**NEBRASCOE Board Meeting Minutes**

**Rodeway Inn – Kearney, NE**

**September 19, 2015**

The NEBRASCOE Board held their meeting at the Rodeway Inn at Kearney, NE on September 19, 2015.

President, Jessi Colgrove, called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.with the following board members and members present:

District 1 = Jessi Colgrove and Cindy Winterfeld (alternate)

District 2 = Joni Johnson and Sharon Blue

District 3 = Shanna Waterman and Lisa Wiese

District 4 = Niki Dittmer

District 5 = Linda Fegler and Diane Hidy

District 6 = Larry Steinbrecher and Heather Amateis

District 7= Ann Kurpgeweit

 Raela Brandt, past-president, and Greg Chewakin, NAFEC representative were also in attendance at the meeting.

Minutes of the April meeting were reviewed. Ann Kurpgeweit made a motion to approve the minutes as read and Linda Fegler seconded that motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer’s report – The current balance on hand is $26,374.37. The cookbook sales are $18,340. There is an incorrect charge for 2 nights at the Potawatomi Hotel & Casino for $273.94. Wisconsin is working to rectify the charge. 6 rooms were held on the NEBRASCOE card and 2 were released to WI at their request. One of the rooms was given to Jonathan Albaum and the NEBRASCOE card was charged instead of his. Linda moved and Diane seconded to approve the treasurer’s report as read. Motion passed.

Board members and their districts for 2015-2016 are as follows: District 1 – Jessi Colgrove, CED and Amy Vitosh, PT District 2 – Joni Johnson, CED and Sharon Blue, PT District 3 – Shanna Waterman, CED and Lisa Wiese PT, District 4 – Tansy Sack, CED and Niki Dittmer, PT, District 5 – Linda Fegler, CED and Diane Hidy, PT, District 6 – Larry Steinbrecher, CED and Heather Amateis, PT and District 7 – vacant, CED and Ann Kurpgeweit.

Those elected to offices for the 2015-2016 year effective July 1, 2015 are as follows: Jessi Colgrove - President; Ann Kurpgeweit – Vice President; Diane Hidy – Secretary; and Shanna Waterman – Treasurer.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Programs – Heather Amateis** The NASCOE website has an online form that will allow members to submit concerns electronically and monitor the response to that request. Heather Amateis has put together a newsletter article that outlines this process and gives examples. It will be included in the October newsletter. She requested Diane’s home e-mail address so the article could be included. Niki Dittmer inquired if we wanted to have an online form on the NEBRASCOE website as well. The form could be e-mailed to members to get their input as well. Much discussion was held on the direction the requests could be referred such as to the state tech team or the national office.

**Publicity – Diane Hidy** Items should be submitted for the October newsletter by Friday, September 25, 2015. The items that will be included in the newsletter at this time include the script that was read at the all-employee meeting, the memo from the state committee supporting NASCOE, the article on sick leave awards, photos of all the board members with their contact information and short biography, a summary of the national convention with photos, an article about a membership incentive drawing, a RASCOE article, an article on submitting program improvement ideas to NASCOE by Heather Amateis, a special interest piece, and a legislative report from Linda Fegler.

The Facebook page was also discussed. It was suggested by several members to run through the membership list and invite members to the page. Individuals can be added as well, but Raela Brandt cautioned that some people may not want to be added and it would be best to check with them first before adding to the page. Diane Hidy agreed with Raela Brandt.

**Benefits – Ann Kurpgeweit**  Ann Kurpgeweit reported that Working Advantage Program offers great discounts for members. Some businesses are difficult to get the discount such as SAM’s Club and other organizations want a commitment of a certain number of people before giving the discount such as the Henry Doorly Zoo. Deb Holmes is the new National Benefits chairperson.

**Elections – Larry Steinbrecher** Larry Steinbrecher reported that there are now seven districts in Nebraska. Districts 4 -7 will be up for election in 2016. We hope to start in January rather than February with the nomination and election process. Please let employees know in those districts that election time is drawing near. Make sure that the person nominated for the NEBRASCOE board truly wants to be on it.

**PAC/Legislation – Linda Fegler** Linda Fegler spoke of the possibility of furlough October 1. She also told us that when they attended Washington D.C. , they primarily meet with aides to the senators. This should be changed. We want members of congress to visit the county offices when they are home. It would be much more cost effective to have one-on-one discussions with senators at home.

**WEB – Niki Dittmer**  Niki Dittmer wanted to know what we would like on the web. She said that the website cannot be worked on at the office as those systems do not use the most updated version of Internet Explorer. We have version 9 currently and version 11 is the updated version. She also wanted to pass the webmaster job to another member. This will be discussed more under new business.

**Scholarships/Awards – Sharon Blue** Thank you notes were read from the scholarship recipients. Eleven people have been submitted for the sick leave award. There are thirteen more to be added for the sick leave award. Honorary membership for Sherry Stubbendeck and Cindy Hall was also discussed. Sherry Stubbendeck’s name has been submitted by Jessi Colgrove. Cindy Hall’s name will also be sent in for honorary membership. She had to request a waiver because she did not become a member immediately since the county office did not encourage participation in NASCOE.

**Emblems – Sharon Blue** She has a small box of emblems in the office that are picked through. This item will be tabled until the next meeting in January or February.

