



MINUTES

Monthly MVG Meeting
Thursday- August 13, 2009
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
T B G

- 2009 -
Board of Directors

Dick Bostdorff
 (President)
 (*Gov. Relations)
 2010

Jeff Creque
 (Business)
 2011

Bill Dearing
 (*Membership)
 2010

Bob Dennis
 (Business)
 2010

Beth Fausey
 (*Education)
 (Membership)
 2011

Diane Hill
 (Treasurer)
 (*Finance)
 2009

Theresa Hoen
 (Secretary)
 (Marketing)
 (Membership)
 2011

Tony Keil
 (Marketing)
 2009

Walt Krueger
 (President Elect)
 (Programs)
 2011

Kirk Mizerek
 (Finance)
 (Programs)
 2010

Neil Reid
 (*Gov. Relations)
 (Finance)
 2011

Tom Wardell
 (*Marketing)
 2009

Kathy Wenz
 (Membership)
 2009

Terms Expire End of Year
 Indicated

(* Denotes Chairman)

Beth Fausey called the meeting to order at 8:03 am

Attendance (24)

Beth Fausey, Joe Perlaky, Dick Bostdorff, Tom Wardell, Serenity Carr, Kirk Mizerek, Neil Reid, Walt Krueger, Scott Leisner, Mike Schenk, Bill Dearing, George Dabrunz, Somik Ghose, James Locke, Deb Bettinger, Sandy Knitz, Wade Smith, John Thomas, Jake Coracia, Charles Krause, Diane Hill, Josh Miller, Bill Stuntevant, & Angie Jones.

President – Dick summarized on several activities that are ongoing. He reported we will be including a list of our members in our new catalog with possibly a list of their specialty products. Bill Dearing and Wade Smith will be meeting shortly after the meeting to discuss “next steps” for the Membership Committee. The Annual Meeting will be on September 17th from 6-9 pm at TBG. Preliminary work is being done on fall advertising and budgets. Neil stated that money is available for MVG to operate another year. Additional grant possibilities are being explored.

Committee Reports:

- Business- Walt stated the Business Committee has been very busy “fine-tuning the natural gas program. The Committee wants to explore and develop other opportunities such as the electricity program. The Natural Gas Advisory Committee has their next conference call on Friday 8-21-09. All members of the program will be given minutes of each Advisory Group conference call on a monthly basis. There was also a request to include the full list of members in the next mailing.
- Energy – Kirk reported MVG purchased more natural gas recently bringing our totals to 40-43% hedged. Prices have stabilized.

There are legislative discussions ongoing in Columbus which may require gas usage volume thresholds to be increased from 2,000 to 15,000 per year to qualify for a “Transport” classification. This is being driven by Columbia Gas which would prefer nearly all of our growers to be included in their “Choice” program which is approximately a \$1/unit more costly. MVG has been working closely with Dale Arnold of the Farm Bureau in Columbus to insure that this change does not occur. We have been asked to give testimony in the next week or so to explain why this change is so detrimental to our industry.

Next week there will be a separate mailing to both current and potential gas/electric members.

- Electricity - Kirk stated about a dozen growers have signed up for the electricity program. They receive 5 ½ percent discounts on the price of their electric usage. Palmer Energy will give back a portion of their fees charged to MVG. All growers need to take advantage of this savings.
- Recycling – Joe stated that Findlay Foam Recycling is interested in MVG’s recycling business. Guests from the company are here to answer grower questions. Findlay Foam Recycling has been in the salvage business over 20 years and is now expanding their services into plastics.
- Education – Beth reported that the Education Committee met last month.
 - There will be a “clicker” survey with marketing questions given to the growers at today’s meeting. The next “clicker” survey will be on production topics.
 - The ABE Center budget is secure for another year.
 - TAFGA bus tour details will be available in 2 weeks. The bus will make approximately 4-5 stops at retail and wholesaler locations, the ARS in Wooster, and the Arboretum.
 - Pesticide Application Training (PAT) details will be coming soon.
 - Information will soon be given to help growers be prepared in the event of a Worker Compensation Audit from OSHA.
 - On January 7, 2009, there will be a combined Winter and Bedding Plant Conference. If any growers are interested in holding the event at one of their locations, please contact Beth Fausey.
 - Beth mentioned there is a possibility of hiring viable grant writers from Michigan to assist MVG. The grant writers will be presenting in January at the ONLA and CENT show. They have been successful on large scale projects and can probably come to a regular grower meeting to discuss possibilities of collaboration.
- Treasurer – The Finance Committee meeting was held on July 30, 2009. Diane reported that the current checkbook balance is \$20,778.12. Account Receivables are \$1,436.00. We completed our 2008 Audit compilation. The fee was \$150.

