

## NPSA Regular Meeting Minutes January 14, 2004

Present: Mary Grodner, Dan Schweitzer, Allan Hovis, Chuck Cubbage, GinnyPrest, Joe Hoffman,  
Nancy Fitz, Kathy Brooks, Rob Denny, and Roger Springman

Quorum Status: In quorum

Meeting Called to Order by Board Chair Grodner at 1:10 (EST)

### 1) Minute Approval:

Two sets of minutes were approved: Regular Meeting of November 24<sup>th</sup> and Special Meeting of December 16<sup>th</sup>. The only registered comment involved making sure that Nancy Fitz was recognized as being present at the November 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### 2) Treasurer's Report:

In the absence of a Treasurer, Kathy Brooks gave the report. No income was reported for the month of December, but several outstanding sponsorships from Tucson were received. Payments included Tucson catering, Arrowchase services, Tucson conference refund, and Kathy's regular service bill. Total payments of \$22,842 were made during the past month. NPSA recently received a bill of \$400 from George Brooks for web services. The account balance at the end of 2003 was \$14,190. The Treasurer's report was moved and adopted as reported.

### 3) Electoral Update:

Mary Grodner gave a brief overview of our December Special meeting. She reported that circumstances required that NPSA Board members either seek formal electoral change via by-laws or appoint interim officers to serve to the Orlando conference. Five votes were received in favor of going with the interim officer appointment strategy thereby affirming this approach.

Mary went on to report that Gail Amos has confirmed his willingness to serve as President, Dan Schweitzer as VP, and Pat Hipkins as Secretary. Don Gilbert was unable to accept the Treasurer's position and Rob Hofstetter's name was mentioned as a possible replacement. Rob Denny agreed to contact Rob Hofstetter and by the end of the meeting he had called Rob and confirmed his interest in the position pending a final check with his agency. Don Gilbert largely turned down the position because of a lack of NPSA-provided bonding.

### 4) Tucson Marriott Situation:

Kathy Brooks began by noting that NPSA recently received an invoice from the Tucson Marriott for \$20,500 for NPSA's unused hotel allocation from the Tucson conference. Rob Denny reported that he tried to work with Peter \_\_\_\_\_ from the Tucson Marriott sales staff to resolve the dispute, but he has refused to be cooperative or even helpful. Kathy has been contacting all Tucson conference attendees to confirm their lodging arrangements so an accurate record can be presented for future negotiations. She has also been keeping track of lodging information inconsistencies made by the Tucson Marriott as there is clear evidence that the hotel was full on the opening weekend. Peter was the third sales person NPSA worked with at the Marriott.

In wondering how to proceed, it was concluded that the time has come to go above and around Peter. Kelly Newton, our pro bono legal consultant, has been unable to help, so Chuck Cabbage raised the notion of seeking help from our corporate friends. Allan Hovis agreed to contact the Bayer Crop Science legal team to see if they could at least offer guidance if not direct legal intervention. Rob and Kathy agreed to be available to talk to Bayer Crop Science legal staff. Chuck then noted that it would be a good idea to have several affidavits available on testimony involving misleading information provided by the Tucson Marriott. Finally, Kathy and Rob have been working to find corporate officials in the Marriott home office who not only care about the situation, but about the bad reputation being given to the Marriott system.

#### 5) Earth 911 Pilot

Joe Hoffman began with a summary on state pesticide disposal progress. Both Pennsylvania and North Carolina officials have been contacted and appear very interested in joining the pilot effort, but need final approval from their supervisors. In encouraging these and other officials to check out the Earth 911 website, Joe found out that most people are pleasantly surprised about the quality of the site.

Rob Denny reported that his contacts have been positive too, but concerns remain on downside concerns such as time commitment, timing, and liability. Joe noted that local control is an important positive feature of the Earth 911 system. Rob and Joe indicated that they should know on each state's final decision by next week. The ACRC is very pleased about the opportunity to participate in this project. Joe will be contacting Anne Reichmann next week to report findings and set up followup teleconference calls.

#### 6) Pesticide Disposal Pilot

Roger Springman gave an overview of December activities and events. In late December, Tom Hall from CropLife America informed him that the project is in a "go mode", but two issues remained outstanding: the hiring protocol and project timeline. Roger and Nancy Fitz then prepared responses and moved them to Tom for consideration. Nancy went on to review the project timeline noting that NPSA would be immediately responsible for a number of items as soon as the final go ahead was given by CropLife. The actual working life of the project is expected to be three months. Dan wondered if the current schedule was realistic given the current date and Nancy said the schedule should be seen as a "rolling timeline" from the point of final authorization.

Roger reviewed the suggested hiring protocol noting that it was important to go into this pilot was some possible staffing options. He said that Royce Batts and Bill McClelland from North Carolina were interested in considering the opportunity along with a student or two from Virginia Tech via Pat Hipkins. Other retired or nearly retired professionals will be considered as well once a go ahead is given from Tom Hall. Roger said that it would be important for the NPSA Board to approve the hiring protocol so that the project could be kept in an action mode once we were contacted by CropLife. Chuck moved to accept the provided hiring protocol and Ginny Prest seconded the motion. It was approved by consensus vote. Chuck mentioned the importance of hiring students/interns with good work skills and instincts.

