



MACS Newsletter



September 2005

2005 Annual Meeting Held

The annual meeting for MACS was held on September 9, 2005 in Detroit Lakes. The full minutes from the meeting are included with this newsletter. Several resolutions were reviewed and acted upon at the meeting concerning program delivery, MN FLP procedure and directives, automation, forms and procedure and the 2006 annual meeting. The full text of the resolutions as approved are included with the minutes.

Morning session speakers included John Monson, SED, Stuart Shelstad, FLPC, and Kevin Beekman, President, MNASCOE. Dan Hockert, Executive Officer, was slated to speak as well but was unable to due to illness. A sincere "Thank you" to all the speakers for their attendance and presentations.

Officer elections were held with the following slate of officers elected for the 2005-06 term:

President – Mark Drewitz
Vice President – Lee Crawford
Secretary – James Kruize
Treasurer – Sheree Krogstad

Russell Miller becomes Past President. Becky Martinson has been nominated and is expected to continue as the Minnesota State Contact for NASE. Appreciation and thanks go to outgoing officers and board members for their work in the 2004-05 year and to Jim Velde for his work in coordinating the 2005 annual meeting. Thanks also to all the members that donated items and those who purchased tickets. MACS raised \$242 at the annual meeting fundraiser.

Goals for 2005-06

The objectives of MACS are spelled out in our constitution as follows:

- To expand, improve, and expedite the services of USDA Agencies to Rural America.
- To promote the social, economic, professional and vocational skills, civic and personal welfare of all USDA-Farm Service Agency employees to:
 - Ensure equal status and privileges with other federal and non-federal employees.
 - Improve morale and efficiency by giving suitable recognition both to individual employees and to USDA – Farm Service Agency field offices whose performances are outstanding.
 - To collect and disseminate information relating to items 1 and 2 listed above and to use such information for the general good without favoritism, bias, or prejudice.

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- To cooperate and affiliate with other organizations whose objectives are similar and compatible with those to this organization.

The following goals have been set to achieve these objectives:

1. Improve and increase member participation – To accomplish this the outgoing board made the decision to increase the number of District Representatives to one per FSA District. This will enable members and potential members to more easily determine which district they are in and who the district representative is. The district representatives are now in the process of being elected by each district. Member participation will also be increased through member committees for implementing passed resolutions and development of future resolutions.
2. Greater communication between MACS officers and members. Activities in this area involve increased newsletters to approximately one per month, periodic online surveys on issues, and increased number of and responsibilities of MACS District Representatives. Members concerns need to be relayed to the officers and board members to ensure MACS is best serving the members. Increased communication both ways will enhance our effectiveness.
3. Increased member attendance at Zone and National Association meetings. The Zone meeting in Lincoln, NE and the National Meeting in Texas afford an opportunity for members to directly participate and obtain a greater understanding of the goals and activities of our organizations and how our state association works within this. We will continue to post these meeting dates and encourage attendance. MACS offers monetary reimbursement to help defray costs.
4. Continued and enhanced dialogue with the State Office. Resolutions passed at the annual meeting pertaining to the State Office will be forwarded promptly. Suggestions,

recommendations, and issue discussions with the State Office will be posted to the web site at the appropriate time to ensure all MACS members are aware of the actions being taken on their behalf. Similarly, communications and responses received from the State Office will also be posted or included in a newsletter, as and when appropriate.

MACS Evaluation Survey Posted

In order to evaluate MACS' strengths, weaknesses, and issues of importance from member's and potential member's perspectives, an online survey has been posted to the MACS web site at www.angelfire.com/mn/mac2. This survey consists of 5 questions and should take just a few minutes to complete. Please complete the survey by October 1st. Please ensure any non members are also afforded the opportunity to complete the survey.

Results will be compiled and reviewed by the Executive Committee and included in a future newsletter.

Treasurer Notes

At the MACS Annual Meeting in Detroit Lakes I had the honor of being re-elected the MACS Treasurer.

I would like to remind all current members that it is time to renew your membership. To non-members I would like to invite you to join MACS.

Dues are \$58 for regular-support members, \$124 for regular-managerial members and \$20 for associate members.

Program Technicians are eligible for regular-support membership. Farm Loan Managers, Farm Loan Officers, Farm Loan Officer Trainees, Farm Loan Specialists, District Directors, Farm Loan Program Chiefs and County Executive Directors with loan

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approval authority are eligible for regular-managerial membership. Associate membership is open to all other employees.

