



Minnesota Association of Credit Specialists Farm Service Agency



MACS 2016 Annual Meeting

President Adam Gritz called the MACS 2016 annual business meeting to order at 9:02 am at the Arrowwood Hotel in Alexandria, Minnesota.

Attendance: There were 12 members present. A list of the attendees was taken.

Secretary's Report: Jim Velde distributed the April 10, 2015 minutes. After a brief review, making no revisions to the minutes, a motion to accept the minutes was made Mark Drewitz, second by Stuart Shelstad. Passed.

Treasurer's Report: This was given by Kevin Lehman. Lehman commented that all Zone B meeting costs have been distributed. Drewitz stated that the Zone B meeting generated \$2,800 for MACS. It was noted that half of the Zone B attendees paid their registration by credit card.

There were four new members, mostly FLOTS. Presently, there is \$8,786 in the treasury.

A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Mark Drewitz, second by Lisa Wilson. Passed.

Past year highlights was reported by Mark Drewitz as follows:

1. The annual MACS meeting should try to move the date until late April due to the lending season.
2. Consider doing a "virtual meeting" to permit more members to participate in the meeting.
3. The MACS website should be updated. A new website manager will be needed.
4. Pay Pal is attached to Drewitz. It should be moved to another person.

FLP Chief Stuart Shelstad spoke to the attendees with the following highlights:

1. Farmers are coming under greater degrees of financial stress. Office staff is reminded to be aware of the signs of distress and be ready to deal with customers having financial difficulties.
2. There will be a Farm Loan Specialist position advertised soon with the preference of a St. Paul location. This will be a GS 9/11/12 position. The applicant would need to obtain loan approval authority.
3. Congressional complaints have been low.
4. Commodity selling prices will likely be modified in mid-April. Typical year prices will be reduced. Milk prices will be reduced in both the first and typical year.
5. Application activity is about 10% under last year.
6. STO staff will be meeting with the three Farm Credit System branches in Minnesota sometime in April. Concerns over cash flows will be the biggest topic.

7. Concerns over borrowers changing their names, i.e. forming an LLC, and making the FSA at risk of its collateral. DeCock may help with these questions.
8. FLS Walzak will be updating the ARC CO price calculator.
9. Debt settlements and bankruptcies are low.
10. Contracting – N/O is concerned over the PLCE funds running out. N/O will take money from salaries and expenses and move them to contracting. Contracting for farm visits more likely than to be used for year-end-analysis.
11. Negative cash flows will occur for a while longer.

Guest Speakers Grant Herfindal, Jane Ray and Mark Bertram made presentations to the attendees. The highlights of each presentation are as follows:

Grant Herfindal:

1. Encourages communication with staff. Feel free to phone call Herfindal at the STO.
2. Emphasizes that FSA is here to help all people who come to the office for assistance, no matter of their size of operation, age, etc.
3. FLOT interviews are being held in mid-April.
4. The receipt-for-service and Bridges to Opportunity programs will be performed in greater detail and regularity.

Mark Bertram:

1. MACS does have an impact on FLP state decisions.

Jane Ray:

1. Contracting is getting better. Valerie, STO staffer, is closer to getting a warrant to perform contracting. Nicole, another STO staffer, is getting her warrant as well.
2. Hiring is on-going. The use of Pathways will be continued to encourage diversity. There is an active “recruitment” team that is being used to move the hiring process along.

BREAK FOR LUNCH

A joint session was held with MNASCOE and MACS.

Presentations were given by Grant Herfindal, Mark Bertram, Glenn Schaefer, Stuart Shelstad and Lindsey Motiki and Valerie ? from the STO.

Grant Herfindal, Stuart Shelstad and Mark Bertram reiterated the comments noted above. Lindsey and Valerie gave a presentation on “leave”. Their presentation will also be place in share point. Schaefer gave a presentation on “Bridges to opportunity”, but the FLP staff were excused to continue its business meeting.

Officer’s Reports:

Jake Wolfe , Vice-President – Expressed the work MACS did in the office restructuring in the northwest Minnesota. Assisted in the Zone B meeting extensively. Continues to pursue the on-line UCC filing.

Adam Gritz, President – Stated that being president has been a good experience. Participated in monthly calls with the State Office on various issues during the year. Working with the recruitment

team on using Pathways and internships for hiring FLOTS. The National Meeting is in Washington, D.C. Minnesota should send someone.

Motion: (Wolfe, Lehman) MACS supports an FLM, FLP PT, and two other positions as determined by the FLM and the DD in county offices. Passed.

Discussion: Viewed the letter received from Mike Forsberg which stated the need for the FLP Program Analyst instead of the FLP PT. The members decided to leave it up to the FLM and DD in each office.

Motion: MACS supports the FLP PT position be upgraded due to the complexity of the job. (Hurrle/Wilson) Passed.

The following resolutions were made during the business meeting.

Resolution: Concern: The training efforts provided by the STO staff are needed, but the trainers may lack adequate skill in presenting the training.

Therefore, be it resolved that the trainers be provided instruction in how to present an effective training session. (Drewitz, Durrow) Passed.

Resolution: Concern: EDALR\$ is accessible to only the staff in the county where the borrower's case is assigned. This limits the ability for other FLP employees to input EDALR\$ information for cases not under that employees jurisdiction, thus hindering the ability for detailed employees to assist other offices.

Therefore, be it resolved that all FLP staff obtain the ability to perform EDALR\$ tasks across the state. (Wolfe, DeCock) Passed.

Resolution: Concern: FLP staff is being detailed to other offices to work when much of that work can be accomplished in their own office.

Therefore, be it resolved that FLP staff be allowed to work out of their own office on files from other offices. (Drewitz, Wubbels) Passed.

Resolution: Concern: The GS employee staff remains about 15 people under the employment ceiling.

Therefore, be it resolved that the STO be encouraged to use all options available to reach or exceed the employment ceiling of GS employees. (Velde, Wubbels) Passed

Resolution: Concern: The Minnesota handbooks and amendments are not up-to-date on Sharepoint.

Therefore, be it resolved that sharepoint have the current Minnesota handbooks and amendments posted including any announcements. (Lehman, Drewitz) Passed.

Report of the Audit Committee: Treasurer's records were found to be acceptable. (Hurrle, Wolfe) Passed

Old Business: None.

New Business:

1. Next MNASCOE meeting will be held April 7, 2017. Motion: MACS to propose to MNASCOE to move the 2017 annual meeting to be held April 28, 2017. (Hurrle, Wubbels) Passed.
2. New website coordinator: Jake Wolfe
3. Election of 2017 officers:
 - President: Adam Gritz
 - Vice-President: Jake Wolfe
 - Secretary: Katie Durrow
 - Treasurer: Kevin Lehman

District Representatives will be held in each district.

Meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm

Respectfully yours,

Jim Velde, Secretary