#### 7) PESP Initiative

Nancy Fitz gave an overview of NPSA's involvement with EPA's PESP Program noting that a key component is filing an annual strategy with them. This year it is due in late February. Although PESP

involvement does not necessarily lead to dollar opportunities or high national exposure, both Mary Grodner and Chuck Cabbage said it is a good thing as it keeps NPSA in the main flow of pesticide stewardship activities nationwide. Nancy said that she would prepare a draft strategy that would include things that NPSA is already planning for the year. Roger noted that it might be good to tweak the strategy to reflect the funding interests of PESP, particularly with regard to any IPM tours. Ginny Pest said we should make the Orlando IPM tour a workshop to give it more visibility and focus.

#### 8) Advisory Council Update

Dan Schweitzer reported that five invitations were sent out and four have been accepted in formal or informal ways. Formally, written confirmation has been received from AAPSE and Earth 911. Informal (verbal) ones have been received from AAPCO and CropLife America. The USDA has not responded and Roger said that he would contact Al Jennings to ascertain their position. Also, Mary Grodner noted that other units inside the USDA could be asked to serve on the AC if Al Jennings doesn't have the time. Nancy Fitz said that we should assume that AAPCO is "in" and simply proceed on that basis, asking for who will be representing them. Dan said he will contact all current partners and start seeking their suggestions for the Orlando conference as a way to get the AC moving. Later, it was suggested that we should ask the AC about their instincts on moving NPSA's annual conference to the January/February period.

#### 9) 2004 Conference Leadership/Planning

Mary Grodner gave an overview on how previous conference leadership was developed. In general, a core leadership team, often consisting of Roger Springman, Nancy Fitz, and Ginny Prest, was assisted by other interested individuals such as Rob Denny, Joe Hoffman, and Jude Andreasen. In 2003, Roger Springman and Frank Doerfler were co-chairs. Nancy Fitz was asked to serve as conference chair, but said that it would go better if it was a co-chair situation. Because the conference is in Florida, Joe suggested that we consider asking Norm Neishem if he could serve with Nancy. Mary said that she will contact him. Joe and Nancy then noted that two more people from Florida, Keith Meyer and Dennis Howard, could be very helpful. Rob Denny noted that Lois Levitan is interested in working with him on a plastics program. Nancy said that she is interested in surveying past conference attendees along with state pesticide disposal programs on possible topics for Orlando. Roger and Ginny said they would be available to help with 2004 planning. Nancy will notify us on her availability for conference leadership ASAP.

#### 10) Budgeting and Future Conference Cycles

Mary Grodner reported that some very important decisions need to be made soon by the Board in the near future. Roger gave an overview of the situation noting that some very important Tucson findings will affect NPSA for the next couple of years. He will be forwarding an issue paper which summarizes the situation to everyone very soon. However, the core issue is that NPSA is losing significant sponsorship money and we have been requested to move from an October/November to January/February conference cycle. The loss of money combined with a conference shift paints a difficult budget year for 2005. There would be no annual conference in 2005 and, therefore, far less revenue.

Rob noted that we have come close to this situation before and can do it again. Dan said that the loss of an annual meeting is important with regard to elections and the annual leadership change. Joe said that January is very difficult for flights into and out of the Northwest. February is better but we have

to work around holidays. Mary felt that it appears important to shift our conference schedule, but there are lots of local farmer meetings in January and February around the country. Dan said that he will contact AC members to ask them their opinion about shifting the annual conference cycle. This topic will be a featured topic at our next regular meeting.

## 11) Committee Assignments

Mary reviewed our committee needs for 2004 and discussion followed on possible membership. Following are the tentative assignments coming out of this discussion.

Membership: Allan Hovis agreed to serve as Chair and Mary agreed to help as well. Other to-be-invited members include Don Bradley, Don Gilbert, Pat Hipkins, and Marc Kodrowski.

Finance: Ginny Prest agreed to serve as Chair. Other to-be-invited members include Don Bradley and Janice Oldemeyer. NOTE: Because Don is being asked to be on several committees, Mary will contact Don Bradley to confirm his interest.

Communications: Nancy agreed to serve as the overall Chair with Ginny serving as Chair of the Website/Electronics Subcommittee and Joe Hoffman as Chair of the Media Subcommittee. Don Bradley will be asked to see if he can be helpful on the Media Subcommittee

Elections/By-Laws: Dan agreed to serve as the Chair and Nancy and Roger will provide assistance.

Stewardship/Awards: Gail Amos will be asked to serve as Chair with Rob Denny and Janice Oldemeyer providing assistance.

## 12) By-Law Revision

By the actions taken at today's meeting, all by-law amendment activity will be deferred to the Orlando conference.

## 13) New Topics

- a) Joe Hoffman said that it is important for us to have a link to Earth 911's website on our website.
- b) Allan Hovis said that his experiences with the listserv system have been inconsistent. It was reported that browser style does appear to be a problem and that all users should update to the most recent Adobe version to assure smoother operation. Nancy said she will be doing a listserv update soon and providing a copy to Board members as a sample run. A question then arose on the extent to which the current site should be open/closed to members, and it was affirmed that NPSA should keep its complete site open for the next year before creating any members-only area.

## Next Meeting

Tentatively, the next teleconference date is Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Nancy will be contacting everyone to select the time and provide the telephone access number.

Meeting Adjourned 3 p.m. (EST)