**NAFEC – Greg Chewakin** Greg Chewakin is the NWA chairman for NAFEC. It is very important for the county committee system to be in place at the field office level. NAFEC representation can get in when NASCOE cannot. It is important to let the county committee chairmen and ladies to know that NAFEC organization is available to join. Also, FSA employees can become associate members. Greg Chewakin or Jim Densberger will speak with your county committee on the advantages of becoming a NAFEC member. A video is coming out in the near future that can be viewed by the COC on the NAFEC organization.

Niki Dittmer moved to accept the reports from the respective program areas. Lisa Wiese seconded that motion. Motion passed.

**Old business**

**2016 State Convention Ideas** – The 2016 State Convention may be in Norfolk in April. Shanna Waterman and Lisa Wiese were looking into what the Divot Center charges for such events. More information will be presented at the January or February meeting. Lincoln was suggested as a convention site, but with Lincoln or Omaha acting as host city for the NWA rally in 2016, it was determined to select another city for the state convention.

**District elections** – Districts 4 – 7 will be up for election. Greg Chewakin suggested e-mailing members in the district to determine who would be willing to serve on the board. Larry indicated that we should start the nomination and election process 60 days prior to the convention in April.

**New business**

**Committees** Linda Fegler moved to appoint Greg Chewakin as a designee for NAFEC plus pay for any of his expenses. Ann Kurpgeweit seconded the motion. Motion passed. Greg Chewakin is not a board member, but because of his involvement in NAFEC we will agree to help pay expenses. Greg Chewakin added that he would check with NAFEC to see if they could cover cost of mileage and hotel for this meeting. Heather Amateis was appointed as a liason for NAFEC in the western section of Nebraska.

**Distribution lists**  The CED in respective district sends e-mails to members only and the PT in the respective district sends e-mails to members only as well.

**Awards** The sick leave nominations for awards should be sent to Sharon at her home e-mail address csblue2009@hotmail.com each January.

Honorary lifetime memberships should be sent in once a year, preferably in January. This year Sherry Stubbendeck, Cindy Hall, Andrea Rickert and Sharleen Marik will be submitted for honorary lifetime memberships.

Publicity awards are available for the state website and newsletter. This year we will be submitting both in for awards. Check with the national publicity website on NASCOE for rules and regulations. There are different categories for the newsletter submission. Do not be afraid to include some human interest articles in the newsletter.

**Membership** Current membership numbers as of September 19, 2015 are as follows: District 1 – 77%; 2 – 43%; 3 – 82%; 4 – 55%; 5 – 62%; 6 – 26%; and 7 – 21% Currently 55 percent of employees are members in the NEBRASCOE organization. South Dakota would take us in or another neighboring state if the organization would fall below 50 percent membership. Steps would need to be taken to amend the by-laws and should be in place 30 days before next annual meeting, but the organization should not fall below 50 percent since a membership drive will be in full gear. Some ideas were presented by Jessi to increase membership. To encourage field office employees to become member of NEBRASCOE/NASCOE we could raffle two tablets or a gift card, similar to what Colorado has done to encourage membership. A jacket drawing could be offered to those who are current members renewing the membership. This will take place in 2016.

 A Jump Team to encourage employees to join NEBRASCOE will be coming into Nebraska, primarily targeting the district 6 and 7 sections. Jessi Colgrove will speak with Janae Prescott to find out the timing of the jump team arrival. The idea is to incorporate the raffle with the jump teams canvassing efforts.

Much discussion was had on changing the membership dues from a percentage of pay to a flat rate. This would allow the use of the form 444 rather than accepting only checks. Many of the surrounding states use the form 444, rather than the percentage of pay option for dues according to Jessi Colgrove. Jessi Colgrove, Joni Johnson and Shanna Waterman will check into the flat rates and share with the board members their findings at the next board meeting in January or February.

The drawing was held for $50 membership and the winners are Sandra Hoback and Wendy Ingram.

**Shirt Order** Heather Amateis will spear head the shirt/jacket orders this year. It was noted that there is a national emblem store. Polo shirts, jackets, long sleeve shirts will be available. Board members will bring in shirts and jackets to view and try on at the State Conservation Reserve Program meeting at Kearney in November. The deadline to purchase items will be November 15, 2015. Heather Amateis made the motion to go ahead with the shirt orders and Larry Steinbrecher seconded that motion. The motion passed.

**By-laws and Board Member Handbooks**

Reviewed the suggested changes made by Jessi Colgrove and Shanna Waterman. A copy of the By-laws will be e-mailed to board members and then forwarded to PT/CED members in each district. The changes to the By-laws will be approved at the 2016 state convention. The changes to the By-laws will be finalized at the January or February meeting.

Committee members for the new year are as follows: Web - Joni Johnson; Programs/Emblems – Heather Amateis; Legislative/PAC – Linda Fegler; Benefits – Ann Kurpgeweit; Awards – Sharon Blue; Publicity – Diane Hidy; Scholarships – Amy Vitosh; Membership – Joni Johnson; NAFEC – Greg Chewakin; and Elections – Larry Steinbrecher and Lisa Wiese

Additional items discussed include the raffle tickets that are available for $20 each to help with expenses for the national convention in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The prizes include a grand prize of $4,000 travel voucher to the destination of your choice or $2500 cash, Remington Model 870 Wingmaster 12-Guage, Browning A-Bolt Hunter 270 Win Glock 42, in .380 AUTO, PSE Surge Hunting Bow Package and $500 cash. The drawing will be held August 6, 2016 and the you do not have to be present to win.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 30, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Rodeway Inn, Kearney, Nebraska.

Respectfully submitted by:

Diane Hidy

Secretary