Dues are distributed as follows: Support - \$26 NASE, \$32 State. Managerial - \$72 FMA, \$20 NACS, \$32 State.

State dues are used to assist members in attending National Conventions, Zone Meetings, FMA Conventions and miscellaneous costs.

If you would like to pay your dues by payroll deduction you need to complete Form SF 1187 (**included with this newsletter**) and send it to me. The bi-weekly withholding for support members is \$2.24 and for managerial members it is \$4.77. Any members whose payroll deduction is processed after October 1st would need to pay the bi-weekly deduction for the missed pay periods.

If you have any questions about which category you would fall under for membership, payroll deductions or any other membership issues, please contact me at 218-631-2876, Ext. 2, or e-mail me at sheree.krogstad@mn.usda.gov.

Please send checks payable to MACS or payroll deduction forms to Sheree Krogstad, 4 Alfred St. NE, Wadena, MN 56482.

Thanks again for the opportunity to serve you as MACS Treasurer.

Sheree Krogstad, Treasurer

2006 MACS Annual Meeting Planning

Lee Crawford, on behalf of MACS, has been in discussion with MNASCOE President, Kevin Beekman, regarding the planning of the 2006 annual meeting. The MACS Executive Committee has approved a joint annual meeting with MNASCOE to be held July 21st. Additional decisions and work remain to

determine the location, agenda layout, etc. Administrative leave for those attending the annual meeting has been requested of the SED. The SED had suggested this might be possible during his presentation to MACS at the Sept. 9th annual meeting.

If you have any concerns or suggestions regarding this please contact Lee or any of the other officers.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed for the following MACS membership participation opportunities:

1. Committee to research and establish FLP goals from MACS' perspective.
2. Program committee's for Farm Loan Program, Automation, Farm Programs, Inventory Property/Environmental, and Administrative/Management. These committee members research procedural and policy issues and make recommendations for corrective resolutions.
3. Web Site Developer – After a redesign of the MACS web site, a developer/administrator is sought who will assist with the maintenance and postings at the web site.

File Exchange Update

A new section is planned to be added to the File Exchange area on the MACS web site. This section will contain promotional or outreach items such as pictures, videos, brochures, presentations, and other such documents or items. If you have any such items that you wish to share, please submit them by emailing them to MACS at macs_fsa@yahoo.com. If there is any special information or directions for your item please be sure to include that as well.

Unless otherwise informed, the submitter will be identified with the posting so as to facilitate any assistance with any of the items for other users.

District Representative Elections

As discussed elsewhere in the newsletter, the district representative election process is going forward. If your FSA district does not have a representative listed yet and you have not been contacted about the election by someone in your district, please contact me at mark.drewitz@charter.net.

As representatives are selected their names and contact information will be posted to the MACS web site.

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.

Zone B Meeting

The Zone B Meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln, Nebraska, on February 9 - 11, 2006. Mark your calendars now! Please contact one of the officers if you need assistance with transportation or any other issues with attending the meeting.

MACS Concerns Memo

A summary of MACS' concerns deriving from the annual meeting resolutions has been forwarded to the SED. The SED response includes a commitment for a meeting to be set up in October. The memo to the SED will be posted to the web site in the near future.

2005-06 MACS Board

President – *Mark Drewitz*

Vice President – *Lee Crawford*

Secretary – *James Kruize*

Treasurer – *Sheree Krogstad*

NASE State Contact – *Becky Martinson*

Past President – *Russell Miller*

District 1 Representative -

District 2 Representative – *Wendy Erickson*

District 3 Representative – *Michael Smith*

District 4 Representative – *Kevin Lehman*

District 5 Representative –

District 6 Representative –

District 7 Representative – *Cindy Vukasin*

District 8 & STO Representative – *Tom DeCock*



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF CREDIT SPECIALISTS

FARM SERVICE AGENCY
USDA

2005 Minnesota Association of Credit Specialists (MACS) Annual Meeting

Date: Friday, September 9, 2005

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Location: Speak Easy Restaurant
Detroit Lakes, MN

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the group.

President's Opening Remarks: Russell Miller thanked everyone for attending. Jim Velde was also thanked for organizing the golf event. Guest speakers were introduced.

