things the NSBA has been up to in the last 12 months.

Our Association continues to be committed to keeping Small Hive Beetle out of Nova Scotia. Conversations are ongoing about the border between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and the risk of honey bee imports. We are pleased that 2019 is another year with no import requests on the table and therefore no risk of bees entering Nova Scotia from Small Hive Beetle positive areas. The NSBA is also in support of the Department of Agriculture's Small Hive Beetle Response Plan and appreciate all of Jason's work putting together this forward-thinking document.

One of the top priorities of our association is of course education. Last October, the NSBA held their second fall meeting, a one-day event featuring a guest speaker, local farm profile and our tech transfer team. This past October it was held in Kentville and we were happy to host Ian Stepler, a beekeeper from Miami, Manitoba. We would love to hear any speaker of general suggestions you have regarding these meetings. This is an informal meeting with lots of practical information and networking opportunities. Please note that we do have a suggestion box on the registration outside.

We are of course in the middle of our biggest meeting of the year! I want to start off by extending my thanks to Jason who put a lot of work into yesterday and today. Jason is an incredible ally to our industry and is always willing to take a phone call or schedule a meeting. As NS beekeepers, we are really lucky to have this relationship with our PA, and I look forward to his relationship with the NSBA continuing to grow as our industry continues to grow.

I would encourage all of you to not dismiss Jason's commercial beekeeping survey or questions on the annual registration form. This data is invaluable and we as an industry are stronger the more we know.

The association works hard to network across the agricultural sector. We are active at the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture's Council of Leaders table and I am also a director at large with the Federations. Even though my role on the Federation board is to represent the agriculture industry as a whole, I am proud to be the first career beekeeper to exist on their board since their inauguration in 1895.

The NSBA is also present at the Joint Pollination Committee which is also made up of Perennia, NSDA and WBPANS. This group meets twice a year to discuss hive health pollination outlook and challenges facing our industries. Thanks to Jerry Draheim who has been sitting on this committee on behalf of beekeepers since it's inauguration more than 25 years ago.

Throughout the year the NSBA was also happy to attend New Brunswick's annual bee meeting, ATTTA's queen field day in conjunction with the New Brunswick Beekeepers' Association, and the Maritime Bee Tour which is held every two years and this past year was hosted outside of Moncton. We also attended the Wild Blueberry Producers field day and their AGM in November. Lastly, the NSBA remains committed to educating the public as well and over the last number of years has been a part of the Avondale Honey Harvest Festival, Meet Your Farmer at the Mall held in Dartmouth, and Farmer for a Day which is held at the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum.

We, as a relatively small industry are committed to having our voices heard and to developing and maintaining relationships across the sector.

I know that several of these meetings may sound "commercially focused" but I can assure you that we do our best to balance and embrace the small- and large-scale parts of our industry. Our constant discussions on hive health, biosecurity and imports impact all beekeepers, whether they are large, small, new or veterans.

Being a member of the association also gains you access to our rollup posters! Sets of these posters are scattered throughout the province and are available for school demonstrations or farm events. Unfortunately, we had some that were leant out without a name so please let us know if you have some rollup posters that we don't know about. The NSBA also has a honey extractor available to borrow. It is housed in Truro and is available upon request on a first come first serve basis.

These items are house by Agri-Commodity. Kara of Agri-Commodity has been taking our registrations the last couple days. Agri-Commodity, or ACMA, has taken over some of the grunt work for the NSBA including our registration and website. Our website has been updated and I'd like to thank Shelley and Alex for forging this renewed relationship with ACMA. The board in the future hopes that it will free up their time to better serve you, the members.

NSBA registration also gains you access to the spring queen orders. There are spring queen order forms available for spring 2019. There is no minimum order for queens and they are available from Hawaii and California. Saskatraz queens are also listed on the form but I want to clarify that they are subject to availability. The queens are delivered to and inspected at the Halifax Airport and are the taken to two pickup spots, one in the valley and one in Debert where they can be collected. Thanks to Dave Cameron for the coordination of this.

NSBA members also get Hivelights, the Canadian Beekeeping Magazine, our NS beekeeping newsletter and reduced or free entry to our meetings. Please ask any board members if you have further questions about the goings on of the association.

As I conclude this report, I conclude my third and final year as President of the Association. I will keep this brief. As I step down from the board, I am truly humbled. It has been an honour to do my best to champion this industry. I am very proud to have been the first female and youngest person to chair this organization. This does not reflect on me so much as it is a clear indication of the exciting changing demographics in our industry.

So, I would like to finish by extending a heartfelt thanks to all of you for having me. Thank you.

2019 Honorary Member Award presented to Jerry Draheim

John Murray presented the award to Jerry. He reviewed Jerry's history with beekeeping and how he ended up moving to Nova Scotia. John also highlighted the numerous contributions Jerry has provided to the beekeeping industry in Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association and economic development of rural Nova Scotia. Jerry was awarded a lifetime membership

Strategic Plan

Lauren Park presented the following report which was prepared by Ben Cornect:

One of the tasks the NSBA board took on over the past year was to revisit our Strategic Plan and work on a plan that addresses the changes in the beekeeping industry today. The last plan was written nearly ten years ago by members of the beekeeping community, Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Industry Development. The objectives of the previous Strat Plan were to focus on bee health, extension programs for beekeepers, encourage new entrants to the industry and increase membership and services provided by the Association. These are all objectives which continue to be ongoing. The board read and researched strategic plans from other provincial associations to see and review how ours lined up. We propose that the Strat Plan be revised to reflect progress made so far and refocus our efforts as an Association to be in line with the growth and ever-changing landscape of the beekeeping industry.

