



MACS Newsletter



May 2007

Meeting with FLP Staff Held

Jerry Hurre and Mark Drewitz attended a portion of the State FLP Staff meeting in St. Cloud on May 15th. The staff meeting was held Monday through Wednesday, with MACS attending on Tuesday afternoon. All state level FLP staff were in attendance including all out-state specialists and appraisers.

Discussion centered on the FLP goals for FY 08 since the National Office is requiring goals be established for each Service Center. The current state goals for FY 2008-2011 have already been set by the National Office. Data was reviewed which outlined each Service Center's average for a FY 03-05 base period as well as a FY 04-06 period. The National Office is basing Minnesota's goals on FY 03-05. Mike Walzak and Anna Parker had prepared a spreadsheet which indicated what each Service Center's goals would be if the percentage change in the state's goals were applied to the average for the two periods.

After discussion there was general agreement to use the FY 04-06 data as a base level. MACS proposed,

however, that Service Center's use the state goal and the FY 04-06 data as a guide and establish their own goals for FY 08 after consultation with the District Director. This would enable Service Center's to have more of a say in what the goal is – especially with the Performance Management system now being put in place. The Service Center would have to justify the goal number selected with final review of acceptability by the FLC. This suggestion was positively received.

A possible goal as to the number of direct and guaranteed applications received in a year was also discussed. MACS is not in favor of this goal; however, we did recognize they were looking for a way to measure outreach. Discussion centered on how to gage outreach and also on activity levels in offices. A decision on this as a possible goal will be made with the rest of the goal setting process.

The goal information is expected to be out by about the 1st of July with final setting of Service Center goals by September 1st.

The credit report issues were also reviewed. A notice/unnumbered letter is expected shortly to clarify this issue as to when a joint credit report, spouse signatures on the application or 410-9, etc. is needed. These issues/problems are not as a result of the changeover to the FBP plan but rather issues with obtaining credit reports and ECOA issues concerning spouses.

The DLS implementation was also discussed with a possible meeting for each District or Bi-District being Pat Gendron's recommendation.

We appreciated the meeting opportunity with the FLP staff and requested that MACS be invited to future such meetings.

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FMA Information

The FMA Washington Report newsletter is located at: <http://www.fedmanagers.org/public/washingtonreport.cfm>. Members are encouraged to monitor the FMA site to keep abreast of the latest events with FMA and legislative actions in Washington.

Upcoming Meetings

2007 National Conventions - June 24-27, 2007 Millennium Hotel Cincinnati, OH. Registration can be still sent in but a late fee will be assessed of \$25.00. Official MACS delegates can receive two days of administrative time for attending the convention. This is as per our Consultative Agreement with the State Office. However, please report to me at mark.drewitz@msn.com if you will be attending as I need to submit a list to the State Office for the administrative time.

Visit the NACS web site at www.nacsfsa.org to obtain the registration form.

MACS Annual Meeting – July 19-20, 2007, Fergus Falls.

Zone B Meeting – Sioux Falls, South Dakota, February 2008.

2006-07 MACS Board

President – Mark Drewitz
Vice President – Lee Crawford
Secretary – Becky Martinson
Treasurer – Sue Westrom
NASE State Contact – Jean Post
Past President – Russell Miller
District 1 Representative - Kirk Phelps
District 2 Representative – Jim Velde
District 3 Representative – Mike Smith
District 4 Representative – Kevin Lehman
District 5 Representative – Rick Ray
District 6 Representative – Scott Nordby
District 7 Representative – Cindy Vukasin
District 8 & STO Representative – Kevin Elton

MACS/MNASCOE Annual Meeting – July 20th

The registration form and hotel information are now available. These forms are attached to this newsletter. Plan now to attend the annual meeting in Fergus Falls, on Friday, July 20, 2007. Activities will begin Thursday, July 19th in the afternoon and evening with the meeting to be held the next day.

Election of officers, action on submitted resolutions, discussion and action on bidding for the Zone B 2009 meeting in Minnesota, and other business will be conducted at the meeting.

NACS Constitution Change RE: FMA

A proposal for a change to the NACS constitution has been made that would make FMA membership voluntary for NACS members. Currently membership in NACS requires membership in FMA. MACS' constitution also requires the FMA membership. Betsey Senter and Bill Mahanay, two past NACS Presidents and active participants in FMA, have put forth this proposal which will be acted on at the NACS Convention. If any member wishes to make their views known on this issue, please send your comments to me at mark.drewitz@mn.usda.gov or mark.drewitz@msn.com.

Of interest will be how this proposal would address the legislative issues that FMA has allowed NACS to be more involved with than prior to the affiliation with FMA.

If this measure passes the NACS Convention, it will also come up as a constitution change for MACS at the MACS Annual Meeting.

MACS Annual Meeting – You Can Make a Difference!

At the upcoming meeting, all members' and potential members' participation is invited and encouraged. There are opportunities ranging from simply your attendance to running for and accepting election to office.

Your attendance is an indicator of your interest and level of support and is noticed by State Office attendees. This aids the next MACS Board as they deal with issues affecting every employee in Minnesota in discussions with State Office staff and also up through our respective National Associations. Your questions to the participating State Office staff provide an excellent means for their assessment of issues and concerns of the employees. The annual meeting is less a time for us as employees to learn from the State Office staff's remarks, but more a time for them to learn and obtain direct feedback from employees.