Guest Speakers:

John Monson, State Executive Director

Update:

- The effects of natural disasters and war on FSA were discussed. The reality is that there is a cost for freedom. Those costs will affect staffing and other issues such as technology upgrades.
- There are far more needs regarding FTE's than there are resources to fix them.
- The challenges FSA faces pale in comparison to challenges faced by victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- Minnesota FSA is now in the process of managing the difficulties rather than fighting the issues.

Staffing Issues:

- Ways to incorporate teamwork among offices needs to be explored prior to directed reassignment. Directed reassignment will be considered if the teamwork plan is not possible or does not work. Teamwork among counties promotes efficiency. The main focus is to be sure that everyone that wants a paycheck gets a paycheck.

Trends:

- The structure of FSA has changed very little to match the current difficulties faced by FSA.
- In 1995 there were 39 FLP offices. In 2005 there are 32 FLP offices.
- If more personnel are not available, the structure of FSA will be addressed.
- Inaction to address structure will lead to customer's needs not being met.
- Action must start at the county office level. Information must be received by the managers and then communicated with staff members.
- It is very important that all employees take these issues very seriously.

Dan Hockert, Executive Officer

(Due to illness, Dan Hockert was unable to attend the meeting. John Monson presented Dan Hockert's material on his behalf.)

- The Administrative department is sincerely committed to empowerment with accountability.

The following list of questions was asked of the Admin/FLP sections. These questions were submitted to President Russell Miller prior to the annual meeting.

- 1. Farm Loan Officers are asking about the decision process for relocation. What factors are considered in the process? Why do officers in some states know the duty stations that will be assigned prior to being hired?**
 - Training is the most important factor in relocation decisions. Exposure to different agricultural enterprises, different types of management styles and offices with different workloads are all considered to be very important factors in the development of a Farm Loan Officer. Workload needs are also considered when making relocation decisions. The staffing charts are followed very closely during this process.
 - To help ease the relocation process, the STO will be distributing the FLO Duty Station Preference Sheet for the FLO's to rank their top three choices of duty stations. Also, the STO tries to meet needs of the employee when making relocation decisions such as family life, medical needs, etc.

- 2. What is the timeline for the next round of relocations?**
 - Hopefully the next round of relocations will be completed prior to the next loan season.

- 3. Program Technicians are asking about the process to determine where they will work, if an office is combined or closed. They are also saying that actions are showing that they are expendable and not important to the agency. Why are open positions always filled with FLOT's when available? Why is there not a system in place to train or hire PT's for the anticipated openings due to retirement?**
 - The process for placing PT's upon a retirement in the office is variable depending upon the situation. It is very tough to set up criteria that will fit every case. Every case is different regarding employee needs, customer needs, etc.
 - If issues with PT locations can be solved locally, they will be. That may mean doing things differently than they have been done in the past.
 - PT's are not expendable.
 - The needs for FLM's and FLO's currently are very great. That is the reason that two new Farm Loan Officer Trainees are being hired.
 - STO will start transitioning PT's sooner when it becomes evident that retirements and/or separations are going to occur in an office.

- 4. Several Farm loan Managers have asked about the process of combining offices and service areas. Is there written procedure or written authority to use in making these decisions? Is grade and pay protected when non-supervisory FLM's are assigned to FLO duties, and if so how long? If grade and pay are protected, is this put in writing anywhere? Some FLM's are also expressing concern over the eventual retirement of their PT's, and say they will be unable to meet customer needs without trained help available. If CO PT's are to fill the needs in some offices, will FLM's be given supervisory capacity / authority over the designated PT?**
 - All office consolidations and combinations are under SED authority.
 - 16-AO addresses factors to be considered when combinations/consolidations need occur. These include such things as efficiency, outreach, program participation, etc.

- 5. Is grade and pay protected when offices are consolidated?**
 - There is no demotion even if the position is a grandfathered GS-12
 - This is pending future review by OPM. There is not a high likelihood that FSA pay levels will be reviewed by OPM anytime soon.
 - Under today's rules, there is no downgrade when offices are consolidated.
 - 115-FI lays out how pay retention works.

- 6. Will FLM's be supervising CO PT's if they are doing FLP work?**
 - Yes. The FLM will be supervising the PT for the FLP work that is being done.
 - Time & attendance, performance evaluations, etc. will be supervised by the CED.
 - STO will review the procedure that governs this to find solid answers.

Joint Meetings with MNASCOE

- John Monson challenged MACS President Russell Miller and MNASCOE President Kevin Beekman to hold the associations' annual meetings jointly.
- John Monson stated that he feels there is much to be gained through joint meetings.

