



ONTARIO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS - November 20, 2020
Virtual Conference

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Adam Ritchie, OBA 2nd Vice-President, called the Annual General Meeting of Members to order at 2:20 pm.

2. Quorum

With more than 90 voting members in attendance, quorum was confirmed.

3. Notice of Meeting

Official notice of the Annual General Meeting of Members was provided on October 27th, 2020.

4. President's Report

Bernie Wiehle, 1st VP, provided a summary of 2020 including the struggles, the successes and the goals for 2021. Bernie thanked the outgoing board member, Dennis Edell, for all his hard work and dedication to the OBA over the years.

Bill 132, and subsequently the Bees Act, has been on the minds of members lately. The Bees Act is still in place and will not be repealed until the parameters are in place.

Access to imported queens and packages was a struggle in the spring. Off-shore labour was also difficult to obtain this spring due to the lack of flights and COVID-19 restrictions.

Bernie gave a shout out to the Royal Winter Fair Food Competition winners.

Collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) will continue. Work on beekeeper registration and the Portal will continue to strive to make beekeeper renewals and registrations easier. Agricorp programs will be collaborated on as well.

5. Canadian Honey Council Report

Albert Devries, board member and Canadian Honey Council (CHC) representative, made a presentation highlighting the work of the CHC for 2019/2020.

CHC attended the American Honey Producers Association (AHPA) to try and mend the relationship for export expectations and trade agreements. Testing of honey for contaminants and adulteration in Canada is performed frequently to maintain high quality and standards.

Canadian Honey Bee Industry:

Colony Numbers	2019: 773,282 (down from 2018)
Beekeepers	2019: 10,344 (down from 2018)
Honey Production	2019: 80,000,000lbs (down 15 million pounds)

Industry News:

Fumagillin-B back on the Canadian market

Formic Acid – 65% and Oxytet-25 registration continued through CHC

Honey Bee Health Coalition (overlapping issues with USA)

Canadian Bee Research Fund

Food Safety – MRL levels for glyphosate unsuitable, more testing with imported honey through Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Labour – restrictions on flights in the spring of 2020 reduced access to labour. CHC chartered a flight to bring labourers in and citizens stuck abroad.

Educational videos are being produced in conjunction with the Canadian Agricultural HR Council (CAHRC) to help train labourers in commercial operations.

COVID-19 – Restrictions on queen and nuc imports due again to flight restrictions. Packages are likely to return to standard in 2021 with cargo routes.

Trade Show – virtual this year, looking for new markets for honey export

Apimondia – provided a good amount of profit to allow CHC to provide resources to the industry

6. Issues Management & Stakeholder Relations Report

Committee Chair, Dennis Edell, reflected on his position with the OBA and the key issues that the OBA is working hard to remain informed about and address them on behalf of all Ontario beekeepers.

Current Issues Affecting Ontario Beekeepers:

Ontario

- Small Hive Beetle movement
- The status of Ontario Class 12 legislation
- Bee Kills

Federal

- Neonicotinoid De-Registration
- Access to Temporary Foreign Workers and imported queens/packages.

Small Hive Beetle

The newest location for small hive beetle in Ontario is the Ottawa region. There is a small hive beetle location map available on the OMAFRA website. Management is key for dealing with small hive beetle.

Bee Kills

Due to an incident in Quebec in the spring, assessment of spraying practices and tank mixing of chemicals was questioned. 600 colonies were lost because of this incident. It was noted that spraying on a windy day is not complying with label directions. Letters were sent to the federal and provincial governments, along with farm groups to try and bring light to the best management practices surrounding pesticide applications with respect to pollinators.

Beekeepers in Ontario also lost several colonies due to circumstances that seemed to point towards possible pesticide exposure. In the past, possible exposures would be followed up with sampling and lab assessments. Without these aspects, it is hard to determine cause and correlations.

Neonicotinoids

The status of the de-registration of neonicotinoids is that the use on fruit plants/trees is lessened, but the use on seeds for crops has been mitigated by minimizing dust and second-hand exposure to pollinators. Reporting on incidents has decreased, indicating that the reduction in use may be working; however, it's

likely that the reports have decreased due to beekeeper frustration. The OBA has submitted responses to PMRA proposed actions and has strongly objected to the protracted three year phase out period of these chemicals. OBA put forth a resolution to the CHC in regards to seeking support from PMRA to re-institute the collection of samples and lab analysis of possible pesticide exposure incidents.

