MICHIGAN BEEF INDUSTRY COMMISSION

Board Meeting

Thursday, July 15, 2021

Okemos Conference Center

**Commissioners in Attendance: Others Present: Not in Attendance:**

Monte Bordner George Quackenbush, MBIC David Neitzel

Jon Haindl Jacquie Harrison, MBIC Ken Blight, Ex-officio

Jill Sears – by phone Katie Serbinski, MBIC Dr. Kathy Ernst, MSU Dept of Animal

Leon Knirk Heather Throne, MDARD by video Science

Jennifer Lewis Dale Oeschger

Bret Schapman

Dave Clark

Travis Schunk – by video

**Welcome and Call to Order**

Vice-Chairperson Bret Schapman called the meeting to order at 9:06 am. A quorum is set in that six commissioners are present in person. Two new commissioners, Leon Knirk and Jennifer Lewis, were appointed by Governor Whitmer in June 2021. Dale Oeschger and Leonard Brown termed off the Commission.

Each commissioner and other attendees introduced themselves for the new commissioners.

**General Business & Information**

**Approval of Agenda**

Leon Knirk **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented. Monte Bordner **SUPPORTED**. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**Financial Report – Jill Sears, Treasurer**

Jill Sears reviewed the financial reports for the year to date ending June 30, 2021. In the current month, MBIC spent $20,000 of the board approved $50,000 for promotional activities such as commercials on WILX in the Lansing viewing area, National Beef Burger Day (May 2021), and Michigan International Speedway partnership. Net assessments for the month appear to be on target with the budget and, if assessments are approximately $20,000 each of the next three months, MBIC will match the FY2020 checkoff assessments.

Jill suggests that a financial report with all similar accounting codes (3-digits) combined instead of a reporting of expenses for each program would be better to understand. She would like to include a percentage comparison of actual expenses to budgeted amounts.

George Quackenbush presented the Checkoff and Non-Checkoff Balance Sheets. George explained that, in July, the Non-Checkoff investments were moved from Huntington Bank to LAFCU and put into certificates of deposit with staggered maturity dates.

Monte Bordner **MOVED** to put financial statements on file as presented. Dave Clark **SUPPORTED. MOTION CARRIED.**

**MBIC Board Elections**

Monte Bordner is nominated for Board Chair by Leon Knirk, supported by Dave Clark.

Bret Schapman is nominated for Board Chair by Jon Haindl, supported by Dave Clark.

Bret Schapman is nominated for Board Vice-Chair by Jon Haindl, supported by Leon Knirk.

Jon Haindl is nominated for Board Secretary by Bret Schapman, supported by Leon Knirk.

Jill Sears is nominated for Board Treasurer by Jill Sears.

Jon Haindl **MOVED** to close nominations. Jennifer Lewis **SUPPORTED. MOTION CARRIED.**

Each board member voted by paper vote, counted by Katie Serbinski, except those on phone or video, which voted by voice vote.

By majority vote, the following positions were elected:

Chair – Monte Bordner

Vice-Chair – Bret Schapman

Secretary – Jon Haindl

Treasurer – Jill Sears

Bret Schapman moved to nominate Dale Oeschger to the Board as Ex-Officio. Jennifer Lewis supported**.**

Jon Haindl **MOVED** to close nominations for Board Ex-Officio. Jennifer Lewis **SUPPORTED.** **MOTION CARRIED.**

By majority vote, Dale Oeschger was elected to the Board as Ex-Officio.

**Approval of Minutes – Jon Haindl, Secretary**

Jon Haindl **MOVED** to approve the March 25, 2021 MBIC Board meeting minutes as presented. Bret Schapman **SUPPORTED.**  **MOTION CARRIED**.

**Information Updates**

**Nutrition & Consumer Info Report – Katie Serbinski**

Katie Serbinski introduced herself and provided her educational and professional background for the newest commissioners. Katie presented the campaigns that she has been working on or completed in the past few months:

