

**Minutes**  
**Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association**  
**June 8th, 2020**  
**Phone Conference Call**  
**9:30 am – 11:30 am**  
By Zoom  
meeting id 947 5152 3081  
pw: 952465  
telephone call in #: 647-374-4685  
call in at 9:20

Attendance:

Executive:

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

Directors:

Judy Hughes	Algoma
Michael Levitan	Algonquin and District
Dave Matthews	Algonquin and District
Jules Rochon	Eastern
Randal Goodfellow	Lanark and District
Clancey Lavender	Haliburton - Kawartha
Bob Snider	Haliburton - Kawartha
Gail Cranston	Grey-Bruce
Michelle Sage	Grey-Bruce
Bob Gray	Grey-Bruce
Peter Lorrigan	Simcoe and District
Bill Vandenberg	Southwest
Phil Thomas	Waterloo Wellington
Ron Grubb	Waterloo Wellington

John Williams	Executive Director
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1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda

**Motion (2020-06-01)**

**Moved to accept agenda.**

**Moved:Ray Bonenberg      Second: Frank Heerkens      Carried**

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
  - a. none
4. Code of Conduct and Robert's Rules
5. Minutes of Board meeting Feb 11 (need seconder and vote) and May 11, 2020

**Motion (2020-06-02)**

**Moved to accept Feb. 11th minutes**

**Moved: Ray Bonenberg      Second: Jules Rochon      Carried**

**Motion (2020-06-03)**

**Moved to accept May 11th minutes**

**Moved: Judy Hughes**

**Second: Randall Goodfellow**

**Carried**

**Business arising from the minutes**

Steve reached out to members with pancake houses. All see a major revenue loss.

Want us to focus on government lobbying. Many are using ecommerce. Shipping is an issue for some. Encouraged us to push people to keep prices up. Spoke about sharing revenue numbers, some willing to some not.

Frank spoke to Eastern. Losses of 80 to 90% of income. Up to \$40 K of inventory loss. Other large expense is maintaining facilities till next year. Brian had similar conversations. Open for one week. Ray suggested we continue to monitor. John noted that we have asked questions in the Production Survey. Randal asked if there could be a working group that could lobby. Steve suggested we see what comes out of the production survey. Randal suggested we need to come with a solution, not just state we have a problem. Ray will check with what is happening with Quebec. Coalition with Quebec to seek help? Keep this on as an action item for next meeting.

Jules to work with John on the boundaries of responsibilities of the Summer Tour. Move forward

Translation quote for the recipe book, \$2150 is total. Translation is \$650, the rest is to rework the layout. M&P will work with them. Will need to be considered in the budget for 2021

Advertising to carry forward with Ray and John.

IPM postponed. carry forward.

Directors manual needs to be carried forward. Frank has done some research that leads towards Rhonda. John will contact her to see if she remembers where the files are.

T-shirts under way, need to get design done. Carry forward.

Ray working on MOU with the Alphabet book, one modification to make. carry forward.

Website set up for locals are starting. \$275 the first year and includes 3 hrs of Jennie's time.

Going forward it's \$75/yr. plus whatever time you need from Jennie. Jules is working away on Eastern's. Steve N. asked if Quinte can't get a volunteer if Jennie could do it. John said yes she can at \$50/hour, but you still need to have someone feed her content. Jules is working on a classified section for Eastern.

Discussion with Frank and John on shipping, carry forward. Frank still working on possibility of a better deal with UPS. Right now Flagship offers UPS rate at the same as offered. Other couriers on this platform are up to 20% cheaper on Flagship (Canpar, Purolator, Dicom)

## 6. President's Report

See Brian's report

Discussion on web security and the Taste Maple website by Louise Street Marketing. Brian explained how we had a call on the previous Friday. Good, calm discussion. They seem to realize we are not happy with what they did. Claimed they did not scrape our membership list off the site, but used manual copying. There was no financial loss by us, so we probably don't have a case for a lawsuit. Randal asked for clarification of their intentions. Brian said, they like maple and saw an opportunity to help small producers with e-commerce and make a bit of money. The executive spent a lot of time on this issue. Jules' expertise in internet security was very helpful. Randal asked if the company was Digital Acorn by Peter Shannon. John said no, but that many of our members were contacted by him. Frank asked if Taste Maple had a setup fee or if it was just \$30 per month. John stated we were told just \$30/month. Brian stated we need to wait and see whether we will get the CAP grant and what our options are before we start making recommendations to our members. Randal suggested if we set up our own e-commerce site we need to get some funds out of it to keep the org. going. Steve said it would be nice for us to keep control over any site that is developed. Randal enquired if we have quorum issues with doing an AGM over Zoom. Brian doesn't believe so, but will check the constitution. Many other organizations are doing Zoom AGMs. Randal asked if there is a nominations committee for executive positions. We usually have the past president do this. We will carry out all the normal functions of an AGM but are still working on the details.

## 7. Executive Directors Report

a. see report

## 8. Ecommerce Update

a. see report

b. Steve asked if anyone has heard back on the grants. No one has heard other than confirmation that their applications have been received.

