

The MAA Board of Directors convened via conference call on February 7, 2010 via tollfreeconferencecall.com, beginning at approximately 2:02 PM. The call was recorded.

All members of the Board were present: Dawn Brooker, Pam Drew, Pat Houde, Jill McElderry-Maxwell and Ginny Rebar

### **Board Administration Issues**

- 1) First order of business was selecting the Board officers. Although the BOD intends to work as a group, the following officer positions were determined:
  - President – Dawn Brooker
  - Vice President – Ginny Rebar
  - Treasurer – Pam Drew
  - Secretary – Jill McElderry-Maxwell
  - Director – Pat Houde
- 2) It was agreed that Robert's Rules of Order would be followed for member meeting protocol in order to ensure that vote results, etc. would be clear.
- 3) At this time, updates to the MAA website will be conveyed to Al Maloney primarily through Dawn Brooker. Of primary interest is updating the time and place of the next members meeting, as well as BOD meetings. The BOD also decided that posting BOD minutes, as well as members meeting minutes, would be a positive move. In addition, minutes may be sent out to the membership via the Yahoo! group.
- 4) We will determine the dates for the remainder of the year's meetings at the transition meeting with the old BOD members on 2/28. This will assist in planning meeting speakers, etc. Ginny Rebar will find out the dates of this year's agricultural fairs, Jill Mc-M will compile a list of upcoming show dates prior to the transition meeting.
- 5) The contact person for MAA as listed on the website will continue to be Pam Drew, and we will ask Al Maloney to sync up the various contact forms so that she receives the communications.
- 6) Pam Drew will also be responsible for maintaining the database of new leads that come in to the website, and for distribution of same to members.
- 7) Jill Mc-M will work up a welcome letter for new members that will highlight past accomplishments of MAA, present goals and member benefits. This material may be incorporated into the new website design.
- 8) Pat Houde will be responsible for communication to the membership through the Yahoo! group. The current BOD will make an effort to communicate more frequently and informally with the membership through the Yahoo! group.

- 9) It was voted to put Dawn Brooker on the approved users list for the MAA checking account and to have a debit card issued in her name. Pam Drew will also have access to the account and a debit card.
- 10) Recognition of Raini Perry's contribution to MAA was noted and will be acknowledged at the next members meeting.

### **Committee Topics**

- 1) Current committee membership was discussed and liaisons to the BOD were selected as follows:

Education – Dawn Brooker

Fundraising – Pat Houde

Marketing – Ginny Rebar

Website (subcommittee of Marketing Committee) – Jill Mc-M

Membership – Pam Drew

Marketing chair position is open, and Pam Harwood will be approached.

Membership chair position is open, Pam Drew will be a member but cannot chair due to being on the board.

Education chair position is open, future chair is unclear. Current members of the committee will be approached.

Marcia McDonald apparently is willing to continue as Fundraising chair, Pat Houde should confirm this with her.

It was decided that the website project should be budgeted under the Marketing Committee, but given the workload involved, it was determined that a designated subcommittee should be formed. The chair position for this subcommittee is open, Jill Mc-M will be a member of the committee.

Dawn Brooker mentioned the possibility of a future need for a Veterinary Education committee to investigate holding veterinary/medical seminars for Maine vets and owners.

- 2) An email will be sent to the MAA membership asking those who signed up to volunteer at the members meeting to confirm their interest, and asking for volunteers from those who were not able to attend the meeting.
- 3) Timing of the membership drive versus updating the website was discussed. It was decided that coming up with a plan for the new website should begin immediately. Pam Drew will continue pursuing members who have yet to renew, or whose memberships

have recently expired; actively pursuing those who left earlier may wait until after the website redesign is further along.

### **MAA Goals and Ongoing Projects**

- 1) Revitalization of the Yahoo! group was discussed. Can we start topics as a board to encourage ongoing discussions? We will update the rules reminder so that no one will think that the reminders are directed at them.
- 2) The MAA newsletter was also discussed. The feeling of the BOD was that publication needs to be more regular, even if the size of the newsletter is reduced. Regular publication of the newsletter reflects well on MAA, and also serves as a vehicle for attracting and maintaining new leads. Ideas included the newsletter containing only a single feature article, perhaps a message from the board, a list of upcoming dates, and possibly a Q&A session with the featured "Snapshot" farm and/or publication on a quarterly schedule. Pam Harwood currently heads the newsletter, and she will be approached at the transition meeting to see if she will continue helming the publication.
- 3) It was discussed that the MAA leads need to be used more to promote MAA and MAA activities. The possibility of tiered pricing (member vs. non-member) for MAA events was brought up. Promoting MAA through the leads should be proactive.
- 4) Bulk buying of goods was discussed, and the concept, while attractive, was thought to be unwieldy given the huge geographic area encompassed by the organization. Another alternative that will be investigated is the possibility of local/regional/state companies offering discounts to MAA members.
- 5) Possible fundraising events were discussed, including:
  - a. A raffle
  - b. A craftspersons event/competition
  - c. A sales booth in the Waterville hospital lobby (Raini Perry will lead this if the organization is interested)
  - d. Organizing an event in conjunction with a charitable organization
  - e. Fees for event listings on the new website, e.g., to list on farm seminars that are for profit, pen sales, etc.
  - f. Fashion show
- 6) It is felt that the MAA display booth for events needs updating. The booth items have been worn by handling, the banner is small, and the map is difficult to maintain and display. One idea that was discussed was changing to a display that incorporates a map as well as promotional materials from all member farms, either brochures or business cards. ABOV and Maine FiberArts both have displays of this type and we will look into the possibility of designing something similar for MAA. There is also a need for new items to display at the booth, as well as for suri items.

## **New England Livestock Exposition Participation**

- 1) It was discussed that a clear distinction needs to be made between MAA's organizational participation versus individual breeders. MAA may choose to participate at one level, and individual members at another level.
- 2) There was substantial discussion of the event at the last members meeting, at which time Don Scipione volunteered to seek more information from Cindy Kilgore regarding the options available to us. This information has been posted to the Yahoo! group; however, the BOD feels that a more formal posting requesting member feedback will be necessary. The decision was made to both request feedback through the Yahoo! group as well as through a SurveyMonkey survey, which Jill Mc-M will set up.
- 3) In the event that the members decide to pursue a MAA presence beyond a booth at NELE, such as a group pen sale, shearing demonstration or other event, Don Scipione has volunteered to serve as a liaison with the NELE group.
- 4) In the event that MAA does not have a presence beyond a booth at NELE, it needs to be made clear to the membership that individual breeders/craftspersons are welcome to participate more fully with their own individual booths/pens/consignments to the auction, etc.

The conference call was concluded at approximately 5:00 PM.