During the meeting, several program ideas were discussed that might generate cash flow for MVGA. One recommendation was to invest a portion of the grant dollars toward hiring a grant writer. It was hoped 2 grant submissions per month would eventually lead to sufficient funding sustainability for MVGA long-term. This would include hiring a part-time grant person.

- Government Relations – Dick reported that in January 2010 ONLA and MVGA will be hosting a luncheon. A possible roundtable type discussion on legislative items relative to the greenhouse industry is being considered. There will be a cost of \$250 to MVGA.

The next ONLA Nursery and Greenhouse Committee meeting will be on September 25th in Columbus.

Walt is arranging a meeting with Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur. If there are growers that would like him to present any concerns or issues before her, please contact him.

Beth stated our local & state representatives will be invited to the MVGA annual meeting. Our main speaker is undetermined at this time. Joe suggested representatives from the Scotts Corporation may be available. Other details are yet to be determined such as cost, catering, displays etc.

- Marketing – Tom recapped our MVGA marketing efforts for the past year. This PowerPoint presentation featured many interesting details comparing return rates, average cost of coupon sales, viewer statistics, website hits etc. This information provides useful and practical data for the Marketing Committee to increase co-op participation in 2010.
- Membership – Wade presented an example of our membership catalog cover and index being considered for the initial publication. The Directory will be completed by the end of September. Agri-Businesses and greenhouse operations will have an opportunity to advertise in this first addition.

Joe reported that Somik will be making a live presentation tomorrow at 9 am on the internet. Contact him for more information.

There will be a Native Plant Committee meeting today at 11 am here in the Stables Room. There are an abundance of rain barrels and composters. There is a need for distributors & retailers.

Governor Ted Strickland is visiting Clerk of Court's Bernie Quilter's home in Oregon tomorrow on Friday. Donation for entry is \$1000 but growers can substitute cash for flowers of similar retail value. Joe emailed everyone earlier in the week of this opportunity.

Representatives from NW Ohio were invited to tour Scotts yesterday at their worldwide headquarters in Marysville, Ohio. (Frank Calzonetti, Dan Kory, Diane Miller, Joe Perlaky, Sarit Bhaduri, Scott Leisner, James Locke, Charles Krause & John Gray) Our discussions covered a variety of topics. Preliminary specifics to MVG's role were also discussed but much is yet to be determined at this time. More on this later as more information is known.

Bill Dearing reports there is a ballot issue regarding animal husbandry on the November 3rd ballot that growers should be aware of. More info will follow and properly distributed to the growers asap.

Bill will be stepping down as Chairman of the Membership Committee. He will continue to provide assistance in other areas where his expertise can best be utilized.

- Presentations

Somik outlined his activities at several greenhouses in NW Ohio over the past year. Much was accomplished. Several growers will be applying for federal and state grants because of his (CIFT) and MVG's efforts. He also reviewed general energy efficiency improvements available to all greenhouse growers.

Beth conducted a "clicker" survey questionnaire focusing on advertising. This information will be used to increase co-op participation for our 2010 marketing campaign.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:08 am

Minutes submitted by Serenity Carr

Our next meeting is the MVGA Annual Meeting on September 17th 6-9 pm at TBG