SEA Conference Call

August 1, 2013

Wes Daniels, SEA Executive

The SEA Conference Call was called to order and the SEA Exec Wes Daniels welcomed NASCOE President, John Lohr and NASCOE Treasurer, Shelly Odenkirk and thanked them for taking the time to join us on the call.

Roll call was taken and Wes also requested that each state give an estimate of the number attending the National Convention. The following information was provided:

1. Alabama- Cathy Blackburn, Shane Seay (10)

2. Arkansas – Sabrina Conditt (9)

3. Florida – Hugh Hunter, Patricia Sorensen, Mark Tomsic, Michael Nordlund (7)

4. Georgia – Michael Brannon, Megan Kennedy, Kyle Brown (7)

5. Kentucky – Micki Crider, Coy Higdon (13)

6. Louisiana – Joel Ducote, Brenda Hornsby, Debra Holmes (5)

7. Mississippi – John Norris, Pam Rhoades, Amy Moore (10)

8. North Carolina – Lorraine Dillard, Neil Burnette, Becky Williamson, Kay Yates (79)

9. South Carolina – Glenn Thomas, Star Griffin, Wes Daniels (17)

10. Tennessee – Donnie Green, Lanny Morris (8)

11. Virginia – Lee Womack, Katie Elsea, Joan Poore (12)

Wes stated that the purpose of the meeting was to prepare the delegates for some things that are going to take place at the convention and to make sure that the state presidents are aware of what to do at the convention as well. He also said that he wanted to update everyone on a few things that are going on in NASCOE. He took a few minutes to thank the area chairs for all that they do and for helping get the word out and send emails from him to our membership.

Wes welcomed NASCOE President John Lohr to the call and he stated that he is sprinting into retirement and offered to answer a few questions. He stated that he has a conference call on Friday with Juan Garcia to discuss FY 2014 staffing, funding, VERA and VSIP. He is also trying to get NASCOE included in an upcoming SED conference to be held in September in Washington DC. This has not been formerly been announced but they are planning for something like that and the Secretary will speak about the future of FSA. And we would like to talk with Juan about the status of Time off Awards; there are some statements out there with Time off Awards and Sequestration that OMB has made that we would like to discuss. We are also concerned about the Managed Print Services, the one-print, fax, scanner per Service Center, to handle all agencies. John stated there are concerns about MIDAS, DCP enrollment, Crop Acreage reporting, and if we are going to make it to the deadline with software issues and short staffing. He also will consider adding anything that comes from this call today.

Wes welcomed Shelly Odenkirk to the call and she expressed her appreciation for being included in the meeting. She is looking forward to coming to Asheville and seeing everyone there.

There were a few questions for John Lohr at this time:

Question: When should we expect a Notice about VSIP?

Response: DAFO Greg Diephouse may try to announce at the National Convention. That will be the earliest that we should expect to see anything on the VSIP.

Question: Any idea on the number of how many will be accepted?

Response: No more than what has already been released. John noted 2 reasons for not having a definite number

 1. A few more VERA's than expected were received; the number is under 200 but will continue to erode because people can walk away from the VERA until the day of departure.

 2. The other reason that they can whittle down as far as VSIP are that as we get closer to the end of this FY we will know more about the carry over. They went in with a bigger number requested than they are going to need ultimately. But a thousand is the number that has been out there and that is both CO and GS, then you subtract the attrition through the hiring freeze and VERA and savings made through other areas and at the end of the day there will be some VSIP number. He also said that some states may not see any because they made enough progress through these other tools. So it is going to be uneven in that regard between states.

Question: Any idea on the amount?

Response: $20,000 to $25,000, probably.

Question: Have you seen the numbers that the SED's prepared and sent to DC?

Response: No, I have not, we asked for those to be released and they respectfully declined. And that is something that we need to work on. The Union's do get those numbers and there are a few Union states, but they have to keep it confidential. So I would be under the same restriction and could not release the information.

The next item on the agenda was the Convention.

Lorraine stated that they are continuing to work on everything and they look forward to seeing everyone and promise a good time to all. There will be transportation to and from the airport and they will also be providing transportation around Asheville 20 hours a day free of charge. If you have any questions you can contact Neil Burnette.

Leg Consultant - Hunter Moorehead - Crossroad Strategies

Hunter and his wife are expecting a baby and the due date is close to the convention date. Hunter is registered and hopes to attend the convention. The NASCOE website has a very good biography of the new NASCOE consulting firm and all of the Crossroads Associates. Wes encourages everyone to take the time and read all about them. Wes hopes all of you get the chance to meet Hunter at the convention and hear him speak.