* Beef Burger campaign was used to encourage consumers to enhance their nutrition and diet to include beef protein, whole grains, and vegetables.
* Beef Burger Bootcamp campaign was used to involve influencers in early May.
* National Beef Burger Day, May 28th, was promoted via influencer blog posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Nutrition & Dietician publications. Katie worked with three different types of food influencers in order to reach different audiences. Each blogger was paid, and the same information was cross posted, by MBIC and the influencers.
* Katie presented the video of the WILX/Studio 10 profile of the Dave Bosserd Family Farm on National Beef Burger Day. On that same day, MBIC purchased customized space on the WILX website, which received over 100,000 impressions. An impression is just someone seeing the information, not clicking on to go deeper for more information.
* MBIC partnered with Michigan Agriculture Council (MAC) for a cross promotion for National Beef Burger Day. Katie is an industry partner on the MAC board. MAC has been focusing on quarterly campaigns based on specific commodities. The MI Burger campaign ran from Memorial Day through July 4, advertising a grilling contest asking for recipes & pictures. More than 50 participants posted on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and the campaign yielded more than 30,000 impressions.
* One of MBIC’s new partnerships is with Michigan Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP). MBIC placed an ad on the MAFP website, and monthly and weekly newsletters. The ad design changes each month. The weekly newsletter goes out to 6,000 physicians in Michigan. Records show there were over 16,000 views on the MAFP website in June. When a viewer clicks on the MBIC ad in the MAFP website, they are directed to the MBIC website.
* A more interactive partnership is with Michigan Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MIAND). State councils have access to the Nutrition Speakers Bureau which provides speakers with expertise in a variety of beef topics. This is funded by national Beef Checkoff dollars. Sally Kuzemchak, a registered nutritionist/dietician entrepreneur, was asked to create a presentation for the MIAND conference on May 13 & 14, called Creating Compelling Content. This presentation answers questions about choices of beef and was attended by 197 people (215 registered). Katie shared handouts and social media messages to the MIAND membership and was able to receive registrant emails, which she has added to her monthly nutrition e-newsletter.
* Katie has been updating the MBIC website for seasonal content and the nutrition page. She sends a monthly e-newsletter to over 400 nutrition influencers. The social media outreach involves posting and engaging with audiences on Facebook and Instagram. We have stopped all Twitter outreach because people don’t ask for information or recipes on that platform.
* A current and ongoing project is a promotion with iHeart Radio. This features a statewide campaign with 10-second and 15-second radio spots in Detroit and Grand Rapids during drive-time, on their Total Traffic & Weather Network, from Memorial Day through Labor Day. At no cost to MBIC, iHeart offered a sponsorship of cash contests in April and May on STAR 105.7 and B-93.7 radio stations, playing 8 times per day.
* Katie is working with Shari Steinbach, former dietician for Meijer and current consultant, who created a national retail program for families and children, specifically targeted to beef in the early years. Through Shari, Katie has gotten contacts from SpartanNash and Gordon Food Service and plans to extend a program at national and state levels and doing more retail outreach.
* We are going to partner with the Michigan Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MIAAP) on a virtual and in-person conference in September. MBIC will have a traditional partnership plus ads in the MIAAP newsletter and website. Katie plans to attend the event to make first contact and see if MBIC wants to expand the partnership with MIAAP in the future.
* In the fall, MBIC will be running a Back to School and Family Meals Month campaign which includes blog posts, and social media posts with several micro-influencers. This format worked well for the National Burger Day campaign.
* The partnership with the Michigan International Speedway (MIS) is going forward. The dates are August 20-22 with visibility on billboards, logos on concession menus, displays at campgrounds and Fan Plaza outreach each day. There will be chef demonstrations and samples of beef recipes and resources to hand out to campers. MBIC has access to MIS’s social media team, sharing social media messages and communications to email subscribers. We will also have a social media grilling contest for people to post their pictures for a chance to win tickets to 2022 BeefItsWhatsforDinner 300 at Daytona in February. Several complimentary tickets for the FireKeepers Casino 400 race on Sunday, August 22 are available to MBIC Board members and families.

**Executive Report**

George Quackenbush reported on the various promotional activities with which MBIC is involved:

* The Midwest States YouTube campaign involves twelve states. MBIC invests $10,000 for this campaign and has done so annually for the last 4-5 years. The objective is to inspire consumers in Midwest states to choose beef. This promotion will be on YouTube and Spotify and launched June 3.
* George explained the history and organization of NCBA, Cattlemen’s Beef Board, and Federation and described what will happen at the Cattle Industry Convention in August.
* The Beef Checkoff Referendum Petition, which is initiated by R-Calf, requires 10% of beef producers (approx. 88,000) to sign and trigger a review of the referendum. There is a July 8, 2021 deadline to get those signatures but R-Calf has requested an extension due to COVID. The Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) is considering the extension request. It is estimated that 18,000 signatures have been procured already. George explained the makeup of R-Calf and why they oppose the Beef Checkoff.
* George presented the new version of Confident Cooking with Beef guide, which MBIC has purchased in quantity. He also presented the FY2020 MBIC Annual Report that was sent out to all Checkoff remitters, placed in the summer issue of the Michigan Cattleman magazine, and Michigan Milk Producers Association magazine.

**Decisions**

**FY 2022 Federation Investment**

George Quackenbush described the basis of the levels of the NCBA Federation of State Beef Councils Division (Federation) investment. Michigan’s rate is $14,000 per Federation seat. Michigan’s state population and per capita assessments allows MBIC to have the lowest rate for Federation seats. George explained what resources are afforded to each State Beef Council when invested in the Federation.

