



Manitoba Flax Growers Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Minutes

Thursday, February 11th, 2016 @ 10:55 a.m. – 11:35 a.m. (CST)

Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention Centre

AGM Room - Wellington

1808 Wellington Avenue, Winnipeg, MB.

Attendees:

Eric Fridfinnson, *Chair of the Board/Research Chair*

Ernie Wiens, *Vice-Chair*

Cam Laxdal, *Finance Chair*

Chris Raffard, *Communications Chair*

Hugh Drake

John Dueck

Nick Matheson

Anastasia Kubinec, *Observer*

Present:

Monika Haley, MFGA (*recording*)

Maureen Jordan, Flax Council of Canada

Members: 15

Guests: 21

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

1. Welcome – Eric Fridfinnson, Chair

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the MFGA Annual General Meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: John Dueck/Reg Marginet that the agenda be adopted as distributed.

Carried

3. Approval of minutes of last AGM – February 17th, 2014 (see attached)

MOTION: Hugh Drake/David Rourke that the minutes of the February 2015 Annual Meeting of Members be adopted as distributed.

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Carried

4. Chair's Report – Eric Fridfinnson

The Chair reported flax production is up 50%. There was a decline in price earlier this year but is better now. Some producers will have a very good year. Flax has many benefits to producers for crop rotation and return.

An MFGA Strategic Planning Session was held last July. One conclusion from this effort is that with appropriate support and demand for flax for Manitoba the goal of 220,000 acres is not unrealistic. Collaboration with the Flax Council of Canada and the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission will drive that growth.

The Agronomy Strategy, which will be presented by Dr. Dribnenki today, will help to better flax growers. The flax industry continues to use the Minor Use Program and are fortunate to have a dedicated Flax Agronomist, Rachel Evans. MFGA makes a financial contribution to the Minor Use and Agronomy Strategy. Ms. Evans first project was to develop the "Growing Flax Profitability (Quick Tips Guide)" which is in your CropConnect event bag. This publication was printed in low numbers and will be updated on a regular basis on reprint. This strategy ensures updated and current information is available to Manitoba growers.

The development of new flax varieties with AAFC, CDC, MAFRD, SFDC, FCC and MFGA working together to ensure the future of the breeding program which is now only active in western Canada.

There is exciting research with new technologies like gene editing. CIBUS continues to work after our commitment ended and have made great strides since then. There are some risks with doubt of acceptability but that process will have to work its way through the system. The money invested by Genome Prairie and MFGA made this possible by the development of genetic markers.

The Triffid situation is now under control with the hard work by the flax industry, producers, seed trade and the Government of Canada. MFGA is asking farmers to use certified seed in this year's planting.

MFGA would like to thank Todd Hyra of SeCan for their sponsorship of the Free Seed Draw and for their role in working through the Triffid situation.

The Chair introduced the MFGA Board of Directors; Brian Johnson, Chair of FCC; Wayne Thompson, Executive Director, SFDC. There is a strong partnership and with limited resources it's important to work together.

MOTION: Cam Laxdal/John Dueck that it be resolved to approve the Chair's report.

Carried

5. Resolution to approve all actions of the MFGA Board over the past year – Eric Fridfinnson

MOTION: Hugh Drake/John Dueck that it be resolved to approve all the actions of the MFGA Board over the past year.

Carried

6. "Notice to Reader" Financial Statement Year Ending July 31st, 2015 – Cam Laxdal

Mr. Laxdal presented the financial statements for year ending July 31st, 2015. The balance sheet show current assets at \$291K including a small amount of capital asset. Check-off dollars are down and expenses are relatively the same as last year. Funded projects are down from \$90K to \$50K, total expenses at \$133K with a deficit of \$18K. The 2015/2016 budget shows a small surplus projecting check-off income at \$180K.

MOTION: Cam Laxdal/Chris Raffard that it be resolved that the Financial Statements Year Ending July 31st, 2015 be adopted as distributed.

Carried

7. Appointment of Accountants – Cam Laxdal

MOTION: Cam Laxdal/David Rourke that Pricewaterhouse Coopers be appointed Accountants for the Manitoba Flax Growers Association for the 2015/2016 fiscal year.

