

**Minutes**  
**Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association**  
**July 15th, 2021**  
**9:00 am – Noon**

Attendance:

Executive:

Frank Heerkens	President: Eastern
Stephen Needham	First VP : Quinte & District
Ray Bonenberg	Treasurer: Ottawa Valley and District
Jules Rochon	Second VP: Eastern
Brian Bainborough	Past President: Algoma

Directors:

Judy Hughes	Algoma
Michael Levitan	Algonquin & District
Anne Zoeller	Eastern
Bob Snider	Haliburton - Kawartha
Clancey Lavender	Haliburton - Kawartha
Michelle Sage	Grey-Bruce
Nick Bereznick	Grey-Bruce
Leann Thompson	Lanark and District
Randall Goodfellow	Lanark and District
Terry Linton	Quinte & District
Mark Youmans	Quinte & District
Phil Thomas	Waterloo Wellington
Ron Grubb	Waterloo Wellington
Chris Wagler	Waterloo Wellington
Jenny Liu	OMAFRA

John Williams                      Executive Director

Jamie Boles                         Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission

Doug Reddick                      Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission

1. Call to Order, Conflicts of interest, Approval of Agenda, Chair Frank Heerkens at 9:10 due to email issues.

**Motion (2021-07-01)**

**Moved to accept agenda as presented.**

**Moved: Randal Goodfellow   Second: Jules Rochon                      none against**

2. New meeting protocol/moderator review- JW
  - a. John set's agenda with input and serves as meeting moderator
  - b. Goal to keep meetings on time.
  - c. important agenda items near the beginning
  - d. items for decision dealt with early
3. Ontario Farm Product Marketing Commission (OFPMC) presentation - Randal
  - a. Jamie Boles from OFPMC, and Doug Reddick with OFPMC but was with OMAFRA Economic Development section.

- b. Explanation of tools available to commodities who are part of the OFPMC.
- c. This is part of our strategic planning process. Nothing is decided, this is purely an exploration of the options available.
- d. PowerPoint presentation available with board reports.
- e. Jamie stressed how important transparency is with members.
- f. 22 marketing boards and 3 section 12 organizations in Ontario currently.
- g. Farm Products Marketing Commission is not actively recruiting commodity groups. This must be a good fit.
- h. 4 basic types:
  - i. Supply managed: dairy, eggs, chicken, etc.
  - ii. Price Setting
    - 1. set or negotiate price and terms
  - iii. Pooling
    - 1. single desk marketing, helps farmers combat larger processors control of market
  - iv. Promotion, Research & Advocacy
    - 1. can be marketing boards or section 12
- i. Section 12
  - i. Ginseng, Canola and Flowers Canada
  - ii. focus is on marketing, stimulation, education
- j. Marketing Board
  - i. authority from the government and the commission is delegated to the commodity group.
  - ii. can include the ability to set license fees, etc. see page 7 of slide deck.
- k. Designation Process
  - i. 8 steps, lots of work.
  - ii. Expression of Opinion Vote is the most important step. Overseen by the FPMC to ensure a fair process. Only proceed to this when fairly sure of a positive outcome.
- l. Commission Review Criteria
  - i. Cost/benefit to industry and province
  - ii. strategic and operational plan
  - iii. number of producers on side
  - iv. evidence of consultations
- m. Key Considerations
  - i. desired end goals
  - ii. how can these be achieved
  - iii. what framework serves the needs of the industry best
  - iv. do you have producer support
- n. Facts and figures
  - i. need to be very careful when collecting numbers as you can end up with less producers and or fees which can significantly affect your income and plan.
  - ii. Randal noted that Stats Can lists 3000 producers in Ontario, but we only have 600 members. How many are there really? Be careful of your assumptions.
- o. See page 11 of slide deck for application requirements
- p. Jamie noted that the more powers of reg. you are given the longer your list of responsibilities. Things like reporting stats.

- i. also flagged consultation with Amish and Mennonite Communities
- q. Doug Reddick
  - i. a lot of work involved. Some groups successful, some not.
  - ii. Building consensus is very important.
  - iii. FPMC stays neutral but is supportive
- r. Randal stated there is no forgone conclusion to this process. Our goal is to ensure the quality and safety of maple products in Ontario. We are exploring options around this. We may find that none of these options suit our needs.
- s. Randal noted we are not looking at quota. There are boards without quota.
- t. discussion on the exercise of powers on page 7. What signals are you sending if you ask for powers of reg.
  - i. big problem is those who won't pay fees.
    - 1. there is a mechanism to allow collection of fees. Everyone must pay to level the playing field, but you can allow for small producer fees. You can exempt small producers, but if there is a food safety problem with un-regulated producers it affects everyone. Some groups have different classes with different fees. They may not have access to all services
  - ii. Industry advisory committees
    - 1. helps work with the whole sector. Commission encourages this industry wide approach to sector development.
    - 2. What's in it for me and why should I care. Need to think about this from our members perspective.
  - iii. Questions
    - 1. How do you determine the people involved in this process, particularly size?
    - 2. Up to us to determine and present these numbers. Need to supply a list the commission with contact information. Commission is looking to increase access and diversity.
    - 3. Commission members like to hear the nay sayers. What are they saying? Is it valid?
    - 4. What's in it for producers, up to us to determine and communicate that. We are exploring that.
    - 5. Can 20 large producers control the vote? No, you must have a two thirds of producers and half of production. Two thirds of our members are under 1000 taps, but only represent 6% of production.
    - 6. Do the boards receive financial support from the province?
      - a. technically, no.
      - b. The boards can go to the government for support programs. This doesn't flow through the commission on an annual and ongoing basis.
    - 7. Thanks to Jamie and Doug for their time.

