

**Beekeepers Association of Southwest Florida**  
- M I N U T E S -

Regular Business Meeting, January 18th, 2024

**BEFORE MEETING**

**Call to Order:** by Dennis Riggs, President at 7:00p

**Introduction of Guests (and New Members):** by Dennis Riggs, multiple new members - new, hobbyist to experienced (Debbie & Paul, Jordan?, Michelle, etc)

**Secretary's Report (Minutes):** Previous minutes were made available via website. Minutes were accepted by Paul Slayton, seconded by Bob Kemper. Motion carried (unanimous).

**Treasurer's Report:** by Virginia Motion. (*defer to website*) November's report - Moved by John M. Seconded by Paul Slayton. Motion carried (unanimous). December's report, balance of \$14,040.31 - Moved by Jeff. Seconded by Paul Slayton. Motion carried (unanimous). Will discuss raising the dues from \$15 to \$20.

**Apiary Report:** by Dennis Riggs, report was supplemented by our website photos and captions displayed on TV monitor at the meeting and similar/additional information may also be found on our Facebook page. No apiary meetings occurred. Angela and Dennis inspected was doing well in November. Then encountered ant issues which were addressed. At the most recent inspection in January, SHB have infested the hives. Traps were reset and additional were added. Dennis will be caulking areas to make hives more impervious to pests. An apiary day needs to be scheduled.

**Education Committee Report:** by Dennis Riggs, Dennis and Virginia did honey talk and tasting. Marc did an educational talk about bees at a school in December.

**Mentoring Committee Report:** by Dennis Riggs, Josh's hives were inspected and treated for mites via vaporized prior to massive hive failure, Ashley's hives are doing well at Dennis', Jennafer's hives are doing well, Jerry Brown's bees are doing well since probiotic treatment, Angela may be in Ft Myers Weekly magazine with Dennis. Her apiary is doing well with numerous hives and experiments with new equipment.

**Communication Committee Report:** Dennis is keeping website and Facebook up-to-date with apiary and mentoring progress. Dennis is making posts of relevant issues, questions etc on FB. FI State Beekeepers Association, Dennis is still promoting the "Save the Bees" plate.

**Old Business:** Nominations for elections are still needed otherwise we will continue as before. Need a copy of our IRS determination letter and budget to be able to solicit donations. Events are coming up and the club needs to decide on the purchase of promotional material.

**New Business:** Dues are suggested to be raised for new members to \$20 effective February. Existing members electing to renew have the option to pay \$15 at February's meeting or renew at \$20 from March forward. Moved by Jeff H and seconded by John M. Carried unanimously. A motion was made for the public education committee to have the ability to spend \$2,500 for marketing and print materials. Moved by John M. Seconded by Cathy. Carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned approximately 7:53p

Respectfully submitted by Jennafer Snyder, Secretary.

### **Raffle**

- Misc bee related items, magazines, refractometer, entrance feeder.

**Speaker:** Paul Slayton - Making a Nuc

Nuc is a mini colony that is already thriving and will rapidly expand if you have a young queen. Terms can be used interchangeably between equipment and bees - be sure to clarify as it depends on the beekeeper.

Expect a minimum of 2-3 frames of bees, boxes come in all shapes and sizes.

Nucs are important - can be a management program, maintaining colonies in the strongest possible condition, preferable means for new beekeepers or those who lack the skill to make new queens, can determine the success of a beekeeper.

Reasons to make a nuc:

1. Alleviate swarming tendencies
  - a. Make a nuc 4-6 weeks prior to nectar flow, feed both parent colony and nuc
  - b. Benefit can be seen managing one nuc per 2-3 full sized colonies
    - To make a strong nuc, pull 3 frames of brood plus queen, feed parent and nuc. Parent colony gets brood break. Option to allow parent colony to make a queen or requeen.
    - To make a weak nuc, pull 2 frames of brood, feed nuc and allow them to make a queen. They will also need a frame of resources. This a better option during warmer times, when pest pressure is low and during a nectar flow.
2. Make use of queen cells
  - a. Split parent colony and make a nuc (if multiple, leave the largest 2)
  - b. Requeen a poorly performing queen
  - c. Donate capped queen cells to another beek
3. Provide a place to put swarms (with reference to having a nuc box)
4. Keep production colonies strong
  - a. Remove one frame of bees and brood from the nuc each week during the spring (starting ~3 weeks before the nectar flow begins) and add it to your production colony. (Spray with sugar water, hint of mint when adding frames with bees)
    - i. Be sure to be ready to give them plenty of space to expand.

5. Strengthen weak colonies
  - a. Give a weak colony a frame(s) of brood and bees from the nuc to boost (use honey frame as a barrier when combining colonies)
  - b. Or move the weak colony to a nuc - prevent pest problems before they occur
6. Deal with queen problems
  - a. Some are going to swarm
    - i. Lose 4 weeks of brood production
    - ii. Difficult to purchase queens early in the season
    - iii. Honey crop is at risk
  - b. Spotty brood
  - c. Laying workers
7. Expand your apiary
  - a. Save money rather than purchasing
  - b. Double, triple or quadruple number of colonies
  - c. Will sacrifice honey production and require investment in woodware
8. Produce additional income
  - a. Nuc income is significantly higher than standard byproducts of bees (honey, wax products)
9. Create a more sustainable apiary
  - a. Replace winter losses
  - b. Breed locally adapted queens
10. Fun and easy way to learn about bees

#### Call to action

- Make your plan, get a box and extra frames
- Be ready to make a nuc when the opportunity presents

Notes: Nucs can be close during a nectar flow, can pull frames of brood from a nuc every week if hive is healthy and during a flow