## 9. COVID Response: Social media program and CAP funding application

a. Amy posting several times a week to promote Sweet Ontario. \$10K has been committed to this program. The next step is the CAP, Stream 2 funding application. We have applied for \$45K in funding to, among other things, redevelop our ontariomaple.com website to help with e-commerce. The 10K we have already committed to Amy's work would roll into this project if approved. We have tried to find out what the likely time line is for approval, but haven't been able to find out.

## 10. Financial - John

a. see report

11. Maple Weekend - see report from Leann
12. Grant Update - John/Leann
  - a. Canadian Experience Fund/Maple Weekend
  - b. RED Grant
  - c. OMAFRA - discussions for next grant - Ray
  - d. see report
13. Current Issues:
  - a. AGM info.

Will be using a registration system for the AGM Zoom meeting. Randal enquired about nominations and quorum.

#### 14. NAMSC/IMSI - Brian/Ray

##### NAMSC

Brian commented on how active the education committee under Missy Lieb is. There is a call coming up with this committee.

Very little comment from them on COVID, Brian feels they should be doing more. Brian has reached out to Joe Polak and he agrees with some of Brian's comments but no action yet.

Membership fees and Maple Digest subscriptions have been paid.

##### IMSI

See report. Concerns about IMSI not committing to the international meeting in 2022. Ray stated they only started meeting together 19 years ago. The membership of the IMSI involves packers, manufacturers and producers. Many of them don't have the time to committee to the large, long international meetings. Too expensive and too much time. Board really wants a new model more focused on their needs.

Largest crop in history in Quebec. 175 million lb. \$2.2 million committed to international marketing at the Canadian round table (Canadian Industry Advisory Council, 4 provinces and the federal government) over the next two year: Countries targeted are Germany, UK, India (not going well), Korea, China and Japan. No such body in the states, but IMSI tries to fill in. Lots of letters of support going out for funding around COVID and research funding. The E.D. Jean Lamontagne has been busy doing support letters for us (CAP) and other provincial and state groups. There are asks for letters to support research projects too.

Randal asked if there has been any discussion around dumping of Quebec syrup into Ontario. Noted he has seen 500 ml at \$6 in grocery stores. Ray noted it's a free market. The CIE complains that their margins are being squeezed to \$0.07 per item. Competition in Quebec is fierce. Steve asked if there has been any problem with COVID in the packing plants.as there seems to be a lack of shipping from some of the packers. Ray said yes, they have been having trouble keeping employees on, short staffed.

Ray commented there isn't as much syrup moving into the US as they have had a large crop. Manufacturers are busy but having staffing problems too.

#### 15. Summer Tour update

Lanark and District, Randal states they have been able to roll everything back to 2021. Change on the committee as Sarah Gibbons is no longer a producer and won't be serving as treasurer of the group. They have found a replacement.

Quite cancelled their venue, but will look to rebook that shortly. They were concerned about booking too far out as the staff and banner of the facility seem to change regularly.

Algonquin, is doing research on the best location and will look to book later.

Money from Grey Bruce has been received.

#### 16. Change of RTTC chair to Phil Thomas

##### **Motion (2020-06-04)**

##### **Motion for Phil Thomas to take over as chair of RRTC.**

**Moved: Bob Gray Second: Brian Bainborough Unanimous**

Phil agreed to take over.

Bob has chaired for about 10 years and has now taken on a large roll in another organization

#### 17. Foodland Report

See report. Brian commented that Local Food week really helps push Local. He had a large order recently related to that. John will send Brittany Stagers presentation notes out.

#### 18. Committee Reports

##### a. Marketing and Promotion - Steve

See report. Steve is looking at a zoom meeting for producers to exchange information on marketing and sourcing. One of the eastern commodity groups is using this.

##### b. Communications/Website - Ray

See report. Randal asked if the tapping portion of the video would be available for a workshop in the fall. Ray will check.

##### c. Membership - Frank - See report

##### d. Research and Tech Transfer - Bob - See report

##### e. Quality Assurance - Brian - see report

##### f. Governance - Jules -

##### i. Condolences card is complete, Jules will help out with the local/OMSPA

Summer Tour responsibility breakdown

#### 17. New Business

18. Adjourn - Next Meeting: Executive will set a time and date. Likely, the day before the AGM. Motion by Ray to adjourn.

Action items:

- i. Pancake House working group. What solutions do we want to put forth. Can we work with Quebec.
- ii. Jules to work with John on policy about what OMSPA's role in the Summer Tour is.
- iii. Eastern to get a quote on the price of translating the Recipe book into French.  
Work on this will carry on.
- iv. John has done some initial investigation of more ads. This will be carried forward in committee work with Communications.
- v. Ray to continue work on an MOU for the alphabet book.
- vi. Jules to prepare new materials for Directors binders. John will check with Rhonda for further information
- vii. John to continue work on promo t-shirts for the store.
- viii. Frank and John to follow up on shipping discounts. Is a further discount from UPS possible. Right now Flagship is a better bet.