

Legislative/Benefits Minutes

April 4, 2014

Des Moines, Iowa

Benefits Chairperson, Dee Ann Lehn, called the joint legislative/Benefits meeting to order and proceeded with roll call. All nine of the IASCOE districts were represented.

Prior to the official start of the meeting, membership engaged in a conference call with NASCOE legislative consultant, Hunter Moorehead. Hunter touched on the farm bill process and the programs included in the new farm bill. He spoke of the President's budget which includes closing 250 county offices and reducing CO staff by 815 employees. He stated the Secretary had recently testified before Congress revealing his proposed plan for restructuring FSA

Several benefits providers were in attendance. The providers included Dillard's Financial Solutions, J M Marketing and Joshua Katcher from Ameriprise Financial. Dillard's is a new NASCOE benefits provider; however, members have the option to continue working with J M Marketing and Josh. Representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield were also present to answer any questions members had relating to their federal health care coverage.

Employees will have the opportunity through the federal health care program to enroll in a Self plus One option beginning in 2016.

Dee summarized the availability of other NASCOE benefits such as cell phone discounts, consultation with the NASCOE attorney, AirVac Life Team membership and the 2014 Sam's Club discount. National Chairperson, Eylse Mussel, is currently working to secure discounts through AAA and also working to secure a gas card discount.

Legislative chairperson, Steve Luke, introduced MWA Executive, Dennis Ray. Dennis discussed the Central, Branch and Satellite (CBS) county office structural concept. A NASCOE work group headed by NASCOE Vice President, Wes Daniels,

is accepting input from the membership concerning how county offices should be structured in the future.

Due to a tight budget, NASCOE chose not to renew a contract with Capwiz. A decision was made based on a recommendation from our legislative consultant to go back to the grass roots method of enlisted key contracts from within the membership to contact legislators on urgent issues.

Mary Roberts, Iowa's NAFEC chairperson, talked of the importance of our County Committee members becoming NAFEC members and the importance of employees supporting that organization by becoming associate members. During the past year NAFEC membership has increased from 940 members to 1500 members. NAFEC is working on such issues as county office staffing, COC's meeting as often as needed and the problem caused by rounding issuing as pertaining to CRP acres.

Bob Braden, Iowa NAFEC director and Scott County COC member not only proved to be an entertaining speaker but also a talented yoga instructor. Bob shared his experiences from last year's national convention held in Ashville, North Carolina.

Gretchen McLain, MWA Area Legislative Chairperson, challenged the membership to make contact with their legislative representatives whenever an opportunity arises and to use the social media to educate ourselves and others on the issues facing FSA.

Dee asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve Luke so moved. Theresa Simonton seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dee Ann Lehn and Steve Luke