Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee

Minutes

February 10, 2016

The meeting was called to order by chair John Mehling at 8:09 am. The meeting was held at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center in Billings, Montana.

**Public Comment -** Roger Bruckner with USDA gave an update on crop insurance available for alfalfa seed now in 5 counties in Montana. The producer must have 4 years of records to be insurable.

**Approve Agenda -** Cavin Steiger moved to approve the agenda, Ernie Johnson seconded. Motion passed.

**Introductions -** were given around the table. Those in attendance:

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| John Mehling – Chair  | Roger Bruckner – USDA RMA Insurance |
| Ernest Johnson – Committee member | Christy Clark – Montana Department of Agriculture |
| Dallas Steiger – Committee member | Treston Vermandel – Montana Department of Agriculture |
| Cavin Steiger – Committee member | Cam Lay – Montana Department of Agriculture |
| Tom Niebur – Committee member |  Jana Mertens – Montana Department of Agriculture |
| Tom Matchett – Committee member |  |

Absent: Tim Wetstein

**Minutes-** Christy Clark presented the minutes from the last meeting. Tom Niebur moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ernie Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Financial Report -** Christy Clark presented the financial report. Discussion about the assessment dollars followed with the committee anticipating more assessment dollars in FY17 possibly up 30 to $35,000. The national dues for NAFA are billed at a percentage of the assessment dollars. Ernie Johnson explained the benefits of belonging to NAFA and the Washington D C Fly-In. Cavin Steiger moved to accept the financial report. Ernie Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed. Ernie Johnson moved to pay the NAFA dues based on the bill at a cap of $5,500.00 without committee approval. Dallas Steiger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Old Business –** A thank you letter from Lorri Brenneman was read. There was a lengthy discussion concerning the assessment on leaf cutter bees that is under administration by the Department of Livestock. The board measurement is out of date and bees are measured now by gallons. Cavin Steiger moved to have Christy Clark and the department change the assessment oversight from the Department of Livestock to the Department of Agriculture, with the quantity of bees to be based on gallons and the assessment payment due on July 1. Tom Neibur seconded the motion. Motion passed.

9:40 a.m. Tom Matchett arrived at the meeting.

Cam Lay presented his request for the Alfalfa leaf cutter bee registration and analysis program. The committee asked about funding sources for new equipment and if there were funds being set aside for new equipment. A possible source for additional funds could be through NAFA, Cam will follow up with Ernie Johnson our board member. Ernie Johnson moved to fund Cam Lay’s request at the amended amount of $12,500.00. Tom Neiber seconded the motion. Motion passed. Ernie Johnson amended the motion to $12,518.00. Motion passed as amended.

Cavin Steiger asked Cam Lay to research the possibility of making all alfalfa leaf cutter bee analysis programs across state lines compatible.

Ernie Johnson moved to fund the NASS proposal at $4,100.00. Tom Matchett seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Ernie Johnson moved to fund the proposal from Dr. Gadi Reddy at $30,000.00. There was a call for a second, seeing none the motion failed.

**Other Business –** Dallas Steiger moved to have Ernie Johnson represent the committee at the Western Alfalfa Seed Growers and allow up to $1,000.00 for expenses. Cavin Steiger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Cavin Steiger moved to set aside $5,000.00 to fund future costs of leaf cutter bee lab expenses. Tom Neiber seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Election of Officers –** Cavin Steiger moved to elect the present slate of officers for another year. Dallas Steiger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Public Comment –** Cam Lay wanted the committee to be aware that the Department would not be allowed to voice support for or against any legislation for the leaf cutter bee assessment. The support of the legislation would come from the governor’s office.

**Adjourn –** Cavin Steiger moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 a.m. Tom Neibur seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:

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Christy Clark, Bureau Chief Date

Approved by:

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Ron de Yong, Director Date