#### 4. Approval of the Minutes of Board meeting May 10th, 2021

#### **Motion (2021-07-02)**

**Moved to accept minutes as presented.**

**Moved: Ray Bonenberg Second: Steve Needham none against**

5. Business arising from the minutes:
  - a. Globe and Mail article from Frank. John to distribute after the meeting.
  - b. Mainline, e-letter, and website advertising improvements
    - i. move to a later time, suggest we do this after or as part of strat. planning.
  - c. Action item to communicate strategic planning to members. Frank suggested that a recording of the presentation be circulated along with the Power Point. John to put on Youtube and circulate links.
  - d. all other action items are worked into the agenda.
6. President's Report - see report attached
  - a. Our exec. job to bring ideas to the board to improve the maple industry in Ontario.
  - b. ideas are currently being explored but there is no foregone conclusion. We are gathering data, setting up steering groups and will be pulling in OMSPA members to participate.
  - c. No hidden agenda, no quota. Working on a strategic plan to set up for the next 10 to 15 years.
7. Exec. Director's report
  - a. See attached report with financial report
    - i. hst, we need to look at charging it on our membership fees as we cannot claim ITCs on our operations. We are losing at least \$6K here and more on years with large grants coming in. We need to have a proposal for approval at the October board meeting.
  - b. John just received notification that the Royal Winter Agricultural Fair will not be held in person again this year. Virtual only with the competitions running much the same as last year.
8. Summer Tour
  - a. Quinte working on 2022
    - i. tentatively scheduled for July 13 to 15 in Belleville
    - ii. Hotel is available. Will be hosted out of Steve Needham's sugar bush
    - iii. Nick Bereznick offered help as they hosted the last one.
    - iv. Steve Needham asked for the manual. John offered it. Jules also mentioned the report done on job responsibilities
  - b. Lanark and District as host for 2023.
    - i. Years already allocated as follows:
      1. Quinte 2022
      2. Algonquin 2023
      3. Eastern 2024
      4. Southwestern 2025
      5. North American (Algoma) 2026
      6. Waterloo-Wellington 2027
      7. Haliburton-Kawartha 2028
      8. Simcoe and District 2029
      9. Algoma 2030

**Motion (2021-07-03)**

**Moved that Lanark & District requests to host the 2023 Summer Tour and Conference.**

**Moved: Randal Goodfellow Second: Leann Thompson deferred to October meeting**

Explanation by Randal: Lanark and District was to hold the tour in 2020 but it was delayed until 2021 by COVID. When that was likely to be cancelled the organizing committee had been at it since 2018 and decided to pull out. The committee did not want to continue and disbanded. There were questions about carrying on with the summer tour format. Since then, Dave and Wendy Branson, have stepped forward with interest. Wendy is a professional conference organizer. Lanark and District does have a large and knowledgeable membership base.

Frank asked if Algonquin would consider pushing back. Michael Levitan will check with the committee and report back.

Steve Needham asked when Quinte can make the call to cancel. Randal stated that OMSPA would not allow an early cancellation in Lanark and District's case and they incurred costs of up \$1900 for cancelling later. We need to hear back from the Algonquin committee if they would be willing to push back a year. Motion is deferred to the October board meeting for a final decision.

9. AGM planning - John

- a. standard agenda as for last year. Except:
  - i. no election
  - ii. amendments Constitution and by-laws to be added
  - iii. set time as 9 to 10 am
- b. Steve and Ray already working on the year in review to be done by the first vice and Ray is working on the president's message with Frank

10. RTTC (2:14 on the recording) - Phil Thomas

- a. see report attached
- b. request for help from locals and individuals with donations as seed money is needed for the next step.
- c. Producer training survey almost ready. Part of working with Algonquin College on Maple training. See note in report. Also, reaching out to UVM and Cornell. Note that Frank has donated use of his bush for the work with Algonquin.
- d. Nick Bereznick, as a member of RTTC, asked for more samples and input for the damaged tubing study.

11. Events Working Group - Leann Thompson

- a. Met recently to approve the logo for FILM, also banner, brochure, ad layout, etc.
- b. Website work underway with Brent Eades, Amy Hogue, Leann and John providing input.
- c. Profiles for participants are coming in. About 25 participants confirmed but more still to come in.
- d. Deadline of mid August for decision to go ahead for public health reasons.
- e. Deadline for new participants to commit the end of June, but will take a few last minute sign ups into early August.