Kevin Beekman, President of MNASCOE

- MNASCOE leadership has changed. Jolene Brazel is now the Vice-President.
- NASCOE leadership has also changed. Minnesota has two members on the national board. Dan Root is serving as the president and Darlene Schouten is serving as the secretary.
- Joint Meetings – MACS likes Thursday/Friday meetings. MNASCOE likes Friday/Saturday meetings. MNASCOE will look at possibly moving the board of director's meeting to Friday. The seasons also play a role in joint meetings. Fall is a good time for MACS and spring is a good time for MNASCOE. Also, the location of members plays a role in joint meetings. The majority of the MNASCOE members are in the southern tier of the state. Associations need to get together and get things done as far as a joint meeting is concerned.
- We have made progress in coming together as a team since the merger, but more still needs to be done.
- FSA Tomorrow will affect all employees. Local solutions hinge on educating all staff members.
- The joint Consultative Meeting with the STO and MACS was a huge step. MNASCOE learned a lot about MACS through the process. MACS and MNASCOE have a lot in common with each other.
- MNASCOE will be realigning the area lines to coincide with the state district lines.
- MN is at 93% membership in MNASCOE.
- If MACS & MNASCOE work together, we can be a big force in Washington, D.C.

Stuart Shelstad, Farm Loan Program Chief

- Workload Counts – Encouraged offices to get all the workload counts that they can. Staffing charts will take workload counts into consideration.
- 2005 Accomplishments – The bar has been raised regarding loan making goals in Minnesota and nationally due to the success of Minnesota in goal achievements.
- FLO Relocations – Relocation is not an exact science. It is somewhat subjective. An extensive discussion was held earlier during the meeting regarding relocations.
- FLM Selections – There has been a very good crop of candidates to select from. FLO's that are not selected for a position can visit with Dan Hockert regarding what to do differently next time they interview.
- Appraisal Services – Appraisal services have increased. If issues arise with appraisals such as timeliness, quality, etc., let Mike Ittel and Stuart know. They will attempt to remedy the situation.
- Program Technicians – If PT's have concerns that Stuart and/or his staff can help out with, let them know. They are always willing to help. Pat Gendron is also available for PT's to contact.
- Hurricane Katrina – Jump teams are likely. All of National Office's attention is on disaster recovery. The FSA employees that were located in Louisiana are safe. There was some crop damage reported, but the extent of the damage is unclear at this time.
- 2006 Challenges & Priorities – Energy prices, weather events, streamlining regulations, GS travel funds (FLM & FLO work activity will take precedence over other GS travel), increase in loan demand?, FSA Tomorrow
- GS Staffing Chart – Does not include PT's only FLO's & FLM's. FLOT's will be counted as zero until they have worked six months. After six months they will be credited at some value, but it will likely not be as a full person. Currently, the charts count FLOT's as one person. The average rank column is used in the chart to provide equality to all offices regardless of size.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR JOHN MONSON, STUART SHELSTAD, AND KEVIN BEEKMAN

1. **Could administrative leave be granted so that employees could attend a joint convention?** John stated that he will go to bat "big time" to support a joint convention.
2. **Is there a message we need to carry to our legislators?** Fund us. We can not operate without funding. The proposed House budget is not enough. It will result in serious cuts.
3. **Do you have any insight on the Pay for Performance Initiative?** No news at this point. Opinions vary greatly on this issue.
4. **Why doesn't Minnesota look at more years when developing staffing charts? Washington looks at 2 years of history and one year of projections.** All A, B, and C workload is credited by Minnesota. The Washington technique will not work in Minnesota. Discretion must be used when making decisions based on the staffing charts. They are guides for decision making, not the ultimate decision-making tools.

5. **Has STO considered detailing FLS' to understaffed offices during busy times?** This has been done in the past and will definitely be done in the future, if conditions warrant. STO is very open to using all employees to get the job done.
6. **Is there any word on using NRCS vehicles?** NRCS feels it would be a huge expense and is reluctant to instruct service centers to share vehicles. It may be possible to get an agreement with RD regarding the use of their vehicles.
7. **FSA should consider sharing FLC, SED, etc.** John Monson is in favor of this and in fact would like to see consolidation of FSA, NRCS, and RD into one agency.
8. **When is right-sizing going to occur?** The 2006 numbers may drive it. County office workload may be a factor. The temp issue is huge and may force action if no temp dollars are received. Funding is everything.