Since the previous plan was written we've seen a lot of change in the demographic of Nova Scotia's beekeepers. The province now has nearly 50% more colonies than ten years ago and a lot younger of a crowd maintaining these colonies. The number of small-scale operations continues to grow year after year.

There have been a few good government programs which have helped grow the industry dramatically, the pollination expansion program being one them. This program provided funding for new and established beekeepers to grow their operations and increased the supply of colonies for pollination of the province's tree fruit and berry crops. It is the hope of the Association that forthcoming government programs will have as beneficial an effect on the industry as this program did and be focused on the sustainability and growth of our industry.

Bee health has always been a priority of the Association and its members. We are lucky to have a very active and engaged Provincial Apiculturist to help the province's beekeepers. Recently, we have been additional bee inspectors trained to help him out. We also have the Atlantic Tech Transfer Team for Apiculture which is back on its second round of funding. They work closely with industry members and help provide education and research to our membership.

Finally, the biggest issue identified in the Strategic Plan was better management and control of Varroa and risk management to minimize the impact of future bee health pests and diseases. Currently, the potential for the establishment of Small Hive Beetle either from the New Brunswick border or from imported pollination colonies from known Small Hive Beetle areas is a top priority. The province now has an import protocol and Small Hive Beetle response plan which are reviewed annually.

With all these changes to the industry, it is the short-term goal of the board to finish the review of the Strategic Plan which adopts the similar goals of increasing the number of bees and beekeepers in the province, develop an adaptive health management program to create a sustainable industry and lobby for program and funding which benefit all members of the beekeeping industry regardless of scale. Please stay tuned for future updates.

The Strategic Plan is available of the NSBA website and I encourage all members to read it.

Treasury Report

Shelly presented the Balance Sheet and Income Statement. There is a loss showing this year because the NSDA owed NSBA at year end. Revenues were good last year with swag sales, queen sales and membership. Where we seem to lag is in events where revenues are less than expenses.

Acknowledging that there has never been a budget, and rarely been a net income, the board has decided to create a budget for 2019. It is the hope that the events (October workshop and AGM) will break even. The board is also looking at sponsorship packages to attempt to gather more sponsors and help with cost.

Another point to note is the Canadian Honey Council has been charging NSBA's annual fee based on the number of hives in the province, not the number of hives registered with NSBA. That issue is being addressed with the Canadian Honey Council to try to have that fee align with NSBA membership.

It was moved by Dave Cameron and seconded by Kevin Spicer to receive the December 31, 2018 financial report as presented. Motion carried.

Resolutions

Alex Crouse presented the resolution submitted by Bobby Bogdanov.

Increasing NSBA Membership- Bobby Bogdanov

Whereas the number of total registered NS beekeepers more than doubled in recent years while at the same time NSBA membership didn't increase accordingly, and whereas the board of the NSBA is looking at encouraging more beekeepers to become members of the NSBA

Be it resolved that NSBA board of directors could incorporate an offer to new members that would provide a free*(*or at reduced cost) non-voting membership for up to 1 year. The free membership is to be offered only with every new BK code issued by the NSDA or to registered beekeepers who have not been members of the NS Beekeeper's Association within the last 5 years. The offer is valid only for beekeepers with no more than 10 hives (*beekeepers with more than 10 hives may be offered membership at reduced cost). Initial enrollment forms are to be sent with the new beekeeper registration and welcome package mailed out by NSDA. Free membership expires on Dec 31st each year, and regular NSBA membership renewal forms are to be emailed to all beekeepers from there on.

It was moved by Peter Kwan moved and seconded by Kathy Saville to bring the resolution to the floor. Motion carried.

- A member asked what the intended discount amount would be. Alex responded that the reduced fee has not been established yet but the intent would be to attract new members.
- It was asked what size beekeepers are generally entering the province. Alex responded that would be majority small beekeepers moving to the province but this option could help attract some bigger producers.
- There was a comment from Shelly regarding the rebate offered to members who took the bee course. Producers would register as a member to get the rebate and then not renew their membership in future year. She is concerned that offering free membership, especially in the first year, will not achieve the goal of this resolution. It was echoed by a fellow member that there is a concern about the amount of money of "left on the table".
- It was asked what the NSBA pays out per member annually which was the HST, the annual membership to Canadian Honey Council. Using rough numbers, it was determined the membership fee essentially covers those costs so allowing new members in without charging a fee would cost NSBA money.

Membership was generally against the idea of giving free or reduced membership fees but it was suggested to reach out to beekeepers who don't registered to see where their reluctance to join is. A recent member suggested working to promote what new members can expect would be beneficial to attracting new members.

Alex called for a vote on the motion as it stands. Motion defeated.

Nominating Committee Report & Elections

Alex presented the report prepared jointly with Mario Swinkles. Alex took a moment to thank the three members leaving the board this year, Michael White, Dave Cameron and Lauren Park.

Nomination proposals from the committee where:

Suzanne Daniels
Kori MacCara
Tyler Hobbs

Alex made three calls for nominations from the floor. No further nominations from the floor were offered.

It was moved by Shelly McDermott and seconded by Jerry Draheim to approve the proposals as presented. Motion carried.

New Business

Lauren Park called for any new business:

Peter Kwan asked if there was interest in the room for a group registration for Apimondia in Montreal. He is willing to organize if there is an interest. Lauren agreed to put a sign-up sheet on the registration table to gather interested parties.

Motion by Shelly McDermott to adjourn at 11:57 am.

Lauren Park, President

Kara Saville, Recording Secretary