12. NAMSC - Brian Bainborough

- a. International meeting still to be held in Niagara Falls in October, in person
- b. Working with a consultant on a new structure for NAMSC. Purpose is to open up the structure and move away from being an old boys club. Some of the work will be presented at a meeting in September with a full presentation of the proposed changes to the NAMSC board in October.
- c. Buddy Sap funding request has gone into the second round of review.
- d. Brian feels there will be change in the organization.

- e. OMSPA will likely have to pay our fees in USD at the USD rate instead of calculating in CDN then converting to USD for 2022.

### 13. IMSI - Ray Bonenberg

- a. See report
- b. lots of work at committee and board levels.
- c. Looking at sustainable funding
- d. working on the SOI (Standard of Identity) for maple
- e. Ray planning to attend the international meeting in Niagara but waiting to see how border restrictions will play out.
- f. This will be the last time the IMSI joins with NAMSC for their AGM. In 2022 the IMSI will hold their meeting in June, in Burlington Vermont. Shortened to a one and a half day meeting on a much smaller scale. The executive will attend the NAMSC meetings in the fall. Meetings will stay centrally located to allow easier travel for the majority of participants.

### 14. QA - Brian Bainborough

- a. TSSA: Zoom call held in June with OMSPA members regarding the end of the Agricultural Exemption for Steam. Process for registering explained well. All members with pressure vessels (boilers and steam generators) must register their equipment online by the end of September. Inspections will be prioritized by risk at that time. They have committed to working with our yearly cycle so that they don't show up March 15th to do an inspection.
- b. TSSA is taking a very cooperative approach. Willing to work with members through this process. Note that an RO is not considered a pressure vessel. Have members call Brian if they have any questions.
- c. Still on hold for BPM rework until our current grass roots for strategic planning is approved.
- d. Judging workshops on hold until we begin to open up from COVID 19 but several locals have expressed interest in holding them, potentially this fall.

### 15. M & P - Steve Needham

- a. Bob Snider is working on new paper bags for the store. There will be a survey for members so we can access needs. This will be advertised in the e-letter and Mainline.
- b. Breakfast from the Farm is proceeding at Carp with Farm and Food Care. Next one in Lindsay. The last one will be held in the fall in London. Custom 250ml plastic jugs have been donated by AMPAK for this event and will be filled by local producers for each event.
- c. The Royal has been cancelled again this year, but will be held virtually with the competitions running as per last year.
- d. Store is working away. Shirts just came in.
- e. Labeling webinar was organized by John. Lots of good information, input and discussion particularly on the new Nutrition Fact Table format.

### 16. Grant Funding - John, Brian

- a. CAP, first portion wrapped up. We received the money from the first half the other day. An amendment has been made to the agreement to allow us to do another update of protocols and information for FILM. The first round was focused on Maple Weekend and spring sales at sugaring operations. The Fall Mainline deadline has been moved up by two weeks (July 30th) to allow the CAP information to get out with the Mainline in late August. This will help our FILM participants. It will also allow us to cover part of the cost of the Mainline under CAP. This is 50/50 funding, but

Brian pointed out it is more like 42/58 because we can't claim the HST- ITCs with our current HST setup.

- b. Randal mentioned we need to provide feedback on the next round of CAP. Add to action items.

#### 17. Communications - Web

- a. See report.
- b. Work on ontariomape.com is ongoing. Working to merge Maple Weekend with it. FILM will also be hosted here.
- c. Stats on websites and social media reported. See graphs. Will work on improving this reporting going forward. Full page locals generally got more traffic than those with simple local pages.

#### 18. Production Survey

- a. first batch of surveys have been sent to Angela Wheeler for processing with the final group to follow shortly. Looks like a good response this year, around 140 so far. Planning to publish the results in the next Mainline.

#### 19. Other Business

- a. Nick Bereznick spoke about the Best Practices Manual (BPM) and how it is to be reviewed and updated regularly. He feels this hasn't been happening and the relevance of this document is fading. The cost in effort from OMSPA members and OMAFRA staff to get this started was significant. Brian answered that yes, there are two chapters ready to go pending a review of the structure of the BPM, but everything is on hold as we wait for a funding decision on our large grassroots grant. Once that comes we will ask for funds for reworking the BPM.
- b. Nick suggested we should keep it going instead of putting it on hold. Brian and Frank stated it is not dead but we are at a turning point. Nick stressed it's importance once again and Frank asked it be an action item for the next board meeting.
- c. Ray suggested moving the next meeting. October 7th suggested and accepted. John stated he needs to attend the meeting virtually.

#### 20. Motion to adjourn by Michael Levitan at 12:03 pm

#### Action Items:

1. HST on membership proposal for next board meeting by finance group
2. Mainline, e-letter, website advertising improvements - John, Frank, Ray, Jules
3. John to send Summer Tour manual to Quinte
4. Fundraising sap bucket in Mainline and e-letter to show how much has been raised for the buddy sap project.
5. CAP input to OMAFRA
6. BPM updates/rework to be discussed and direction decided.