BUSINESS MEETING

Roll Call

A motion was passed to dispense with roll call – all attendees have been recorded. There were 37 members in attendance (see Attachment “A” for roll call).

Announcement of Officer Candidates

The following candidates have announced their interest in running for the following offices:

President – No Announcements
 Vice-President – Lee Crawford
 Secretary – No Announcements
 Treasurer – No Announcements

Officer Reports

Vice President: (James Kruize)

- Attended FMA
- Took several issues to “Day On The Hill”
- Participated in the Collin Peterson fundraiser. This was paid for by FMA.
- Attended the annual consultative meeting in March with MNASCOE. This worked very well. It is very important to continue to build a relationship with MNASCOE.

Secretary’s Report: (Justin Phillips)

The report of the 2004 annual MACS meeting was presented.

A motion was made to dispense with the reading of the Secretary’s report.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Secretary’s Report.

The secretary’s report was accepted.

Past President’s Report: (Mark Bertram)

- The voice of the association is important in difficult times.
- The association is lacking participation by FLOT’s. It is important to promote the association to this group.
- Be sure to continually pass your concerns on to MACS leadership so that they can be relayed to STO.
- Joint meeting with MNASCOE is very important. It may require changing the ways we have done things in the past.

NASE Representative: (Becky Martinson)

- Always room to improve membership

- Attended annual consultative meeting. This was very beneficial.

Treasurer's Report: (Sheree Krogstad)

Sheree distributed a copy of the Treasurer's Report. See Attachment "B" for a copy of the Treasurer's Report.

An audit of the Treasurer's Report was requested by President Miller. Kevin Hagan and James Eberhard were asked to complete the audit.

President's Report: (Russell Miller)

- Attended Zone B meeting in Oklahoma City in February. Potential budget shortages and human capital shortages were discussed.
- Consultative Meeting – important for members to submit issues to board members with potential solutions to be discussed at the meeting. 2005's meeting was a good one with a good response from STO.
- Attended FLP National Policy Meeting – continue to forward FBP issues up through the chain of command.
- Attended FMA Convention – important to attend due to "Political Power" in Washington D.C.
- Attended MNASCOE Meeting in April – CAPWIZ.com is a useful tool that can be used to issue action letters. This must be accessed from your home computer.
- Looking ahead --
 - Continue joint efforts with MNASCOE.
 - FSA Tomorrow is here. This will take us in new directions, places we may not have been.
 - Members, keep submitting issues to the board
 - Promote MACS membership with payroll deduction.
 - MACS may need to be creative to make membership more affordable to new FLOT's and FLO's

Old Business

- **Mark Drewitz presented updates on website and volunteers.**
 - Volunteers were never utilized.
 - The Forum does not cost any extra money, however it is not used extensively.
 - Mark stated that he is considering closing down the Forum. MACS will have to decide if they want to continue with the Forum.
 - Mark may convert the website back to a simpler version.
 - The file exchange section needs to be updated.
 - A mass mailing list was created on the Yahoo Site so that all paid members are included in emails. The "Paid Members Page" is going to be eliminated.
 - Items to be posted to the website need to be submitted to Mark Drewitz.
- **CED Membership**
 - Loan approval officials are being charged as full members to keep us in line with the NACS Constitution.
 - CED's with loan approval authority are required to pay regular membership dues, not associate dues.
- **FLOT Dues**
 - reducing the dues for FLOT's would require a constitution change.

New Business

- Joint meeting with MNASCOE

A motion was made that the membership recommends scheduling the MACS annual meeting of 2006 to coincide with the MNASCOE 2006 annual convention. This motion was seconded and passed.

- Resolutions (See Attachment "C" for the Resolutions acted upon during the meeting).
- Audit of treasurer's report.
 - No discrepancies were found. All books were in order. It was moved and seconded to accept the treasurer's report as presented along with the audit report. Motion passed.
- Election of Officers

An election committee of Lynn Meyer and Randy Dufner was appointed.

President:

Mark Drewitz and Russell Miller were nominated for President. It was moved and seconded that nominations cease. Motion Passed. Mark Drewitz was elected President.

Vice President:

Lee Crawford and James Kruize were nominated for Vice-President. It was moved and seconded that nominations cease. Motion passed. Lee Crawford was elected Vice-President.

