

OCIA MN#1 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Thursday, January 5, 2023
St. Cloud, MN

Board members present: Denise Olson, Dennis Week, Don DeWeerd, Carolyn Lane, Darin Dorn, Chapter Administrator Lorri Ann Hartel. Absent: Paul Vanderwoude
There were 14 in attendance.

1. Welcome Remarks and Lunch: President Denise Olson opened the annual member meeting at 6:45 and welcomed all members and guests. All board members and guests introduced themselves. Members enjoyed a pizza and salad buffet.

2. Comments by Cassie Dahl, MN Dept. of Agriculture

Organic Cost Share is now only done online to reduce the employee time required, especially since Cassie is now the only organic employee at MDA. MDA created a presentation with FSA to explain the online application process for the Organic Cost Share program. Many farmers applied directly through FSA and possibly NRCS. Farmers have until February 3 to apply. If there are any issues with the county offices, let Cassie know and she can help.

Cassie coordinates the Organic Advisory Task Force (OATF). The term goes through 2024. They need a certifier, a member of the public, and a processor. These positions need to be filled within the next couple of months. They have two virtual meetings/year. OATF members are in attendance at the MN Organic conference.

Volunteering at 2024 MN Organic conference: They're hoping to have a better organizational structure next year.

It's important to complete evaluations with our suggestions and comments.

3. Additions or Corrections to Agenda: Carolyn's thank you note for the plant sent for her mom's funeral will be shared. The Board of Directors, Chapter Administrator and corporate members will be introduced.

Darin moved to accept the agenda with the additions. Second by Don. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the March 19, 2022 Annual Meeting were read. Dennis moved to accept the minutes as presented. Second by Darin. Motion carried.

5. FY 2022 Financial Report: Lorri Ann Hartel

a. Review of 2022 finances – Lorri Ann explained the operating activities, basis of accounting, accounts receivable method and revenue sources for MN #1.

The balance sheet for 2022 and Previous Year Comparison were presented. Total assets and liabilities balanced at \$62,988.02.

The Profit & Loss was reviewed line by line.

2022 was a tougher year due to poor planting conditions and thousands of acres of preventive planting. There was a net loss of -9471.44 compared to 2021. We also spent a lot more for education/conferences in 2022 compared to 2021 when conferences were cancelled or virtual. We also lost 7 members in 2022. The PPE grant helped offset this loss.

People are inquiring about OCIA and several who left in previous years are considering returning to OCIA. Packets from OCIA Intl. will be ready Feb. 1. More people are now applying online.

Darin moved to approve the FY 2022 financial report. Second by Adam. Motion carried.

6. OCIA International Report – Carolyn Lane, OCIA Intl. board member

The OCIA Intl. board meets monthly by Zoom plus committee meetings. The new USDA initiative Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) was explained. Its goal is to reverse the decrease of farms transitioning to organic. USDA is investing up to \$100 million over five through TOPP to support new and beginning organic farmers. OCIA has been selected to administer the Plains region. Minnesota is included in the Midwest region, which will be administered by MOSA. OCIA's TOPP team is waiting for the kickoff meeting to receive more direction; still many unknowns.

Carolyn has also been serving as the OCIA board liaison with the NOSB and has been following their meetings, especially the Certification and Accreditation Sub-Committee, which has been focusing on deterring fraud in the organic industry.

An acreage fee increase was voted on in December, as it's been 8 years since there was an across-the-board increase, and inflation has hit OCIA's operating expenses significantly (especially salaries to retain good employees.) The increase will be announced and voted on by the membership at the AGMM later in January.

AGMM: Jan. 19 in Ames, IA. Let any of the board members know if interested in attending or running for the board. Don DeWeerd will be our MN #1 delegate. Carolyn will also attend as an Intl. board member. The AGMM proposed agenda was included in the meeting packet.

7. Education Report: Lorri Ann

- a. Membership: The list of corporate members was read and they were thanked. MN#1 has a total 78 members, including corporate members.
- b. MN #1 sponsored and/or exhibited at the following 2022 conferences: MN Organic Conference (virtual), AGMM R&E (virtual), NPSAS, FarmStart at Steve Halter's farm, Garlic Festival, MOSES conference, SFA. We will again exhibit at 2023 MN Organic Conference and sponsor the AGMM.
- c. Chapter Newsletter continues to be sent quarterly to members. The Winter issue featured chapter member Vika's Essentials (Victoriya Hopperstad) of Burnsville, MN.

8. New Business: Lorri Ann

- a. Elections for 2023: 4 seats open (Denise Olson, Carolyn Lane, Don DeWeerd, Paul Vanderwoude). All were willing to run again. Darin moved to cast a unanimous ballot for the nominated slate. Second by Adam. Motion carried.

- b. Intro of Celia Thompson, certification specialist/file reviewer at OCIA Intl. for last 12 years. Works from home by Gully, MN. Members were able to ask her questions such as crop rotation standards.
- 9. Other Business: Bills of lading and promotional items were available for those in attendance. Door prize drawing - David Walsh won a \$25 gift card for Fleet Farm and a gift basket. The Board presented a gift to Lorri Ann for 20 years of service to OCIA MN #1 as Chapter Administrator. Thank you, Lorri Ann!
- 10. **Adjourn:** Don moved to adjourn. Second by Adam. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Lane
OCIA MN #1 Secretary