

Mount Rogers Area Christmas Tree Growers Association

PO Box 127
Whitetop, Virginia 24292

Minutes – General Membership Meeting, February 27, 2011, Whitetop Fire Hall, Whitetop, VA

The meeting was called to order by President John Rosser at 2:30 PM.

Budget and Financial Report

Earl Deal reported on our expenditures and receipts since September 1, 2010. Attached to these minutes is a spread sheet giving these items since September 1, 2010. Also attached is a modified Balance sheet for the Association. Several items such as the value of the Warehouse, Grayson Highlands Orchard and the new Old Flat Orchard are difficult to determine. Only “good” estimates are contained in the figures. The budget for the year 2011 was presented to the members. The only change from that budget proposed by the Board was an increase in the rent donation to the Whitetop VFD. A motion was made by Buryl Greer to increase this line item to \$1000. This motion was approved and Earl Deal indicated that a check for an additional \$500.00 would be sent when the Association’s cash flows would allow. The Budget as modified was approved by the members. A copy of this budget is attached.

Orchard Reports

Charlie Conner reported on the status of both the Grayson Highlands and Old Flat orchards. It was reported that site preparation and planting of the root stock in the Old Flat orchard was done and that 98% of the plants survived. An excellent accomplishment considering the weather and the oversize root stock planted. Della Deal was busy last fall in working with various growers on the selection of outstanding trees in their fields. Forty-seven (47) different trees have been selected for evaluation for use as grafting material in the new orchard. She worked with John Frampton in taking cuttings in November for needle holding ability evaluation. The results from these studies have not been completed at this time.

Jackie Davis indicated that he was working with the Virginia Department of Forestry in developing a long term cooperative agreement. Several individuals indicated that we needed to push for as long a time period as possible. Carl Garrison, State Forester, will be our speaker at the June meeting. This should be a good time to settle how long an agreement we can have. Several members indicated that we need to thank Mr. Garrison for the support that the Department of Forestry has given the Association.

Jackie also reported on his work with the American Chestnut Foundation on establishing high elevation plantings of several of their Chestnut cultivars. He thinks they will probably establish some trees in the next year or two on the Old Flat site.

Scholarship Committee

Earl Deal reported that Renny Gambril was not going to be able to continue as chairman of the Scholarship Committee. Consequently, we would need another chairman. Dr. Calhoun volunteered to do this and Julie Norris and Cheryl Wiles both indicated that they would serve on the committee. Betsy Deal had volunteered as a committee member also. Two scholarships for \$750 each were approved in the budget.

Copies of the scholarship application were distributed at the meeting and plans are to contact the guidance counselors at both the Ashe and Grayson county high schools. Hopefully, we will have as good a group of applicants as we did last year.

Warehouse

Jackie Davis reported on the cost of a monitoring system with emergency dial up service if the Freezer holding our tree seed should shut down. The basic cost of the equipment is \$535.00 and the monthly cost of phone service and monitoring would be approximately \$35 to \$50. A motion was made that the Association purchase the equipment and have it installed as quick as possible. The motion passed without objection. Jackie indicated that he would make this purchase and have it installed.

It was also reported that ice and snow that had accumulated on the warehouse had slid off and damaged the gutters on the north side. Rodney Richardson has reported that he was working on the roof to repair the leaks and would try to find someone to replace the gutters on this side of the building.

Earl Deal also volunteered to contact Mundy Insurance to find out how much it would cost to insure the seed in the warehouse. Charlie Conner reported on the shipment of about 1/3rd of our most valuable seed to Jim Rockis for emergency storage in his facility. This 120 pounds would be available if we should lose our main supply that is now stored at the warehouse.

There being no further business, the meeting was turned over to Jim Zinck of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for a program on the Gypsy Moth. This program lasted to 5:30 PM. The meeting formally adjourned at that time.

Submitted by:
Earl L Deal, Jr.
Secretary/Treasurer