Secretary:

Kevin Lehman, Cindy Vukasin, and James Kruize were nominated for Secretary. It was moved and seconded that nominations cease. Motion passed. James Kruize was elected Secretary.

Treasurer:

Sheree Krogstad was nominated for Treasurer. It was moved and seconded that nominations cease. Motion passed. Sheree Krogstad was elected Treasurer.

- District Reps
There is to be one representative per state district. Districts will elect their own representatives. The even-numbered districts will have even-year elections and odd-numbered districts will have odd-year elections. An election to select the representative must be held with all members in the district having a chance to vote.
- Thanks
President Miller thanked the association for a good year in 2005.
President Miller thanked Jim Velde and James Kruize for their hand in setting up the 2005 annual meeting.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the 2005 MACS annual meeting. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Justin Phillips
JUSTIN PHILLIPS
MACS Secretary

ATTACHMENT "A" – Roll Call

1. Derek Nelson	20. Kirk Phelps
2. James Kruize	21. Justin Phillips
3. Russell Miller	22. Wendy Erickson
4. Mark Bertram	23. Sue Westrom
5. Greg Janachovsky	24. Dave Petry
6. Pat Gendron	25. Cindy Vukasin
7. Becky Martinson	26. Jim Eberhard
8. Bev Turner	27. Rick Ray
9. Lee Crawford	28. Gary Schommer
10. Clayton Quade	28. Stuart Shelstad
11. Mike Norberg	30. Kevin Kvistero
12. Sheree Krogstad	31. Kevin Beekman
13. Tom Haubrich	32. Jerry Hurrle
14. Jim Velde	33. Mike Smith
15. Mark Drewitz	34. Lynn Meyer
16. Amy Dykema	35. Kevin Lehman
17. Rod DeGraaf	36. Randy Dufner
18. Kevin Hagan	37. Tom Anderson
19. Mike Forsberg	38. John Monson

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF CREDIT SPECIALISTS

Treasurer's Report
September 9, 2005**Beginning Balance – 9/10/2004****\$4,699.70**Income

Regular Managerial Members (33 @ \$124.00)	\$4,092.00
Balance due for increase in dues	18.00
Regular Support Members (6 @ \$58.00)	348.00
(1 @ \$32.00)	32.00
Associate (3 @ \$20.00)	60.00
Payroll Deduction (25 managerial/11 support - currently)	3,773.44
NACS/FMA Incentive	500.00
NASE State With Most New Members Award	50.00
2004 Annual Meeting Buffet	290.00
2004 Annual Meeting Fundraiser	181.00
NACS Fundraiser	10.00
Interest	<u>7.37</u>
Total Income	\$9,361.81
Total Available	\$14,061.51

Expenses

FMA Dues	\$3,900.60
'04 4 th Quarter – 65 @ \$18.00 = \$1,170.00	
'05 1st Quarter - 62 @ \$18.00 = \$1,116.00	
2 nd Quarter - 61 @ \$18.00 = \$1,098.00	
3 rd Quarter – 61 @ \$18.00 = \$1,098.00 less \$581.40 FMA voucher = \$516.60	
NACS Membership Dues (61 @ \$20.00)	1,220.00
NASE Membership Dues (17 @ \$26.00)	442.00
Dues Overpayment	9.54
2004 Annual Meeting	273.86
2005 Zone Meeting	850.00
FMA Convention Reimbursement	1,598.52
2005 Convention	781.15
Tape Recorder	37.26
NACS Raffle Refund	10.00
Website Fee	59.40
Postage	<u>7.40</u>
Total Expenses	\$9,189.73

Ending Balance – 9/9/2005**\$4,871.78**

Respectfully submitted,

SHEREE KROGSTAD
MACS Treasurer

Committee: Administrative

Concern: Goals are ever changing and becoming increasingly used as a measure of performance. Employees responsible for achieving these goals are not consulted with prior to the issuance of the goals.

Goals that are not reasonable or supportable or promote artful manipulation of applications are not in the best interest of the FSA client.

Solution: MACS develop and submit to the State Office a set of goals that are reasonable, supportable and are in the best interest of the FSA applicant/borrower.

Action: Passed.

Committee: Automation

Concern: IT has been acquiring "recycled" print cartridges that void the printer warranty. Additionally, these cartridges are inferior providing fewer copies per cartridge, potentially hazardous and fouling leaks of toner, and degradation of print quality of documents. This does not provide a professional appearing document assisting in the support and promotion of FSA programs.

