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Official Minutes of the 2023 Annual Business Meeting

Chairman Brad Barth called the 120th annual business meeting of the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association to order at 10:50 a.m. on January 12, 2023. The meeting was held at the Bigwood Event Center in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, the Chairman and Secretary being present. The Chairman confirmed that notice of the meeting was properly mailed ten days prior to the meeting and was published in the winter 2022 issue of the *Minnesota Seed Grower*. He took roll call of the Board members present. With more than 25 members in attendance, the Chairman declared that quorum was met.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the 2022 MCIA Annual Meeting were published in the spring 2022 issue of the *Minnesota Seed Grower* and were included in the meeting documents. John Kappahn moved to approve the minutes of the 2022 MCIA Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

Treasure's Report: The Chairman reported that the Statement of Activities and Financial Position for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2022, was included in the meeting documents. The financial report and an independent audit were successfully completed, presented, and accepted at the November 2022 Board meeting. Copies can be obtained by contacting the MCIA office. The Chairman stated that financial reports are reviewed by the Treasurer and the Chairman and presented at each meeting to the Board of Directors.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman stated that MCIA is in good financial position. He encouraged producers and members to use and promote MCIA's services. He thanked MCIA's staff members for their continued dedication to the organization.

Board of Directors' Election: The Chairman thanked outgoing directors Darius Thiel and

Matt Bohn for their service to the Board. The Chairman explained the Board of Directors' election ballot: Two incumbent Category A directors were seeking re-election. Three other Category A director positions were open. One nomination had been received for each position on the ballot. Brent Benike, District 1, and Grant Mehring, Related Industry, each having completed one three-year term, sought a second term. The nominees for open director positions were Wes Olmschenk, District 2, of Foley, Minnesota; Jake Noll, Related Industry, of Breckenridge, Minnesota; and Ryan Anderson, District 3, of Dunnell, Minnesota. (Anderson was seeking to serve the remaining two years of a three-year term of a vacant District 3 position.) Nancy Ehlke was nominated by the University of Minnesota to serve as Category B director. There were no other nominations. Duane Dahlman moved to cast a unanimous ballot for the election of the nominated slate of Category A directors and ratify the nominated Category B director. The motion was seconded and passed.

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws: MCIA President/CEO Fawad Shah presented changes to MCIA's Articles of Incorporation and By-laws recommended by the Board of Directors. Duane Dahlman moved to accept the amendments as presented. The motion was seconded and passed. [Note: See the MCIA website for a full description of the amendments to the association's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws that were adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting.]

President's Report: The President introduced MCIA's staff members. Next, he reported that fiscal year 2021–2022 was financially successful for MCIA. Organic Services led all departments in revenue generated, showing sustained growth over the past five years. Revenue from the Field Services and Foundation Seed departments increased slightly. Revenue from

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Certification and Seed Laboratory Services declined slightly. Organic Services expenses showed a slight decrease over five-years, mainly due to staff changes. Field Services expenses also decreased. Foundation Seed Services expenses increased slightly. Seed Laboratory Services expenses increased, mainly due to new staff. The trend for Certification Services expenses remained steady.

MCIA continues to collaborate with the University of Minnesota, acting as licensing agent for its crop varieties, increasing foundation seed, providing seed laboratory services in support of academic research, and developing curriculum for a Seed Science, Technology & Society course.

The President then reported on personnel changes. Since January 2022, those who resigned their positions at MCIA included Tom Keskey, Field Services; Connie McDowell, Seed Laboratory; and Karen Gjehaug, Cherry Flowers, and Tyler Tisdale, Organic Services. New hires include Keith Marti, in June as District 3 field supervisor; Claire Biel, in October as seed lab technician; and two organic certification specialist/inspectors—Shauna Ilse, in August, and Lauren Martin, in January 2023. One organic certification specialist/inspector position remains open.

MCIA continues to work with University of Minnesota and Farmers Yield Initiative to stop the illegal sale of PVP seed. Recent court judgments were entered against two Minnesota farming operations in a case brought forward by the Regents of the University of Minnesota to stop unauthorized use of PVPA-protected oat varieties. The judgements were in the amounts of \$50,000 and \$150,000.

The President conducted an in-person OECD Seed Schemes roundup at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) office in Pakistan. The participants included staff from the country's Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department, the FAO, and private company representatives. While in Pakistan, the President also gave a presentation on corn seed production at a conference held at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. In October, MCIA hosted a tour of our facilities for a group of professors and university administrators from Zimbabwe.

MCIA's Field Services inspects nearly 180 facilities each year for the Approved Facility Program. In 2022,

five facility inspections were completed under the U.S. Identity Preserved Program. Field Services also administers the MnDOT Approved Seed Vendors Program and MCIA representatives serve on the Minnesota Soybean Council and the Minnesota Turf Seed Council.

The MCIA Seed Laboratory is accredited by the USDA's Accredited Seed Laboratory Program through 2025. Thus far, laboratory reports indicate that seed quality is high with some mechanical damage on soybeans. The Seed Laboratory circulated a customer satisfaction survey. Feedback was positive for quality, turnaround time, and customer care.

Foundation Seed Services installed a Meyer M-1 Color and Shape Optical Sorter. It was used to improve the purity of soybean and barley seed lots. Spring Foundation seed sales increased 10.5 percent compared to 2021. Wheat sales were up 31 percent and oat sales were up 6 percent. MCIA prepared new license agreements for one winter barley line and two soybean lines.

Updated Organic Services fee schedules, with changes effective January 1, were recently mailed to clients. Due to personnel changes over the past year, hiring and training of new Organic Services staff members continues.

Certification Services saw a decrease in final certification fees for fiscal year 2021/22 of approximately \$20,000, mainly due to perennial grasses and drought conditions. Compared to last year, in fiscal year 2022/23 there is a decline in hybrid rye, oats, tall fescue, and wheat and an increase in corn and perennial ryegrass.

MCIA will host AOSCA's 2023 international annual meeting in June. In conclusion, the President stated that MCIA will continue to work on database improvements, fill vacant positions, and train newly hired staff. MCIA looks forward to ongoing collaboration with SSGA, the University of Minnesota, MDA, MnDOT, and other state and federal agencies throughout the year to increase its visibility, market its services, and engage in capacity building.

The Chairman then called for other business. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.