Bret Schapman **MOVED** that MBIC retain and fund two Federation seats. Jon Haindl **SUPPORTED. MOTION** **CARRIED.**

**Strategic Planning & 2022 Budgeting Schedule**

George Quackenbush proposed that the MBIC Commissioners use the September 2021 board meeting to discuss and decide upon a strategic plan. Todd Johnson, from the Federation, would come to that meeting to facilitate the planning. George suggests the commissioners do this after the Cattle Industry Convention and before the NCBA Partners in Action meetings to utilize information gleaned from the Convention. The Commission could invite industry partners to add value and make better use of time to help in planning. It is suggested that a survey be sent out prior to the planning session, and get a head start on the process. A minimal business meeting could be included in the day where the FY2022 proposed budget would be presented for approval.

Leon Knirk **MOVED** to schedule the planning session in Sept with Todd Johnson from NCBA, create and send out a survey prior to the session, and include a minimal board meeting. Dave Clark **SUPPORTED. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Allied Industry Reports**

**Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**

Heather Throne had to step away from the meeting.

**Michigan State University Animal Science Department**

George reported that Dr. Catherine Ernst has been chosen as Chair of the MSU Animal Science Department. George is aware that MSU has planned to have Fall schedule classes on campus. Dr. Dan Buskirk reported to George about the solar array that is planned for the beef barn pasture. MSU is moving forward to break ground in spring 2022 and expects it to be completed in summer 2022. Dr. Buskirk doesn’t know where the cattle will pasture.

**Michigan Cattlemen’s Association**

* George Quackenbush reported that the MCA Summer Round Up at Hughston’s Cow Camp in McBain, MI went very well. The group toured the Koster Dairy and Feedlot in Falmouth area. Frank Wardynski held a BQA certification class after the tours. MBIC was a sponsor at the Summer Round Up which afforded a space in the common area to provide information to producers.
* George is looking forward to the Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show on August 10-12. 2021.
* George participated in a meeting with Senator Debbie Stabenow and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack where they discussed climate issues, meat processing needs and other issues. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with USDA is up for renewal this year. There was a TB positive herd found in Cheboygan County for the first time. The typical investigation on the Cheboygan farm has been ongoing since October 2020. MDARD is asking stakeholders where the TB program would like to go? The TB Advisory Committee is meeting to discuss this issue and choose an to answer that question.
* The MCA Bull Evaluation committee met on July 13 to revise the program rules and regulations. Nomination packets will go out to interested parties by the end of July.
* The Beef Expo leadership needs to meet and make some decisions about going forward or ending the program.

**Commissioner Reports and Public Comments**

Dale Oeschger expressed his appreciation to everyone during his time as commissioner and chairperson of the commission. He said the wheat is harvested in the thumb region at a lower yield than average but the quality was good. They’ve had some rain in the thumb region which means not as much drought compared to other areas. Dale’s farm is about ½ - ¾ full of cattle and, as of two weeks ago, the price was pretty good. The Cass City stockyards have had fairly good runs of beef and good runs of dairy cows in the past couple of weeks.

Jon Haindl said he UP is very dry this year. He has heard there might be a disaster program implemented to help producers in this drought. Potato and alfalfa crops are looking good. Overall, this has been a good year for calving. The crops are looking okay due to getting rain in the last 3-4 weeks.

Dave Clark said the auction market is doing well with the market being a little higher. Fed cattle prices are good, but corn/feed costs are higher, therefore, the auction market may lose some customers. Dave’s farm is full of cattle and still buying baby calves to raise them. Local crops look good; corn looks great.

Leon Knirk said it’s been quite dry in June. He is trying to apply water to crops and activate herbicides to retain his crops. Farms south and north of him got heavy rains so now things are lush. The beans are growing, and corn crops look great. Futures prices are huge compared to the past couple of years. Leon is looking forward to serving on the MBIC Board.

Bret Schapman reported that soybeans are hurting from a wet season and has white mold. Their feedlot is full of cattle. It’s nice to have other packers at the table for buying cattle. The Schapman’s deal with someone out of Detroit periodically. They are moving forward and staying full of cattle. Bret would like better answers on price discovery and more competition. A little higher price for cattle would make a big difference. Last year’s profit only existed because of federal stimulus money but he doesn’t like that.

Monte Bordner said his area of southern Michigan has been dry between April and June. Irrigation started on his place May 4, which is a full month earlier than average. Recently they have had adequate moisture. The corn crop looks better now that they have received some rain. The cattle are all in the south pasture and they have had some loss of grass due to heavy rainfall. The bull market seems strong.

Jennifer Lewis said her crop report is the same as Leon’s. The dairy business is tough and has been for a long time. The big dairies north of Lansing and in the thumb are growing. Their beef store is seeing high demand for meat. Michigan Representative Sarah Lightner has put a bill forth in the amount of $10 million to help beef processors with growth and modernization. Jackson County Farm Bureau members were the impetus for this bill. The American Farm Bureau from Michigan put forth a national committee to look at price discovery. Brian Pridgeon, from Branch County, is on that committee. The committee has had 1-2 phone conferences and are currently doing background work.

Jill Sears went off the call/meeting.

The next scheduled MBIC Board meeting date is Thursday, September 16, 2021.

**Adjourn**

Bret Schapman **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 pm. No support was required. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquie Harrison

Administrative Office Manager