

FLORIDA STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF MANAGERS MEETING

February 4, 2006

Jerry Latner's Home, High Springs, FL.

Elmore Herman, President, called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.

Association Representatives in attendance: Central Florida (Mickie Westervelt), Tupelo (Greg Brown), Ridge (Bert Kelley) , Northeast Florida Honey Bee Assn, Clay County (Calvin Wilcox). No representatives for Tampa, Escarosa, Tri-County, Hernando, Palm Beach, South Florida, Northeast (Jacksonville).

Gary Ranker
Calvin Wilcox
George DeMarino
Lee Del Signore
Greg Brown
Laurence Cutts
Jerry Latner
Joann Latner
David Webb
Bert Kelley
Carolee Howe
Tom Glisson
David Miksa
Andy Miksa
Jerry Turner
David Westervelt
Mickie Westervelt
John Westervelt
Jerry Hayes
Bill Merritt
Margaret Merritt
Doug Mcginnis

Roll call to obtain quorum; 4 associations represented for voting purposes (Tupelo, Central Florida, Northeast and Ridge). A quorum was present; only 3 need be present plus officers according to bylaws.

President Herman provided a copy of the bylaws with reference to the board of managers and voting participation. It was recognized that only those appointed by local associations could vote at board or managers meetings. The Executive Secretary had sent out forms to all associations for nominations of representatives. No responses had been received from Tampa, Palm Beach, Hernando and Northeast (Jacksonville). Of those received, South Florida had not appointed a representative. It is recognized that in the past this voting process had not been followed as it is difficult to keep up with officially appointed representatives by local associations. In addition, it is difficult for these representatives to sometimes make meetings that are far from their home (Escarosa, Tri-County and West Escambia were absent at this meeting as an example).

After some discussion, it was thought that the full bylaws need revision. A committee appointed by President Herman was established to present suggested revised bylaws at the next meeting. Committee members include, Calvin Wilcox, Mickie Westervelt, Bert Kelley, and Laurence Cutts.

The idea of having a board of managers meeting by conference call was brought to the floor. President Herman has contacted an outfit that is willing to set up a call for \$.18-\$.25 per minute. The Executive Secretary has researched the situation at <http://freeconferenc.com>. Vice President Webb will look at his phone service, which also includes this kind of functionality. The use of teleconferencing is not specifically stated in the bylaws as a means of holding meetings; a motion by Mickie Westervelt to look at the situation was withdrawn in favor of recommendations to come from the bylaw revision committee. The general feeling seemed to be that the next meeting should include some form of conference calling technology.

Report of the Executive Secretary. January Newsletter produced; 4,000 copies of membership brochure printed for distribution at State Fair and elsewhere.

In its last meeting the Board of Managers put \$4,000 into its research budget, which was to aid researchers in purchasing bees and equipment that would be necessary as part of any research effort. The idea was that this small amount would be better utilized this way than in attempting to fund research proposals themselves. President Herman received two letters requesting funds, one from David Westervelt for \$4,000 for research being carried out by the Division of Plant Industry and another from Dr. Glenn Hall, IFAS, University of Florida for \$2,000.

Motion by Bert Kelley to provide \$2,000 to Dr. Hall for his research. Seconded by Calvin Wilcox, passed. This money will be held in limbo until the final disposition of Dr. Hall's research program is determined (see discussion below).

Motion by Greg Brown, seconded by Calvin Wilcox, to provide the remaining \$2,000 to David Westervelt for DPI research. Passed. This will be matched by a generous contribution from David Miksa.

There was a general discussion on disposition of the bee research money (\$150,000) that was appropriated by the legislature during its last session. This money was distributed by the Florida Department of Agriculture's Division of Plant Industry. A list of 10 projects receiving funds was handed out by Jerry Hayes and David Westervelt. These included:

1. Metarhizium fungus for Varroa control (\$10,000)
2. Allisure for Varroa control (\$8,000)
3. Determining optimum treatment thresholds for Varroa (\$8,000)
4. Small cell foundation in Varroa control (\$8,000)
5. B-401 easier wax moth control (\$8,000)
6. Identification of sources of disease, stress and burdens in migratory beekeepers (\$31,000)
7. Development of semiochemical based Varroa management (\$25,000)
8. Africanized bee extension project (\$12,022)
9. ELIZA field test for Africanized bees (\$19,780)

10. Africanized bee quick test project (\$18,935)

Dr. Glenn Hall expressed disappointment in not being funded. He asked for \$122,000 to continue his research project, but was turned down. Since he lost funding elsewhere as well, this has forced him to seriously consider closing his research program on finding genetic mechanisms for Varroa tolerance, which has been going on for several years, even though he has recently received \$16,000 from the National Honey Board and an equal sum from the California Beekeepers Association.. Other factors include the retirement of Dr. John Harbo at the Baton Rouge Laboratory, a major collaborator. Although the collaboration is expected to continue, the fact that Baton Rouge will hire someone to essentially do the same kind of work inserts more variables that Dr. Hall cannot control. He did express appreciation for DPI's hiring his trained assistant. Unfortunately, that assistant is now considering taking a more permanent, stable job. Given these factors, Dr. Hall said the future of his program is presently in limbo. He will continue to keep the industry informed about the status of his program.