Contract for JM Marketing - Expires September 30, 2013

The NASCOE Exec Board put together a Sub-Committee last year at the Organizational meeting in Asheville. The members are Wes Daniels SEA Exec, Dale Fowers SWA Exec, Larry Olsen NWA Exec and Phil Morton NASCOE Benefits Chair and NWA Alternate Exec. Wes also noted that John Lohr and Mark VanHoose set in on all committees. The sub-committee met to look at all possible directions that we need to go with our benefits vendors. They met with a lot of people and this was a big undertaking. Things were put out on bid and got down to two, JM Marketing and Dillard's Financial Solutions. John Lohr will make a presentation on Wednesday afternoon during the delegates meeting to the Board of Directors. The two vendors (JM Marketing and Dillard's Financial) will be available to answer questions from all of you. It will also be discussed at the area meeting. Your opinion will count and you will get a chance to talk with committee members about it all week. We will have a discussion and try to see what the general consensus of the SEA. There will be a lot of information available and a side by side comparison of the two companies.

Wes expressed some of the biggest concerns he has heard (if there were to be a change): If we were to make a change and that vote has not taken place, so you will have a role in that decision

1. What happens to your current policy? It is important to understand-and this information has come from both companies involved - your policies (cancer, vision, dental, and ect.) are a contract between you and the insurance company that JM Marketing brokered for you and they will stay in place. The only people that can stop a 444 - payroll deduction - is you and possibly the company it’s involved with. If you want to continue to your policies you have the right to do that. Whether we make a change or not - will not affect the policies you currently have.

2. Wes talked about the loss of income stream in the last past 5 years. He stated that the loss is 12 to 15 percent and it may be even higher. FSA is looking at 8.25 percent reduction with VSIP, VERA and hiring freeze and we will suffer our part of that on the county office level. We are looking at trying to increase our income stream without increasing membership dues at this time. We have got to do everything we can to do a better job of bringing in money and tending to the money that we have. By putting this out to bid, both standing offers have increased our income more and that income is important to us. There is percentage money on of both offers; it’s a little hard to measure. You will have to listen and make some decisions. There will be a side by side comparison available for everyone to see. Wes stated that we want to give you plenty of information because this is a very big decision to make. These are very important issues to discuss.

The Joint NWA/SWA resolution regarding the possible change to the NASCOE Constitution and Bylaws regarding Membership specifically allowing cross boarder State Membership of Affiliate State Association. Wes stated that all State Presidents were sent a copy of this and it’s on the NASCOE and SEA website. Please review this and have your state delegates prepared to vote on it at the convention.

SEA Chair Reports and SEA Presidents reports for the SEA breakout sessions at the NASCOE Convention -

Wes asked that each Chair and President prepare a report and get it to him prior to the convention. He also requested a short report from each meeting at the National Convention. Wes would like to have information from each State President about what is going on in each state both positive and concerns. He is going to try to discuss this in the area meeting at the Convention but if time does not allow he will include it in his report leaving the convention and try to address those issues going forth.

John Lohr clarified the format of the meeting schedule for the National Convention -

Thursday afternoon there will be a joint meeting of committees and then a break out meeting of the Areas.

Friday morning the Area meeting will take place and in the afternoon the committee meetings will be separated.

Wes expressed his appreciation for the support that he has gotten as Area Exec. He asked that the same support be given to John Norris as he steps up as the SEA Executive. He also asked that you help John get the directory updated and if possible we would like this done before the convention.

Wes also stated that we will hear from all of the candidates during the meetings and will vote on our area exec on Friday.

Mark VanHoose - President

Wes Daniels - Vice President

Shelly Odenkirk - Treasurer

Annette Hyman -Secretary

Charlene Neukomm- Secretary

John Norris - SEA Exec.

David Curtis - SEC Alt. Exec.

Wes has invited Hunter Moorehead NASCOE Consultant, John Lohr NASCOE President, Greg Diephouse DAPO, Mike Schmidt DAFP and FSA Administrator Juan Garcia to speak at our area meeting.

SEA Awards

The SEA Awards will be presented at the meeting instead of the banquet due to the amount of activities on Saturday night. There are two awards to present, Service to the Community, and Service to FSA.

This will be verified with Tom to make sure there is not a schedule conflict.

2014 SEA Rally

Sabrina Conditt gave a brief update on the 2014 SEA Rally to be held in Little Rock Arkansas. The dates are April 9th through April 14th. The rally will be held at the Doubletree. Sabrina will have some information to present at the National Convention. And she also stated that there will be more information forth coming.

Wes gave a brief run down on the money that the SEA has spent. He stated that we helped North Carolina with the hospitality room last year and that we gave them $500 this year toward the National Convention. Arkansas also received $500 and $500 remains in the account. Only 7 of the states have paid their dues, so please get those in as soon as possible.

There was a brief discussion about having questions ready for the VTC that will be held on Friday with Juan Garcia; Wes stated that we need to be prepared for the future. He also stated that we need to share our thoughts and ideas on ways to better serve our farmers and ranchers, after all that is our goal.

Wes thanked everyone for their time.