There are opportunities for members to serve in appointed capacities including the MACS program committee's in Farm Loan Programs, Management – Personnel, Farm Program, Automation, and Legislative. The NACS or NASE State Contact is also an appointed position. The State Contact is a MACS member who holds the opposite National Association affiliation as the elected MACS President. You may volunteer to be considered for these positions at any time.

One of my goals has been moving our organization to one where people express their interest in and actually seek elected position. This may be as a local District Representative or as an officer.

A personal perspective...

In 1997 I was not seeking elected position when I was first nominated for MACS President by two co-workers. While not being elected President I was elected Secretary. I have never regretted my decision at that time to agree to serve if elected or that decision in any

subsequent years. Serving on the MACS Board is an informative and rewarding experience. Our organization is small enough for individual members to make a difference yet large enough to take on difficult tasks. I encourage all members to consider serving as an elected officer. There are many who will help you as many have helped me.

If you are willing to serve, please email me and your interest will be noted in the June newsletter.

Here's hoping to see you all in Fergus Falls!

Mark Drewitz

NACS/NASE Information

Newsletters are available at their respective web sites:

NACS – www.nacsfsa.org

NASE – www.nasefsa.org

Links to these sites as well as FMA are maintained on the MACS web site under "Links".

FLM Vacancies

Classification issues have once again surfaced for filling FLM vacancies. The Clearwater (Bagley) vacancy is being held up because of a classifier's determination that three employees need to be supervised to classify as a Grade 12 and that contracting may not be counted as a part of the three. Contracting could instead be counted if the three employees are reached but no FLO is one of the three. We have elevated this issue to NACS President Darren Metzger. NACS has been watching these issues carefully as periodically issues of this type have come up. NACS has elevated this issue to the National Office including Farm Loan and other appropriate sections.

MNASCOE & MACS JOINT STATE CONVENTION

Fergus Falls, Minnesota

JULY 19-20, 2007

HOTEL INFORMATION

Best Western the Falls Inn & Suites
925 Western Avenue
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Tel: 218-739-2211
Tel: 800-293-2216
Fax: 218-736-2533
Web: www.bestwestern.com



Directions: The Best Western Falls Inn and Suites, is connected to the Bigwood Event Center and is located in west central Minnesota right on I-94. It is 2 1/2 hours NW of Minneapolis/St. Paul and 1 hour SE of Fargo. Take Exit 54 and turn east heading into town. Turn left onto Western Avenue. Follow signs to the Bigwood Event Center, approximately 1/2 mile on the left.

HOTEL AMENITIES

- ◆ 96 Deluxe Guest Rooms and Suites
- ◆ Z103 Bar & Grill
- ◆ Complimentary Expanded Continental Breakfast
- ◆ Complimentary newspaper, USA Today, Mon-Fri
- ◆ 24 Hour Front Desk - Room Service
- ◆ Heated Indoor Swimming Pool - Whirlpool
- ◆ Fitness Center
- ◆ Meeting/Banquet Facilities
- ◆ 24 Hour Copier & Fax Service
- ◆ High Speed Internet service
- ◆ Same day dry cleaning, Mon-Fri
- ◆ Guest Laundry facilities
- ◆ Children under 18 stay free with an adult

FERGUS FALLS ATTRACTIONS

- ◆ Red Horse Ranch Arena
- ◆ A Center for the Arts
- ◆ Prairie Wetlands Learning Center
- ◆ Historical Museum
- ◆ Historic Downtown and Riverwalk
- ◆ Antique & Quilt Shops
- ◆ Art Galleries
- ◆ Regional Treatment Center/Kirkbride Tower
- ◆ Pebble Lake Golf Course
- ◆ Pine to Prairie Birding Trail
- ◆ Otter Trail Scenic Byway
- ◆ Sundberg Bee Farm
- ◆ Veteran's Walk of Flags
- ◆ Lindig's Farm

MNASCOE & MACS



JOINT STATE CONVENTION

JULY 19 & 20, 2007 - Fergus F
at the
Bigwood Event Center



Registration Form: Registration is due by July 9, 2007 to avoid a late fee.

Please mark the appropriate association: MACS _____ MNASCOE _____

Name(s): _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ - _____ E-mail: _____

Guest(s) Attending: _____

No. Attending Thursday, July 19 (Evening picnic) _____ No. Attending Friday, July 20 _____

Registration Fee through July 9, 2007

\$25.00 X _____ = \$ _____

Registration Fee after July 9, 2007

\$35.00 X _____ = \$ _____

MACS MEMBERS

Make checks payable to:

MACS

Mail registration & checks to:

Wendy Erickson
506 Western Avenue N.
Fergus Falls, MN 56537

MNASCOE MEMBERS

Make Checks payable to:

MNASCOE

Mail registration & checks to:

Carol Poppel
506 Western Avenue N.
Fergus Falls, MN 56537

Best Western Falls Inn & Suites (Bigwood Event Center) Hotel Information:

- ◆ July 19, 2006 Room Rate \$60.00 + tax (Doubles - \$85.00 + tax)
- ◆ No parking fees.
- ◆ Rooms blocked out with the discounted rate will be released after June 19, 2007
- ◆ Make reservations by calling: (800) 293-2216 or (218) 739-2211
- ◆◆ To get the discounted room rate you must ask for the **Farm Service Agency block**. (Government ID will be required at check in)
- ◆◆ Hotel offers complimentary Continental Breakfast and a Bar & Grill on site.