Carried

8. Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission - Wayne Thompson, Executive Director

Mr. Thompson reported that he works for a Board of 6 producers. One of the key goals for farmers is to have access to Rachel Evans, Extension Agronomist. The Crop Development Centre is the remaining active breeding program and SFDC sees this program as a key component. The question is what does the program look like and how to fund it so the breeding program can continue and be sustained. The HealthyFlax.org website, led by the Flax Council of Canada, has been a very good program. Interacting with consumers has been very successful. The industry would like to expand this market and to further develop feed and industrial uses and to focus on working together as an industry. The SFDC participated in a China Mission. The volume of imports are huge and there is further potential for flax in China in the future. SFDC also participate in a Mission to Mexico. This is also a new expanded market for flax and human health. Saskatchewan acreage increase last year so the SFDC has more dollars which goes into agronomy research and the breeding program. SFDC is working with the Western Grains Research Foundation in an economic capacity to make sure the flax industry has agronomic research going forward.

Mr. Marginet noted there is good agronomy research being done. The flax straw is an issue – there are some bales but there is a drawback on how to find a market for the straw. More dollars need to go into straw management.

The Chair agreed that straw is a major issue and has been identified as on the priority areas for breeding. The possibility of developing markers of how straw is formed in the plant, better quality straw and breed varieties that have less fibre to go through the straw chopper.

Mr. Thompson added that this is part of the discussion with the Crop Development Centre.

The Chair thanked Mr. Thompson for his report.

9. Approval of By-law change (see attached)

MOTION: Ernie Wiens/John Dueck that is be resolved that the By-law change on Membership Policy be adopted as distributed.

Dr. Khalid inquired about yearly fees for producers who want to contribute but have not grown flax.

Mr. Wiens indicated the policy for membership in that situation is \$60.00 per year.

Carried

10. Nominating Committee Report – John Dueck, Chair, Nominating Committee

The Chair of the Nominating Committee reported the current Directors are as follows:

➤ Eric Fridfinnson	➤ Chris Raffard
➤ Ernie Wiens	➤ Hugh Drake
➤ Cam Laxdal	➤ John Dueck
➤ Anastasia Kubinec (<i>observer</i>)	➤ Nick Matheson

There are five positions up for election: 1) Hugh Drake; 2) Eric Fridfinnson; 3) Cam Laxdal; 4) Chris Raffard; 5) Ernie Wiens. Each has served their 2 year terms.

At the December 3rd, 2015 Board meeting the issue of too many directors' terms ending at the same time was discussed. It was agreed to elect two directors for a 2 year term and three for a 3 year term in order to even out the numbers so that no more than 3 directors are up for re-election. The goal is for a three year term for all directors.

MOTION: John Dueck/Hugh Drake that is be resolved that the Terms for all Directors of the Board be changed from two years to three years be adopted.

Carried

Mr. Drake, Mr. Fridfinnson, Mr. Laxdal & Mr. Raffard agreed to let their names stand. Mr. Wiens has announced at the December 3rd meeting he will retire from the Board. Further nominations may be further added to which may be put forward today.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Mr. Dueck presents the following name for a three year term:

David Rourke

David and his wife Diane live and farm in Minto, MB. They have 3 daughters; Dana, Darcie and Dorian and a son Don. They have 7 grandchildren ranging in age from 2 months to 12 years. David farms just under 5,000 acres in crop, has a research company and has other interests which includes restoring a 1927 Model T that is a lot of fun when full of grandchildren.

David has enjoyed good yields in flax and is interested in seeing flax continue to be an important contributor to his family's overall wealth. David had the good fortune to be invited to go on a trip this past summer to the UK and France to look at flax and hemp fiber production, processing and utilization. While he is undecided in how their involvement may take shape in the future, he learned a lot about the industry. There is money and demand there if one can master the retting process.

David's main focus is in helping their kids to further strengthen the farm and research businesses, look at new possibilities such as a bioplastics project and be the ancestor his great-great grandchildren need.

Mr. Dueck asked for further nominations from the floor. Being none, he then declared by acclamation nominations were closed and the aforementioned are appointed as Directors. The Chair, Vice Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Finance, Research and Communications Committees will be done internally after the AGM.