Solution: Toner printer cartridges be acquired as recommended by the printer manufacturer.

Action: Passed

Committee: Farm Loan Program

Concern: Under Part B; #12 B. Dates Owned. This cell on the fillable form will only allow a person to input dd/mm/yyyy.

Solution: This form should allow the user to insert two dates (since it says: DATES OWNED). It would also be good if the user could type the date any way they would like; this is due to the fact that the user may not know the exact dd/mm/yyyy. For example they may only know both years or a month and both years, or both months and both years. (This is the way it used to be)

Action: Passed

Committee: Farm Loan Program

Concern: Policy direction and procedure interpretations are provided verbally at meetings or in other less official forms such as DD minutes, emails, and memos. This complicates locating the applicable item and determining the validity of the item or if it is still in force.

Solution: MN FLP policy direction or procedure interpretations be reduced to an actual FLP notice.

Action: Passed

Committee: Farm Loan Program

Concern: There is confusion by applicants when signing the application in that the spouse will sign in the co-applicant section when they are husband and wife and not joint operators. This causes a lot of paper shuffling when it should not be necessary.

Solution: A section should be added that asks "are you applying as spouse or joint

Action:	operator?" Passed
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Committee:	Farm Loan Program
Concern:	In the past the FLP specialists had defined areas of expertise and served as the primary contact in those areas. Changes in personnel have taken place with the specialists and a clear designation of duties has not been communicated to the field.
Solution:	State Office FLP send out an updated designation notice.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Farm Loan Program
Concern:	Draft MN procedure was issued for 1927-B and 1955-A that was never finally issued. MN 1951-S is no longer consistent with MN mediation law.
Solution:	Draft procedure should be issued as final procedure to codify actions being taken by County Offices and MN 1951-S should be brought into line with MN mediation law.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Farm Loan Program
Concern:	National handbook streamlining will require substantive changes in existing MN procedure.
Solution:	MACS offer its support/assistance to ensure the timely and accurate release of MN procedure once streamlined National handbooks are released.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Farm Loan Program
Concern:	Recent emphasis on loan making, caseload, processing times, and other goals is obscuring the purpose and intent of the FSA farm loan program. Loans are being made to meet goals, caseload, office competition, etc
Solution:	MACS supports the making and servicing of loans and credit packages using all available tools that meet the applicant/borrowers credit needs and provide the applicant/borrower with the best possible chance for long range financial success.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Administrative
Concern:	Not all FLP offices and personnel are properly positioned to provide credit services where needed and significant disparities exist in office size and workload. Difficult situations arise from retirements, reassignments, etc. affecting offices abilities to adequately perform their responsibilities.
Solution:	The State Office Admin, FLP section and SED work together with offices affected to find an equitable long range plan so as to minimize crisis type actions and situations.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Administrative
Concern:	The "Travel Voucher (Temporary Duty Station)" Form AD-616 requires the social security number of the approving official. In times of increasing identity theft, this places undue risk on the approval official. The approval official has no ability to protect his or her personal information after signing the voucher as it is in the

	possession of a third party.
Solution:	Remove the requirement for the social security number of the approval official
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Administrative
Concern:	Exhibit 7 of 1-FLP only allows for the FLM to delegate the PT authority to sign correspondence in the "for" format. Often it would be beneficial for the PT to sign in the "for" format for the FLO in cases where the FLM is not the primary correspondence signing official; however, there is no delegation of authority to do this.
Solution:	Request for change in procedure to allow FLO to delegate signing correspondence in the "for" format to the PT.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Automation
Concern:	Farm Service Agency has not been provided access to all enhancements presently available to the Farm Business Plan, (FBP). Specifically, not allowing FSA access to print multiple reports. Lack of access to this feature requires significant additional time.
Solution:	Allow FSA access to all present enhancements to the Farm Business Plan, specifically including the multiple reports menu.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Administrative
Concern:	Present workload tracking system only tracks work items actually completed, but fails to account for any other work items that were required or necessary, but not completed.
Solution:	Since staffing needs is based on work actually completed, true staffing needs are not accurately identified, and the present system perpetuates staffing inequities. If the present workload system is to be utilized, MACS recommend and support enhancements to acknowledge and consider required items which are uncompleted.
Action:	Passed

