

Addison Country Sugar Makers
Annual Meeting
February 14, 2023
American Legion, Middlebury

Draft Minutes

40 members joined for the meeting.

Welcome –President Moe Rheume thanked Pratt’s Store in Bridport for the good meal.

The secretary reviewed the minutes from 2022 and the 2022 financial report.

Andrew Rainville presented a recap of Field Days 2022. He was pleased to have 64 entries in the syrup and specialty goods display. Andrew also revamped the registration form for the judging. Several sugar makers in different parts of the county volunteered to be drop off spots for syrup.

He outlined the highlights – the gift packs were well received. In 2022, Andrew made arrangements to begin taking credit cards in the center section. The minimum charge was \$20. Fees were minimal to use the card. Hopefully, we will expand it next year.

Milk shake prices were raised – no one seemed to notice too much. This year, maple kettle corn was offered. The kettle corn vendor on the grounds made the popcorn and the sugar makers purchased it from him and then resold it. The relaxation tent across the street was busy! Broughton’s and sugar makers divided the cost of the spot. We hope to be able to do that again next year. Andrew reported that the weather and the shifting of events on the grounds made for a record year.

Things to evaluate for 2023 – use of Middlebury Bagel and Deli, how to make the slushies easier and continue to work with cotton candy.

The new addition has started after Field Days – the footings and pad is poured and ready for more construction. To continue to be safe, Andrew is hoping to get a safe for the back room. The shiplap siding has been purchased and will be ready when we are. Current, thought is to hire Bill and Trent Roleau to do the work because the opportunity to use volunteer help is hit or miss. The goal is to have a “grand opening” 50th Anniversary gathering in 2024. We will be looking for someone to put the party together.

Moe asked for nominations for a Field Days manager for 2023. Andrew was willing. Andrew will be the manager for 2023. Field Days dates for ’23 are August 8-12.

Kenn Hastings, Mike Christian and Allison Hope spoke about the Big E. Cotton Candy was dropped for 2023. Because of staffing issues, managers decided to not make cream and candy at the Big E. Chris White did a terrific job at making candy head. A WHOLE bunch of cream was made ahead – using about 3 barrels. It wasn't enough – they made another 3 barrels at the fair. The church volunteers worked out great again last year. The sugarmakers took in about \$240,000.00 at the Big E. 2023 dates are September 15 – October 1. Reach out to Mike or Kenn to volunteer.

Allison Hope introduced Heather Winner – the new membership manager. The focus of 2023 will be to get sugarhouses certified. There is grant money available to remediate issues standing in the way of getting certified as well as creating an operational manual. Contact Allison if you are ready to begin the certification process.

Other initiatives the VMSMA are working on are maple marketing program, maple passport (Maple Trail) and on-going container issues.

Pam Green spoke about the work IMSI is doing in conjunction with the NASS survey. The NASS survey results is so far off base that the information is useless but yet it is still being used. IMSI is working to correct the survey and ask questions that are relevant and timely. Dave Folino has been instrumental in working on the survey. It's important for all sugar makers to complete the confidential survey. If you don't get a survey please reach out to Pam Green at the end of the season. IMSI is also reworking their website.

Addison County Sugar Makers is rewriting their by-laws. The rewrite was not ready for tonight's meeting. There will be a special meeting called sometime in May to review the changes. One of the changes is the timing of the annual meeting.

No old business.

New business

The USS Vermont would like 5 gallons of syrup. Mike Christian made the motion and Donna Hutchison seconded to give 5 gallons of syrup. Motion passed.

Election of Officers – Dan Thomas motioned and Richard Warren seconded to accept the slate of officers. Moe – President, Mike C, - V.P, Barb – sec/Treasure, New board members – Jim Rowe for 3 years and Ken Button for 3 years. State Director – Mike Christian, Alternate – Kenn Hastings, Second Alternate – Jim Rowe. Motion passed.

Doug Dwy motioned and Richard Warren seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed.