

March 2019

# NACS Zone D Newsletter

## In this issue

Zone Meeting Recap P1-4

1st Time Attendees P5

NACS President P6

Committee Updates P7

Events & News P8



Grounded in Service

Invested in Your Future

Lending a Voice

Leading the Way

## 2019 NACS Joint Zone C & D Meeting Recap

*By Matthew Christian, TN – NACS Zone D rep*

The 2019 NACS/NASE Joint Zone C & D meeting was held March 7-9, 2019 at the Embassy Suites in Chattanooga, TN. Due to the partial government shutdown, Zones A & B were forced to cancel their meetings, leaving the Joint Zone C & D as the only Zone meeting held in 2019. Through the hard work and contributions of many from both Zones and Associations, the meeting was a success! 38 total NACS members were in attendance from the following states:

Zone A: New Mexico (1)

Zone B: Kansas (1), Nebraska (1)

Zone C: Illinois (3), Indiana (1), Kentucky (7), Ohio (2), Virginia (3)

Zone D: Arkansas (4), Mississippi (2), Alabama (3), Georgia (3), North Carolina (2), Tennessee (5)

Those in attendance included the following NACS National Officers:

Denise Lickteig, NE, NACS President

Kimberly Eilerman, IL, NACS Secretary

Ray Bartholomew, KS, NACS Treasurer

In addition, 8 NASE members were also present from the states of Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

TN SED Dennis H. Beavers welcomed the group to Tennessee on behalf of the Tennessee Farm Service Agency. From the National Office, Mr. Bill Cobb, Acting DAFLP and Mrs. Peggy Browne, DAFO were in attendance and addressed the attendees.



## **Bill Cobb, Acting DAFLP**



- DAFLP position is still vacant at present time. Hopefully will be announced soon.
- Randi Sheffer, Guaranteed Loan Branch Chief, will be retiring at the end of April.
- Appraisers have been moved to the Program Operations & Appraisal Division. The Director for this Division is Courtney Dixon. 26 states have no appraiser presence.
- 96 total DAFLP positions in National Office with 19 vacancies at present time.
- Even though direct loan volume increasing, delinquency rates are steady.
- FY 18 obligations were 4<sup>th</sup> highest in history. FY 18 FO funds were highest in Agency history and G-FO funds were 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in Agency history.
- DLS updates for increased loan limits targeted for 3/18.
- USDA-AMS has the lead on hemp, not FSA.
- Farmers.gov target release date is 3/15.
- FLP fellowship options open in N.O. in (4) categories. Fellowship period will be from 5/1/19 – 06/26/19.
- FLP Goals – DAFLP mgt. group decided to extend FY 16 goals for one more year with some of the benchmarks adjusted. A forthcoming FLP Notice will provide details of adjustments. Still looking at impact of furlough on goals. 35 states not meeting goals on direct loan servicing. Work is not getting down and this is easy to see on the servicing side.
- A notice will be coming for adjustments to FLM & FLO approval authorities.
- EM loans to be added to the list of eligible loans when a writedown has occurred.
- Still waiting on FBP Lending Cloud release date.

D

A

F

L

P

D

A

F

O

***Peggy Browne, DAFO***

- Former Oregon SED. Grew up on dairy farm before converting to beef cattle.
- Huge proponent of efficiency and getting things done quickly
- #1 priority is staffing, however the budget is the #1 constraint.
- Strong desire to be more quick and nimble as Agency.
- Leasing issues are a big deal.
- Furlough was frustrating for everyone. At one point in time there were only 3 people in the National Office “running” FSA (Administrator, DAFLP, & DAFO).
- #1 supporter of employees during furlough were the SEDs.
- This Administration wanted to limit adverse impacts of shutdown.
- Secretary pushed for the importance of agriculture to be acknowledged.
- DAFO intends on re-establishing quarterly conference calls with all Associations.
- Believe we do a good job of accounting for what is done, but not what is not getting done.
- Accountability & integrity are keys to management strategy.
- 2020 needs to keep up pace with hiring efforts. Sending out “Best Management Practices” to AOs for hiring process.
- DAFO absolutely supports field participation on task forces, etc...however, SED has final say.

## NFAOC via Teleconference (Sharon Sachs, Monique Kelly, Shantaye Gladney, and Sharon Gottlieb)

*Located centrally in the greater St. Louis area, NFAOC currently provides services to two large U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies: USDA Rural Development and the Farm Service Agency. The portfolios they service include almost 1.5 million loans with a total dollar amount of \$236 billion, and a delinquency rate of only 3.77 percent.*

- GLS has been updated to handle new increased loan amounts. Report GLS2091 was updated to reflect the increased loan limit.
- Max % on OL & FO for Beginning Farmers and SDA was raised to 95%. G-conservation % increased to 90% for BF and SDA. This has not been implemented in GLS yet.
- Routing information for EFT payments must be validated prior to loss payments. EFT validation requests should be sent to Loan Servicing Groups.
- Account corrections in GLS do not require a remedy ticket. Please submit through ECM.
- Quick reference training guides are available for loan closings, restructures, and transfers/assumptions. Emergency check requests should be a rarity and used ONLY for true emergency situations such as unexpected foreclosures, U.S. Marshals sales, delinquent RE taxes or FMFI issues when it affects the ability to process a timely TY document.
- FSA FLP currently has 2,882 active PAD agreements. Hawaii has most in nation.
- EFT validations are no longer handled by the Servicing Branch. These are handled by NFAOC Cash Management Disbursements Branch (CMDDB). Requests must be received by 2:30 CST to be processed same day.

## RESOLUTIONS

Don't forget to submit your resolutions prior to the National Convention. Resolutions are the backbone of NACS. It is through the resolution process that NACS members have a VOICE. We all have thoughts, ideas, and concerns regarding the delivery of the FSA Farm Loan Program. A resolution form can be found on the NACS website. Once completed, submit to your Zone rep!

## Andy Quinn – McAllister & Quinn (Legislative Consultant)



Full budget expected soon. \$20 million was appropriated for FLO/COT/CO staff. \$8 million of this went for FLO positions. 11 new Ag committee members in Congress. Will require some educating but is an opportunity to tell our story. Still working on abolishing term limits. Will continue to meet with “like minded” groups. Protecting program integrity is a main concern.



Service. Support. Growth



## First Time Attendees:

There were 5 first time attendees present at the 2019 Joint Zone C & D meeting.

Let's hear from the two from NACS Zone D:



### Joshua Lang, FLO - Kenansville, NC

*The Zone meeting was a good experience for me. I learned a lot over the two days for a few reasons. The first is that the people that choose to go to a NACS meeting are very interested in the details of the Farm Service Agency and as a result are very knowledgeable. Enough so that they would use their own vacation time to attend. A second reason I found was the opportunities to meet people from other states. Each state handles most issues somewhat differently and learning the approach from other states is useful for being more productive and effective in North Carolina. A lot of what I learned is really what we can do and what we can't. Also, through the different committees, NACS can get procedure re-written to be more effective or accurate for our loan making and servicing needs. At the same time, bigger issues like personnel and other congressional decisions are handled by the NACS legislative committee. All in all, I found the Zone meeting to be very informative, interesting, and fun.*

### Millicent Harrison, FLO - Fort Valley, GA

*I definitely enjoyed meeting FSA employees from other states. It was refreshing to get new perspectives and insight on the loan processing that we all work with on a daily basis. Attending the event allowed me to listen to all the stories people shared, current policy changes, and other current happenings in our agency. I'm already positively influenced by the things I've heard. Now that I am a member of NACS, I know there is an entire support system of people out there to help me do my job better. You can tell from hearing from others at the event that they are very passionate about their jobs and the farmers and ranchers they serve. As I'm just starting this career as a loan officer, being amongst others with more years under their belts also lets me know our jobs are satisfying and I can see myself here long term.*



*The first time attendees with Acting DAFLP, Bill Cobb*

**Denise Lickteig, NE**  
**NACS National President**



- Please review the updated State President's Guide.
- Make plans to attend the 2019 NACS National Convention
- We need committee members and alternates from ALL zones.
- DAFO has expressed desire to meet employee associations twice a year in D.C. on government dime.
- NACS Board will be headed to D.C. in late April.
- Proposed constitution and bylaws change for membership. Change will allow for FLP PT to be able to become full NACS members.

## SERVICE

**Attention ALL Zone D members! An excellent way to become more involved is to serve on a NACS committee. Make the decision to serve YOUR association on a committee this year.**

## Wunderfund Update:

NACS members at Joint Zone C & D meeting contributed \$155 to the Wunderfund.

The Wunderfund was set up as a way to assist first time attendees at the National Convention.

Thank you Zones C & D for feeding the pig in Chattanooga!



## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### **Loan Making Committee Report**

The Loan Making Committee had a teleconference with the National Office on February 28, 2019 to discuss the NACS resolutions adopted at the National Convention in June 2018. Discussion took place on the (10) Loan Making resolutions submitted. Progress was made as the National Office is willing to make changes as requested. Please continue to submit your resolutions through the NACS-FSA website or reach out to any committee member to assist you in preparing your resolution.

*Nicole Cleggs-Burns, AL*

### **Loan Servicing Committee Report**

A joint phone call between all committees with National Office was held on February 28, 2019 with the National Office. The Loan Servicing Committee had recommended 4 resolutions for adoption from 2018 and 3 of the 4 received favorable responses. The committee will continue to monitor the topics going forward so that the agreed changes are implemented into the forms and instructions as appropriate. Please to continue to submit resolutions through the website.

*Cheryl Brooks, AR*

### **Management/Personnel Committee Report**

A conference call was held with the National Office on February 28, 2019 to discuss their responses to the resolutions NACS submitted. The first resolution concerned training. The committee expressed to the NO that face to face training was more beneficial than webinars. They agree, however with limited funding, face to face training will still be on a limited basis. They did mention upgrading the webinars to be more informative in the future. The second resolution addresses the amount of time we spend on environmental issues. The NO will be looking at workload in the future concerning this issue. They are potentially looking at advertising 3 regional environmental positions.

*Alec Love, MS*

### **Membership Committee Report**

The Membership Committee has been working on updating the membership packet on the NACS website. We intend to add more current information and revise that section of the website to make it more "user friendly". We want to provide the necessary tools to help recruit new members, especially since we have so many new FLOTs coming on board. We are also brainstorming ideas for training opportunities to be held at National Convention.

*Tammy Jones, AR*

### **Information Technology Committee Report**

The NACS IT Committee met with the National Office via teleconference on February 28, 2019. (7) resolutions were presented to the National Office and their responses were discussed. Several of the resolutions were already in the works for implementation. IT resolutions are often dependent upon funding/budget, however, the National Office has prioritized our concerns/resolutions and will revisit once funding is available for updates.

*Dana Baucom, TN*

### **Legislative Committee Report**

On March 18-19, the Legislative committee was in D.C. for the annual "Hill Day" with Andy Quinn of McAllister and Quinn (our NACS legislative consultant). The group met with numerous House and Senate offices that make up the respective Ag committees. While there, we worked on educating the members about FSA Farm Loans and NACS as well as concerns that NACS has that would require legislative action.

*Dave Bonnett, NC*

Visit [www.nacs-fsa.org](http://www.nacs-fsa.org) to review resolutions previously submitted and submit new ones.

**2020 Zone Meeting**

Overwhelming support was given for another joint meeting next year. The 2020 NACS/NASE Joint Zone C & D meeting will be hosted by Kentucky.



**THANK YOU to everyone who assisted with the 2019 Joint Zone C & D Meeting!!!!**

**2019-2020 Candidate Announcements:**

- \* LeAnn Gibbs (NM) has announced for President
- \* Ray Bartholomew (KS) has announced for Treasurer

***Interested in holding a NACS Board position? Announce your intentions at this year's National Convention.***

**Upcoming Events**

**2019 NACS National Convention**

**June 22-27, 2019**

**Astor Crowne Plaza**

**New Orleans, LA**

**Registration announcement coming soon!!!!**



**Mark your calendars and make plans to attend!**

**Let's fill all available Zone D delegate slots!**