

55th Annual South Dakota State SDASCOE Convention-2015

April 24-25, 2015

Deadwood, SD

The 2015 SDASCOE Convention opened with President, Stan Lamb welcoming us to Deadwood. He introduced SED, Craig Schaunaman who addressed the group. He began by thanking us for the job we do. In the past year we were asked to administer many programs and did an excellent job. We paid out over \$260 million in LFP and over \$40 million in LIP. The ARCPLC sign-up was completed in a timely manner. As he said SD gets it done. He reported that staffing is challenging. They are trying to hire up to full staffing and can now hire above the staff ceiling as long as they are at staff ceiling at the end of the fiscal year. They just received the certificate on Monday for the COT positions. There were 23 applicants. He stated that he hopes they will have a yearly workload model to base staffing on. They are in the process of setting up criteria for extra effort awards. The employee associations will be involved in setting up the criteria for the awards. There will not be blanket awards for everyone. He stated that area training meetings are very important because bringing employees together helps foster workforce engagement.

A question and answer session was next.

1. *Are you going to hire Key PT's for each district?* They are looking at hiring based on program more than by district. Some programs might be MPP and NAP but that isn't definite.
2. *The advertisement said you would hire 3 COT's are you going to stay with that number?* We based the number hired on the candidates that could do the job for us.
3. *Has the DD re-alignment been decided?* Yes and there will be a notice out soon stating the changes.
4. *Will CED's be allowed to do FLP training for loan approval?* They will consider if it would be beneficial to the agency

Next we were addressed by the congressional representatives, Qusi Al-Haj for Senator Thune, Jeff Marlette for Senator Rounds and Kyle Holt for Representative Noem. They all stated their appreciation for the good job we did in administering the farm bill. They were asked about sequestration and stated that sequestration is the law of the land. It was implemented in 2011 and runs thru 2021 but appropriations can change it. They were happy to report that this year Congress has passed a budget. There have only been 4 times in the last 36 years that Congress has passed a budget on time.

Calvin Bagley with Dillard Financial provided us with a retirement seminar. He informed us that we need to take time and do research prior to retirement. We have several good resources to check into such as MyFederalRetirement.com and the Office of Personnel Management at OPM.gov. Dillard's offers good retirement information as well and he had some excellent handouts.

Billy Denison, NASCOE NAFEC Committee Chair spoke to us about NAFEC. NAFEC is able to do things we as employees cannot do. He encouraged us become associate members of NAFEC and asked that we encourage our county committee members to join NAFEC.

The committee meetings were held jointly with each committee chair presenting their report. The individual reports are posted on the SDASCOE website.

We adjourned for the day. The evening awards banquet was held at the Deadwood Gulch Convention Center. Length of Service and Sick Leave awards were presented. Lori Jones read the names of the counties that will be receiving awards at the National convention for years of 100% membership. We had two distinguished service awards presented. The Community Service award was presented to Sherry Ternes from Corson County and she also won the NWA award. The Service to FSA award went to Damon Stormo of Hamlin County and he won the NWA award also.

The general session of the 2015 SDASCOE Convention was called to order by Stan Lamb. The National Anthem was sung and we recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Mike (Jeremiah) Johnson the Historical Preservation Supervisor for the city of Deadwood welcomed us and thanked us for choosing Deadwood for our convention site. Doug Hofer representing the host counties of Corson and Ziebach thanked us for attending the convention. Stan introduced our special guests: Deb Esselman, NASCOE Secretary and her husband John Baird, Phil Morton, NWA Exec., Lanney Nelson, RASCOE President, Dean Bahr, SDACS President, Larry Olsen, NASCOE Parliamentarian, Becky Zirpel, NWA Publicity Chairperson, Billy Denison, NAFEC Committee Chairperson. We also had representatives from JM Marketing, Dillard Financial and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Roll call was answered with counties informing us of a famous Wild West character from their county. There were 103 attendees. Next was a power point presentation honoring our departed FSA employees. The minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting were read. Larry Somsen moved to approve and file the minutes. Rhonda Deutsch seconded the motion, motion carried. The treasurer's report was handed out. Mary Johnson explained the report and noted a correction that needed to be made in the amount of interest that was earned on the checking account. \$41 was listed on the report and the amount should have been \$.41. Joel Foster moved to approve the treasurer's report as corrected. Motion was seconded by Bill Chase, motion carried.