There was general discussion about the disposition of the funds provided by the legislature, given Dr. Hall's experience. Some were upset because the money was perceived as being raised for mite research and a good chunk went to other areas. Those lobbying heavily for the funds, including legislators who had been primed by beekeepers to see mites as a threat, thought all the funds would go to mite research. But the official labeling of the money was broader and so was appropriated for other concerns (Africanized honey bees, wax moths). It was suggested that this was appropriate use of the funds and that especially Africanized bees could not be ignored as they proved a potent, even more important threat to the long-range future of the Florida bee industry. However, bee mites are still the primary threat to Florida's commercial beekeeping enterprises.

There was also concern about the process for disbursing research funds. There was little if any beekeeper input. Although queried at the last technical council meeting about these funds, no listing of projects nor process had been provided to the council about proposals and how they would be evaluated. Many believe that at that meeting, officials of DPI indicated that money for Africanized honey bee would come from elsewhere, not the money received by the industry from the legislature. Given the concerns over this funding, there was discussion about how the money that is being solicited this year (\$800,000) will be allocated. In addition, there was discussion about how the results of the projects being funded would be communicated to the beekeeping industry.

Motion by Bert Kelley, seconded by Calvin Wilcox that the Executive Secretary write a letter to DPI Director Richard Gaskalla requesting that a formalized process be developed with input by the industry (Honey Bee Technical Council) concerning disposition of research funds received due to lobbying by the bee industry. Passed.

Farm Bureau day, a major lobbying opportunity for commodities, will be held March 21, 2006, Leon County Civic Center, Tallahassee. Given the success last year, a large contingent of beekeepers going to this event would be extremely helpful. Anyone interested in this is asked to contact Carolee Howe, ph 352-378-8100 x 1091, e-mail: chowe@sfbic.com.

The Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association will have its annual meeting 17-19 2006 at the Ritz Carleton in Naples, Florida. Anyone interested in attending this event representing the Florida State Beekeepers Association should contact Vice President David Webb, phone 321-403-4201, e-mail: webbshoney@msn.com. The Association is a member and there are discounts available for active participants.

Jerry Hayes reported on Africanized honey bee finds, which are on the increase, especially in

south Florida. Several stinging incidents involving dogs have surfaced recently. This is becoming a huge problem in the state and he agreed with others that research monies spent on this area were as important as that on mites. He has received no replies from his queries about keeping bees on South Florida Water Management lands; not an encouraging sign. However, one of the grants listed above is expected to yield some dividends in terms of first responder education. The hiring of a new extension specialist in Apiculture in the Department of Entomology and Nematology (IFAS) at the U. of Florida is also expected to help enormously in the effort to educate the public and the media about these bees. Four candidates will be interviewed for the job this month and one is expected to be hired soon.

Citrus canker eradication has now been abandoned in Florida and so growers must now take on greater responsibility for controlling this disease. What this means, according to David Westervelt, is that anyone moving bees to citrus areas must contact the grove owner to see what is required for sanitation procedures before entering any groves. There are strict control methods in force and those not conforming can be fined.

Bert Kelley said that he had most of his volunteer slots filled for the state fair, but some during the week were still needed. Call him phone 863-644-6944, e-mail KelleysApiaries@aol.com if you would like more information on volunteering. May 18, 2006 is official Honey Day at the Fair. Mr. Kelley has found a chef in training to do recipes during the day in keeping with the tradition established by other commodities. He proposed hiring the person for \$300 plus the food needed (approximately \$100) as a budget item to come from line 9 item in the Association's budget adopted last November in St. Augustine. Motion by Greg Brown to hire the chef and pay for the food, seconded by Calvin Wilcox. Passed.

Mr. Kelley said research showed that an umbrella liability insurance policy was in place by the State Fair authorities so the Florida State Beekeepers Association would not need one for this event. However, he thought it prudent to obtain one for other activities the Association is engaged in, particularly apiaries run in the Association's name. He suggested coverage of a \$ 1 million, which should cost about \$350. Motion by Mickie Westervelt, seconded by Calvin Wilcox, that a policy be purchased. Passed.

Break for lunch; barbecued chicken, coleslaw, beans and great desserts, coordinated by Joann Latner. Thanks to the Latners for their great hospitality. At least thirty people were in attendance, suggesting the old adage "feed them and they will come" still contains wisdom.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m. in anticipation of the next meeting on the new honey cooperative being contemplated in Florida.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm T. Sanford
Executive Secretary