

Sheboygan County Beekeepers Association

October 12, 2021

Dan P called the meeting to order.

Attendance: 21

New members: Chris & Nancy Schaeffer

Minutes - September Minutes are posted on the website

Treasurer's Report - Ken reported: that is still unable to get online; the balances haven't changed since last month.

Checking account balance - \$ 1174.97

Savings account balance - \$ 948.99

Motion to Accept: Ray

Second: Keith

Old Business -

- The club engaged in a serious discussion concerning mite mitigation - several members shared their approach. Per Dan P.'s request, Peter D. started it off. He first said that his approach is not one that is recommended by the state and then went on to describe the current situation with the state: basically that Oxalic Acid (when applied the way the state mandates - fogging or drizzle) is not appropriate to apply when harvest honey is in the hive, but should still be applied 4 times per year. He summarized his approach (carefully prepared OA saturated shop towels, which the bees tear and remove from the hive), citing its ease of application and low cost. He went on to say that he would like for the club to be able to move forward with this issue, and asks how others are dealing with the mite problem. Next to weigh in was Dan H. He treated his hives with Formic Pro, for the required 42 days. The weather turned very hot and he lost 2 queens. He said he had read that Formic Pro can interfere with the bees' ability to detect the scent of their own queen and may kill her. He is trying Peter D's approach and is recording all of his mite counts. Ralph (with Dan P.) first applied Apavar, then tried Formic Pro, then returned to Apavar. He lost 1 of 7 hives. Another member fogged OA once per week for 3 weeks. Dan P. mentioned that some beekeepers do a brood break, in which all brood is removed from the hive for a period of time. (ed. Note for newcomers: varroa mites live and breed within the brood cells). Sue mentioned that she uses green drone frames (the varroa mites prefer drone brood, apparently due to longer time in the cell), then pulls the frames and freezes them to kill the mites. Travis applied an OA vaporization application in September, then pulled his supers and treated on the 8th, 16th, and 21st. He said vapor can

be applied when the weather is above 40 degrees. He has treated 3 hives with the towel method. He is still seeing lots of mites.

It was noted that the state recommends rotating treatment methods.

It was also noted that some beekeepers think that by treating for mites, we create a weaker species.

Perhaps the club can develop best practices over time.

- Maywood hive update: Sam Lammers gave her presentation; she had a really nice slide show describing not only the demonstration hive, but also the Maywood programs, including a new education wall, interaction with the daycare kids, and a four-week program on bees and beekeeping done in August, in conjunction with the SCBA. She expressed her thanks to club members, particularly Dan H, and Peter and Elizabeth D. for their support. She is doing everything she can to keep her hive alive through the winter and will keep us posted.
- Club shirts - The club shirts are in; several members picked theirs up from Dan P, who said that additional shirts can be ordered at any time from Callahan's in Sheboygan.
- Future meetings and COVID - re-evaluate after winter if we need to include Zoom meetings.

Correspondence -

- No new correspondence.

New Business -

- Update on a Friend of Sheboygan County Beekeepers entity: The club discussed the details of how people/businesses are nominated; we would like the award to have real meaning, which requires vetting, but don't want to become bureaucratic about it. We also discussed who in the club should "own" the process; it was suggested that the VP might be an appropriate officer to take this on. We agreed to move forward, acknowledging that we will learn over time how to do this well, Ray moved to accept the proposal as written; Sean seconded. The motion carried.
- The response to a member survey was tepid at best, although some people would like to discuss over-wintering at next meeting. Dan P. said additional over-wintering questions will be encouraged and answered at November's meeting.
- Peter D moved, and Dan H seconded that we will not hold our annual Holiday Potluck this year. Motion carried. Our November meeting will be held as planned. Dan P. reminded the group that February is our annual introduction/educational meeting. Our first regular meeting of 2022 will be held in March.

Questions sent from membership - none

Hive reports -

Dan P. and Jessica reported that the hive they cut out in Plymouth last month has disappeared.

Dan H. - winterizing; everything looks good. Peter D. - lost 1 hive due to accidental loss of queen. Remaining 3 hives are healthy and being fed. Sam L. - as per her presentation, but also said that Maywood is looking to keep regular hives in the future. Keith - 3 hives, honey is off, hives look good. Lois and Carl - 4 hives, all look good. Ralph - 6 hives, honey off, feeding. Dan P. - feeding, and notes that the bees are eating a lot. Ray - 10 hives, 9 are eating a lot; pulled honey from 4. One member reported his first package died; he went to 2 nukes, which are strong but produced no honey; they are eating a lot. Jessica is feeding and added rubber screen. Travis - hives are strong but have a lot of mites. Other members are feeding.

Program - Sam Lammers gave a presentation on Maywood.

Topics for the Month -

Over-wintering techniques. Terry is using quilt boxes with open bottoms, although she closes the entrances when it is very cold. 9 out of 10 hives survived last winter. Dan P. makes quilt boxes out of burlap and painters tape. He also drills holes into a solid bottom board to ensure good ventilation. Most members wrap their hives. . General discussion: candy boards can be added for feeding even in late winter, as no moisture is introduced to the hive. Several members use candy boards, one member mentioned adding a little white vinegar to the board to prevent mold. Travis doubles up 5 frame nukes. It was also mentioned that a local honey producer over-winters their bees in nukes that are tightly packed on pallets.

Joanne F. reported that the Sheboygan Senior Community (SSC) now has a lush clover lawn! She attended a gathering honoring the 25th anniversary of the Glacial Lakes Conservancy, which celebrated the Dutch White clover planting of a 10 acre sport field. She has also been invited to a sustainability conference at Kohler Sportscore in November.

Motion to adjourn: Ray

Second: Peter D.

Raffle -

Next meeting is Tuesday, November 9th - 6:30 pm at NOURISH

Refreshments at the October meeting are Al Spindler and Carl & Lois Demmin

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth D for Kathy P.