Lanney Nelson, RASCOE president addressed the group. He reported RASCOE had 23 members in attendance at the annual meeting. He reminded the group how wonderful retirement is and that everyone gets one year of free RASCOE membership when they retire. The winners of the 50/50 drawing were announced.

Dean Bahr, SDACS president was next on the agenda. He thanked SDASCOE for inviting him to attend. He stated he is envious of our strong association, SDACS and SDASE do not have strong associations. Only about 2/3 of the eligible members belong to the association. Even at the recent FLP training when all loan officers and managers were in attendance they couldn't get members to attend a meeting.

Cathy Denison visited with us about JM Marketing and the products that they offer. They have a new long term care/life insurance policy. There are many other plans available that can be viewed on their website jminsuredirect.com or the NASCOE website has a link to the site.

Deb Esselman, NASCOE secretary, spoke to us about NASCOE negotiations. She said the message we need to get to our legislators is that FSA is the face for agriculture. Producers depend on us, even if things can be done on-line producers want to see a face and visit with someone about decisions they need to make. We are the face. There is a pilot project called ACRISI which is allowing producers to do acreage reports at FSA, RMA or from a home computer. NASCOE is monitoring this project, we want FSA to be the warehouse for crop reporting data. NASCOE is working on providing more consistency in performance ratings. They are also aware of the need for training.

NWA executive, Phil Morton, highlighted some of the things NASCOE is working on. The performance plan process is being looked at. It is hard for an employee to get exceeds. Some elements may need to be adjusted so PT's can reach exceeds. The national mailings have created issues for the field staff and NASCOE would like input on that. GovDelivery is a big issue in some states. County offices can do their own bulletins but must use information that is cleared by the national office. Lexmark printers still have some problems. It is a problem having just one printer to share between agencies so they are working on getting more printers and more printers that don't require using our lincpass. The employee viewpoint survey is important to use and be honest with the answers. They are working on leadership training for PT's. There may be promotion opportunities as they are trying to move DC employees out of DC and allowing telework. There is a task force looking into speeding up the hiring process. The COT/FLOT hiring process is being reviewed. FLOT's go in to one office to train and that is where they stay. They are looking at the COT's being the same. Hunter Moorhead has done wonders for us. We were able to get more money with his help. Candidates running for NASCOE officers are: Wes Daniels (North Carolina) for President, Dennis Ray (Missouri) for Vice President, Shelly Odenkirk (Ohio) for Treasurer and Deb Esselman (Wisconsin) for Secretary. Jenae Prescott is running for NWA Executive.

There was no old business. In new business Monica Cooper moved to file the committee reports. Brenda Wicks seconded the motion, motion carried.

The Ways and Means raffle drawing was held: Jodie Schremp won the Kindle Fire, Roxie Stambach won the Black Hills gold tie tack, Larry Somsen won the Black Hills gold necklace and Brett Knox won the \$100.

Election of officers was held: Lori Jones nominated Stan Lamb for president and Bill Chase seconded the motion. Larry Olsen moved that nominations cease and the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Stan, Doug Hofer seconded. Lori Jones nominated Joel Foster for Vice President and Mary Johnson seconded the motion. Larry Olsen moved that nominations cease and the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Joel, Brenda Wicks seconded the motion. Mary Jane West nominated Michaela Iverson for secretary and Roxie Stambach seconded the motion. Larry Olsen moved that nominations cease and the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Michaela, EJ Goetz seconded the motion. Laurie Pfeifle nominated Mary Johnson for

treasurer and Janelle Adrian seconded the motion. Larry Olsen moved that nominations cease and the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Mary, Becky Zirpel seconded the motion.

Director elections will be sent out soon. Terms run thru July 1 and elections will be completed before that time.

There was no formal bid for the 2016 Convention so more will be coming on that later. A thank you was given to Corson and Ziebach counties for putting on a successful convention and thanks to districts 1 and 7 for the wonderful door prizes.

Joel Foster moved to adjourn the meeting and Larry Olsen seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Susi Odden, Secretary