

New River Valley Bee Keepers' Association

Minutes for Nov 13th 2014

The meeting began with a very informative talk by Andrew Trent, post approval monitoring officer for Virginia Tech's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and a bear researcher who spoke about bear behavior and ways to help prevent apiary damage.

Following the break Richard Reid began the business meeting.

Last month an audit committee was formed comprised of Glenn Buss, Mark Priest, and Richard Reid. They met with the treasurer Jack Price and looked at eleven bank transactions chosen at random to follow the paper trail. They also chose five large transactions such as bee package purchase. In all cases paperwork was found to be present and accurate. The committee signed off the books as being accurate and truthful. The report is available for view if any one wants to see it.

Last meeting a nominating committee was also formed, Carl Lefko, Tim Service, and Mark Chorba. They were charged with getting nominations for board officers, so that elections could be held today. However, no committee member was present at tonight's meeting, so current officers were asked if they would consider staying on. Richard Reid has another year to serve as President, Jim Hill has another year to serve as Vice President, Sue Hossack agreed to stay on as secretary. Jack Price volunteered to continue as Treasurer.

Tom Simpkins proposed the motion that officers will stay as they stand. Seconded by Tonia Moxley. Motion carried.

Richard Reid announced that Program Director Tonia Moxley is stepping down after 2 years. She has done a great job of finding excellent speakers, and has a list of possible speakers for the future. This is not an elected position, but a committee is recommended per our bylaws. Tonia mentioned that it helps to have a director of each committee to act as the point person.

Also per the bylaws, there should be an Education and Outreach Committee, and an Entertainment Committee. The Education and Outreach Committee is mostly served by Jerry Borger as he runs the training sessions for new members, but someone is also needed to provide speakers and advertising materials when we are asked to events such as the Shawsville Garden Fair in the spring or provide education to schools. The Entertainment committee runs the picnic and ensures refreshments are available at the monthly meetings. Jake Price volunteered for this committee and will undertake to get others involved.

Volunteers are asked to consider serving on these committee, A request will be put on Thehive by Sue Hossack asking for volunteers for these programs.,

Clem Von Claparede reported that he has the Floyd County extractor which is normally kept by Mark Chorba and it is clean and ready to go.

Jerry reported that the Library talks have been scheduled over three Saturdays in January, with two volunteers at each to give talks and answer questions. Jerry will send data to Sue Hossack to update web page. Jerry will coordinate computers, materials etc. He also reported that the beginners' class has a room reserved and speakers set up. Dr Fell has requested that he still be involved. They are being held the first Saturday in February, and the second Saturday in April. There will be advertising in newspapers.

Richard Reid reiterated that the membership agreed to 175 packages of bees – Mark Chorba to manage

Storage Unit: We have a small storage unit in Christiansburg. It contains refreshment items, observation and teaching hives, supplies for raffle, and the Montgomery County extractor all of which takes up room. Plus there are three large tents, two of which have been used at picnics. The Association is purchasing a number of pieces of equipment from Charlie Elgin including a hand-cranked extractor, but there is not enough room in storage to keep them. If the tents were removed there will be space for Charlie's equipment. The question was raised do we need the tents? Richard Reid made a motion to sell the tents and purchase a smaller one, Tonia Moxley seconded. Jack Price reported that two of the tents were donated from his West Point organization. They are not in good condition, having holes, and missing supports. The third tent is a good quality tent worth at least \$200. It was originally donated by Arnold Rampey. It has only been used 2-3 times. It is approximately 10'X20' which is too big for most events Jack Price volunteered to remove the two old ones. Luke McCoy recommended that we sell the big one and buy a smaller one around 10'X10'. Jerry Borger pointed out that for some events such as Shawsville even that would be too big. It was finally decided that Richard would check with Arnold to see if he wants it back – if not it would be put on the hive to see if anyone wants it for \$150.

Richard Reid then retracted the original motion The motion to buy a 10'x10' tent was tabled until later.

Jerry Borger reported that Mark Chorba did a huge amount of work for bug fest, The NRVBA was the center piece. Dr Fell led a waggle dance – lots of opportunity to talk about bees and give out bookmarks. It was a very successful event.

Jerry Borger reported that he needs to order more books for the Beginners course and for new members. He will propose a number to treasurer. He will determine how many are left and how many are needed. The January class is limited to fifty – but families share. “First Lessons in Bee Keeping” is given to new members. There are approx 21 left of Merrick, none of others left. Also, Brushy Mountain offers free shipping between Thanksgiving and Christmas; if he can buy bulk raffle items then he can save on shipping. Jerry will ask on theHive if there is anything people want him to get. There is also Charlie Elgin’s equipment which can be used for raffle items or offered for sale. For example there is a lot of foundation.

There was a question posted on theHive about whether all equipment being sold needs to be inspected? Richard Reid has emailed Brian Kreowski for the VDACS policy – Richard thought it is only if drawn comb is present does it need to be inspected. Tonia Moxley agreed that empty boxes do not need to be inspected.

How are the bees doing? It has been a bad fall with little nectar, and rain washed out nectar. Most people report feeding large amounts of sugar syrup. Richard Reid left his production hives with honey on, since they had way more than needed from spring flow. A question was asked ‘How much honey does a colony need to get through winter?’ For example a hive with two deeps - needs 40-50 lbs. Since it has warmed up, the bees are active but are consuming stores because there is no nectar. Jim Hill reported that his nucs are not putting on honey, despite feeding a quart of syrup every two days. They also haven’t been drawing out comb. Nectar flow here is in spring, once that over, there may not be much else. Fred Jones noted that he had been out of the country until mid September; on his return he found all his colonies empty, even though he left supers of honey in July.

Richard Reid lost bees from three nucs which were starting to starve, he restocked with bees. What’s should be done next to prepare for winter? Stop feeding as bees won’t take cold syrup. Bill Wallace recommended the following recipe: 5 lb sugar plus 7.5 oz water plus 2 tsp honeyBhealthy. Put in pyrex dish Score in blocks 5” x5”x2: Dry out in oven. Place on hive top feeder, or on top of frames. If cluster is at top of hive, bees will cluster on sugar blocks. On mild days hives can be checked. Fondant from Brush Mountain, and fondant boards can be used. A fondant board is like a top cover but is 2” deep, 1/2” hardware cloth across base to hold in fondant, let it harden, then turn over and place over bees which can then cluster on the fondant, since they can get through 1/2” cloth. You can also use wet newspaper, add sugar, spray with water.

Jerry Borger reported he does three things:

1. Wrap hives with cheap black landscape cloth; because this is dark it absorbs heat. It is not insulating. If the hive warms up bees will break cluster and move to food.
2. Using $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $\frac{3}{4}$ " spacer shims, places granulated sugar on newspaper over frames, not all the way to edge so bees can get to it.
3. He places a hive top feeder away from hives, fills with gravel, and 1.5 : 1 syrup, When it is over 43°, bees will feed on it. It is not close enough to start robbing. (commercial bee keepers will do this in ditch near bee yard)

Submitted by Sue Hossack

NRVBA Secretary