

## Sheboygan County Beekeepers Association

April 12, 2022

### Agenda

Dan P called the meeting to order.

Attendance: 42

New members: Steve and Morgan Becker, Paul and Courtney Gottsacker, Derek Huebsch, May Reid, Chris and Nancy Schaefer, Krystal and Travis Wick, Lidia and Josh Kalsow

**Minutes** - March minutes are posted on the website

#### **Treasurer's Report -**

Checking account balance - \$ 1572.47

Savings account balance - \$ 949.19

**Motion to Accept:** Gary

**Second:** Ralph

#### **Old Business -**

- The March meeting was very informal and relaxed. It was filled with questions, many from new beekeepers, who want to learn what to do for a new hive. letter templates when the logo issue is decided.

#### **Correspondence -**

- The Association sent a Get Well card to Peter D, a member who suffered a serious accident and is now recovering. The card was very much appreciated!

#### **New Business -**

- Dan P circulated a sign-up sheet for presentations. Anyone with an appropriate topic is encouraged to volunteer and share their knowledge.
- The group discussed whether or not the annual June picnic should be held. Dan P. said the club will provide brats, hot dogs, hamburgers, and will look into who provides beverages. Everyone brings a dish to pass and a prize to contribute to the Speed Bingo game we play. There are ongoing concerns about COVID-19, but the group has decided to proceed with the picnic, as it will be outdoors.
- Peter D had asked that the SCBA discuss No Mow May, a community event which began in Europe and has found a positive reception in Appleton. Dandelions and clover are allowed to grow, providing early fresh food for the bees and other pollinators. Appleton has an ordinance that requires mowing which, for the third year in a row, is being waived for the month of May. Further, the Appleton Common Council voted in March of this year to make No Mow May a regular practice in that community, Several SCBA members offered their

experiences with the program and discussed current mowing requirements and neighbor issues in surrounding communities. It is too late for Sheboygan County to participate this year. Peter suggested that we approach local municipalities for next year.

A few members know a professor in Appleton who helped put their program in place and volunteered to talk to him about it. It was generally agreed that this is a good issue for SCBA to support, perhaps some member(s) would consider taking this on.

### **Questions sent from membership - none**

**Hive reports** - Most members are feeding. The general report is as follows; the first number indicates the number of hives going into winter the second the number of hives which survived. Member name(s) have been included when possible. (It would be helpful for members to state their names when delivering reports. Thanks)

1-1, 25-15, 2-2, 5-4, 6-0 (new packages have been ordered) Gary, 2-0, 6-5 Ralph, 3-3 Peter, 8-2, 4-3 Jason, 6-6 Dan H, 3-1, 9-7, 2-0, 1-0, 7-6 Dan P, 5-1 Ken, although Ken also reports that the hive at the Children's Museum survived for the very first time, which is great news.

**Program** - Craig and Michelle of Let It Bee of Greenville, WI, presented a program on Hive Splitting. The First Rule: **Never Split a Weak Hive**. Split hives that have successfully overwintered, but be careful to not split too early to ensure that you can procure or develop a queen and will have mature drones; they recommend sometime around Mother's Day. Several options for splitting were discussed:

A Walkaway split made without finding the queen. You find the brood nest in the hive you want to split, making sure you have eggs and brood, capped and uncapped. Divide the nest frames between the original and new hive, making sure each nest has plenty of nurse bees. Surround the frames with pollen and honey, adding food if needed. Craig then leaves the hives alone for 24-48 hours; the queen-less hive will build queen cells in preparation of developing a new queen. Craig almost always introduces his own queen unless he wants to preserve the genetics of a colony that has, for example, overwintered several years, in which case does not remove the queen cells. A new queen will develop in 16 days and will then take her mating flights, although she can hold off those flights for up to 30 days if necessary. 7 Days later she will start laying, then 21 days to hatching brood. So 4 - 6 weeks are required to establish the new colony. Foragers that have been moved to the new hive will often migrate back to the original hive, so it is important to provide pollen, etc. in case the foragers have departed the new hive. One can also insert a queen excluder prior to the split to encourage development of queen cells although Craig uses a page of newsprint for this purpose. If the new hive fails to re-queen, the hives can always be reunited.

Another option: place frames with queen cells into a nuk box with eggs, larvae, and capped brood, a few frames of honey, and 1 frame of foundation. [Caution: make sure the original hive

is not left queen-less! Hives usually swarm within 2-3 days of having capped queen cells, so the swarm may have already absconded.]

Other topics Craig discussed: Colonies often work their way to the top box during winter; when this happens, he often moves the top box further down. He uses a slider rack because it allows ventilation, keeps the hive dark, helps prevent swarming, blocks wind, and minimizes burr comb. He uses both screen and solid bottom boards; screens allow for non-invasive inspection (he favors non-invasive bee-keeping). He sometimes puts Canola oil on the debris board. He uses oxalic acid for mite treatment in early spring, formic acid a little later, treating Spring and Fall. If he has a serious mite infestation, he will treat with Formic Pro in the summer. There is a 10 day wait per pad, so it takes 2 pads to cover the full cycle. He airs the pad out for an hour before placing it in the hive. They highly recommend *The Bee Book*.

Let It Bee sells 1 gallon, 2 1/2 gallon, and 5 gallon containers of feed. They sell Italian, Carniolan, Buckfast, and Russian/Italian hybrid bees.

He will have queens available in June.

They maintain a retail shop with honey, candles, clothing, etc. and can be found on the Web and on Facebook.

Thank you both for a great program!

**Motion to adjourn:** Peter

**Second:** Ray

**Raffle -**

**Next meeting is Tuesday, May 10 - 6:30 pm at NOURISH**

**Refreshments at the April meeting were provided by Ralph and Dan P.**

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth D for Kathy P.