Committee:	Farm Loan Program
Concern:	Form FSA 410-1 items 10-14 collect information about the co-applicant. When an individual applicant applies, FSA also needs the spousal information. COR reviews indicate that filling in the co-applicant information implies a joint operation, even if item 15 (type of operation) is checked for an individual operation. The form can not be amended by the applicant to write in or revise the term co-applicant to spouse. The results in COR findings concerning the correct completion of the application form.
Solution:	Place some check boxes on the 410-1 to allow items 10-14 to be identified as EITHER the co-applicant OR the spouse. This will allow the collection of necessary information for SCIMS without creating confusion as to the type of applicant. The form should also state that the applicant's spouse's signature is not required unless identified as a joint applicant.
Action:	Passed

Committee:

Concern: Full sharing of resources is not consistent among all service centers, such as use of NRCS vehicles.

Solution: Promote the “Team USDA” concept by designating USDA or service center vehicles available for use by all USDA agencies.

Action: Passed

REQUEST FOR PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS FOR LABOR ORGANIZATION DUES

Privacy Act Statement

Section 5525 of Title 5 United States Code (Allotments and Assignments of Pay) permits Federal agencies to collect this information. This completed form is used to request that labor organization dues be deducted from your pay and to notify your labor organization of the deduction. Completing this form is voluntary, but it may not be processed if all requested information is not provided.

This record may be disclosed outside your agency to: 1) the Department of the Treasury to make proper financial adjustments; 2) a Congressional office if you make an inquiry to that office related to this record; 3) a court or an appropriate Government agency if the Government is party to a legal suit; 4) an appropriate law enforcement agency if we become aware of a legal violation;

5) an organization which is a designated collection agent of a particular labor organization; and 6) other Federal agencies for management, statistical and other official functions (without your personal identification).

Executive Order 9397 allows Federal agencies to use the social security number (SSN) as an individual identifier to avoid confusion caused by employees with the same or similar names. Supplying your SSN is voluntary, but failure to provide it, when it is used as the employee identification number, may mean that payroll deductions cannot be processed.

Your agency shall provide an additional statement if it uses the information furnished on this form for purposes other than those mentioned above.

1. Name of Employee (<i>Print or Type-Last, First, Middle</i>)	2. Employee Identification Number (<i>SSN or Other</i>)	3. Timekeeper Number
4. Home Address (<i>Street Number, City, State and ZIP Code</i>)	5. Name of Agency (<i>Include Bureau, Division, Branch or Other Designation</i>) USDA-Farm Service Agency	

Section A-For Use By Labor Organization

Name of Labor Organization (*Include Local, Branch, Lodge or Other Appropriate Identification*)

National Association of Credit Specialists (NACS) /Minnesota Association of Credit Specialists (MACS) (Local 0527)

I hereby certify that the regular dues of this organization for the above named member are currently established at \$ _____ per	(biweekly pay period) (calendar month). (<i>Strike out whichever period is not appropriate, based on arrangement with the employee's agency.</i>)
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Signature and Title of Authorized Official	Date (<i>Month, Day, Year</i>)
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Section B-Authorization By Employee

I hereby authorize the above named agency to deduct from my pay each pay period, or the first full pay period of each month, the amount certified above as the regular dues of the (Name of Labor Organization): NACS/MACS	of my employing agency. I further understand that Standard Form 1188, Cancellation of Payroll Deductions for Labor Organization Dues, is available from my employing agency, and that I may cancel this authorization by filing Standard Form 1188 or other written cancellation request with the payroll office of my employing agency. Such cancellation will not be effective, however, until the first full pay period which begins on or after the next established cancellation date of the calendar year after the cancellation is received in the payroll office.
and to remit such amount to that labor organization in accordance with its arrangements with my employing agency. I further authorize any change in the amount to be deducted which is certified by the above named labor organization as a uniform change in its dues structure.	Contributions or gifts (including dues) to the labor organization shown at left are not tax deductible as charitable contributions. However, they may be tax deductible under other provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.
I understand that this authorization, if for a biweekly deduction, will become effective the pay period following its receipt in the payroll office	

Signature of Employee	Date (<i>Month, Day, Year</i>)
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FOR COMPLETION BY AGENCY ONLY- The above named employee and labor organization meet the requirements for dues withholding. (Mark the appropriate box. If "YES", send this form to payroll. If "NO", return this form to the labor organization.)	YES	NO

1-Agency Copy

2-Labor Organization

3-Employee Copy