The Auditor General’s Report, released in late 2019, stated that the Agriculture Ministry cancelled action plans to improve the health of Ontario’s pollinators without notification or consultations, contrary to the Environmental Bill of Rights.

OBA will continue to work for the beekeepers in Ontario regarding all issues they face year to year.

7. Treasurer’s Report

Tom Congdon reported on OBA’s financials, highlighting the following growth in membership:

	2020	2019	% Change
Total Members	1484	1403	+ 5.8 %
Commercial	135	136	- 0.8 %
Small-Scale	791	573	+ 38.0 %
Young	69	669	- 19.9 %
New	467		
LBA/Supplier	22	26	- 15.4 %

A change in the membership categories, voted on in the previous year’s AGM, was responsible for a change in the small-scale category, with a sizeable increase, while also resulting in a decrease in the young & new membership categories (which are now separate).

Tom discussed the Financial Statements, September 30, 2020, for presentation and approval of members, noting that copies were publicly posted on OBA’s website.

He noted that the received money from the TPA with OMAFRA provided the OBA will a bit of an increase in assets. This funding supports OBA’s outreach, education and training to Ontario beekeepers along with workshops, presentations to Local Beekeeper Association members across the province, spring and fall conference presentations and educational materials.

2020 showed a profit of \$87,521 in contrast to the deficit of \$91,794 in 2019. This essentially has balanced out the two years to show a loss of \$4,273 over the two year span.

Meetings and Conferences were down in revenue, due to COVID-19 restrictions and cancellations.

Tom thanked all members who gave donations to help support the Tech-Transfer Program and educational outreach projects.

Motion to accept the financial statements, for September 30, 2020, as presented.

Moved by Tom Congdon

Seconded by Adam Ritchie

Carried

Motion to investigate a new accounting firm to review OBA’s financial statements for September 2021.

Moved by Tom Congdon

Seconded by Bernie Wiehle

Carried

8. Resolutions

Resolutions Committee Chair, Adam Ritchie, presented the resolutions submitted by members. He noted that two resolutions had been proposed and submitted by the deadline of November 6th.

Resolution #1

Whereas, cash flow is an important issue in Agribusiness and that OSCIA has an onerous procedure for the administration of program claims which involves producers spending a significant amounts of money up front and being subjected to unnecessary delays in fund delivery, and whereas the process involves the submission of paid invoices, and whereas 20% of applicants are subjected to the process of site visits to photograph these same purchases, and whereas those 20% of inspected files are subject to a further 30 day delay from the point of inspection, Be it resolved that the OBA recognize the onerous and unnecessary nature of OSCIA's administrative procedures and the OBA work with OSCIA and OMAFRA to develop a program funding model which either does not require that funds be spent in advance OR that provides immediate reimbursement upon submission of paid invoices.

Proposed by Mike Davidson

Seconded by Bernie Wiehle

Carried

Resolution #2

Whereas import, adulterated and counterfeit honey are a problem and a potential health hazard, and whereas an import moratorium would benefit beekeepers and bee product consumers, Be it resolved that OBA investigate the proposed import moratorium as detailed by Niagara Beeway.

Proposed by George Scott

Seconded by Mark Hopkins

Carried

9. Nominations & Election of Board Directors

OBA member, Paul Kelly, gave a quick overview of the board structure, terms and replacement protocols. He invited all candidates for board election to introduce themselves. Paul presented biographies of candidates not present. The following board members were elected to the board for a 3-year term.

- Jim Coneybeare (Commercial)
- Andre Flys (Commercial)
- Colette Mesher (Small Scale)
- Dave Stotesbury (Commercial)

10. Adjournment

The Annual General Meeting of the OBA was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Subsequently, and at a meeting of the new board, the following board members were elected as officers:

Bernie Wiehle, President
Adam Ritchie, 1st Vice President
Ian Grant, 2nd Vice President, Chair: Issues Management & Stakeholder Relations Committee
Tom Congdon, Treasurer
Albert Devries, Canadian Honey Council
Joanna Paul, Secretary
By virtue of his previous position, Andre Flys, remains as Past President.