

West Plains Beekeepers Association
Minutes
September 16, 2016

The Educational Program was given by Jack Miller on the hive in winter. His presentation is posted on the WPBA website under Presentations. Next month's program will be given by Mike Durst, a fifth generation beekeeper, on varroa mites.

Meeting was called to order at 7:15 by President Ellen Miller.

Secretary Brian Raska was unable to attend the meeting and Mellody Descoteaux volunteered to take the minutes. The August minutes were approved as printed.

Joe Miller, Treasurer, gave his report. After ordering more fleeces there is a balance of \$4,645.

Committee Reports:

Marilyn Geiger, Vice President and responsible for **education**, announced the November beginning beekeeping class dates are November 5, 12, and 19 and will be taught by several of our Journeyman beekeepers.

There will also be a Hands-On class on October 8 at 11:00 a.m. for all beginning beekeepers who have taken classes in the past year. Kevin Oldenburg will demonstrate how to get hives ready for fall/winter at the Medical Lake High School apiary on the Jensen Youth Ranch. Directions are on the calendar posted on the website and a reminder notice will be sent to all who have taken a class from WPBA in the past year. Anyone is welcome.

Marilyn also gave a status report on the committee that is working to develop children's material that can be used at our booth during community events. There are many ideas and the committee is working on finalizing their recommendation. They are also looking into a special page for the WPBA website that will contain children's interest items on bees and beekeeping.

The Airway Heights event went very well and there was special interest in the observation hive. This was the first time it was available and it drew lots of attention. Marilyn announced that she made contact with Mike Durst at the event. Mr. Durst is a fifth generation beekeeper and he has agreed to do a program for us on varroa mites at our meeting in October. The November educational program will be on honey judging. Other suggestions for programs were: an extraction demonstration, essential oils, Noxious Weed Control Board, pollinator strips, and how to build a yard to attract bees. If you have other suggestions please pass them on to Marilyn.

Volunteers are still needed for the Spokane Herbal Faire on September 24.

As part of the beginning beekeeper classes we are wanting to have mentors who will be willing to work with the new beekeeper during their first year providing advice and support as the new student begins working with their bees. A list was passed out for people to sign up to be a mentor for these students.

Research Committee: Kevin Oldenburg was not able to attend the meeting but Margo reported on what they are learning so far at the Medical Lake High School project hives. The hives are doing well with the exception on one hive that has been weak from the start. Regardless of the feed, the hives have all grown at the same rate. The students were out twice during the summer to measure and observe. There will be a hands-on class October 8 as the hives are prepared for winter.

Margo Buckles, chair of the **Publicity Committee**, talked about the use of the WPBA Face Book page which she has been maintaining. She posts an average of three times a week and the activity is good. Margo also passed out posters advertising the November classes encouraging people to take them to post in areas that would receive community interest.

EWU Sustainability Report: Kevin Oldenburg (was given by Margo) met with the group and they have also visited with Jim Miller. They are interested in placing hives on the EWU campus near their garden. The site is one that the WPBA has toured and approved last year. Kevin volunteered to place two hives on their campus next year and is willing to have them there for one year to see how their program develops. At this point there is one student interested in taking a class. WPBA agreed earlier this year to allow for a reduced cost for the beginning beekeeping class to students from approved institutions. After discussion on how to determine the cost, a **motion was made to charge \$20 for students from the sustainability program at EWU wishing to take our Apprentice Beekeeping Class. This will cover the Washington State Beekeepers Association charge for certification. We would set this policy for one year and evaluate the success of the program. The motion passed.**

A motion was made to identify Eastern Washington University and Medical Lake High School as "approved institutions." The motion passed.

Airway Heights Ordinance Report: Jack Miller and Margo Buckles met with the City and were told that they were not opposed to changing the ordinance. They suggested that a resident of the City who was interested in beekeeping in the City contact individual City Council members. One of our members will be contacted to see if she can provide that conduit. At the meeting with the City, several draft ordinances were reviewed. The next step is to arrange for residents to contact City Council members and to schedule a presentation to the City Council.

Website Report: Jack Miller fixed a problem with the PayPal button that was not allowing people to register for our November class.

Washington State Beekeepers Association Report: Ellen Miller reported on the current status of the WASBA and the potentially new break-away group, Washington Master Beekeepers. At the moment legal action is being taken by WASBA to ensure that ownership of resources such as the educational

materials remains with them. We are not expecting this issue to impact us directly but there are rumors flying about a variety of topics. We are comfortable, and have assurance from the President of the WASBA, that certifications will continue to take place in a timely manner. At a WASBA executive board meeting the topic of our member, Sandy Fanara, and her application for Master status was discussed and a special panel of Master beekeepers was appointed to review her application and to take action as soon as possible.

For those who are interested in influencing the outcome of the conflicting interests, one way to have an immediate impact is to join the Washington State Beekeepers Association as a personal member so that you have a vote in the election coming up on November 12th. Voting will be electronic so no travel is involved.

New Business:

The question about donating funds to **WSU Honeybee and Pollinator Research Facility** was removed from the table. This is a question that had been raised several months ago, but Margo Buckles who brought forward the topic, had not been able to attend meetings until this month. There was discussion on this topic including the value to us to have WSU working on honeybee issues in our area. **A motion was made and passed to donate \$500 to WSU Honeybee and Pollinator Research Facility.** Margo will contact WSU and ask if there is any special recognition that will be given to WPBA as a result of this donation. Once we have clarification and a positive response, our treasurer will be authorized to draft a check.

Jim Miller requested that the question of reducing the charge for taking the beginning beekeeping class to approved inmates of the Airway Heights Correctional Center be discussed. He was not able to attend the meeting so the request was presented by Ellen Miller. The WASBA had also been asked to reduce their charge for inmates who were approved by the correctional center to participate in the sustainability program due to positive behavior. They approved a reduction to \$5 at their Executive Board meeting the previous night. A spokesman for the AHCC and one of the staff members involved in this program offered further information about the value of the classes to the inmates. Two other beekeeping associations in the state are participating in this program in their local area. The AHCC has volunteered to do the printing of the WASBA Apprentice Beekeeping Handbook and the test. A motion was made and passed that the West Plains Beekeepers Association charge inmates of AHCC \$5 to take the beginning beekeeping class. This brings the total cost for an inmate to \$10 (\$5 for WASBA; \$5 for WPBA). The remainder of the actual charge of \$35 will be \$25. The amount of \$25 will be awarded to the inmates in the nature of a scholarship.

Motion made and passed to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mellody Descoteaux, Acting Secretary