# **MMPA** Proposed **Bylaw Changes**

Diving into the Co-op Structure Realignment Proposal

fter reviewing historical trends and future predictions, the MMPA board of directors has

submitted a proposal to update the cooperative's bylaws and proposed district realignment plan for MMPA delegates' consideration. Delegates will vote on the proposed bylaw amendments and the district realignment plan at the state annual delegate meeting on March 20.

The proposed changes have been reviewed at various member meetings, including local meetings, over the last few months. A brief synopsis of the two parts of the proposed changes is included below.

### Part A - Proposed Bylaw Changes

Part A deals with bylaw language regarding districts, the nominating and advisory committees and directors. If amended, the bylaws would:

- Allow the board of directors, with delegates' approval, to change the number of districts, the geographic description of districts, or both;
- Permit the board of directors to appoint one member of the advisory committee from each district to serve on the nominating committee, which would be chaired by a member of the board of directors:

- Provide a process for changing the number of advisory committee members elected per district if the number of districts change;
- Put in place a process for electing more at-large directors if the number of districts decreases (maintaining 13 board members); and
- Allow up to two at-large directors to be elected from a district.

## Part B – District Realignment **Proposal**

The MMPA board of directors annually reviews membership data as it relates to farm numbers, milk production, production per farm, etc. MMPA demographics have changed over the years; we have seen fewer farms and greater milk volumes. Since 1990, MMPA farm numbers declined nearly 60 percent, while at the same time total milk volume increased by nearly 50 percent (from 2.9 billion pounds in 1990 to 4.3 billion in 2013).

This trend in farm and production numbers was amplified over the past decade. While the average district member farm decline was 28.2 percent from 2003 to 2013, District 4 and 7 posted 45.5 and 44.9 percent declines, respectively. In reviewing the data, the board of directors is proposing a district realignment plan that would move locals currently in Districts 4 and 7 into surrounding districts and reduce the number of districts from 10 to eight.

In District 4, it is proposed the Barry-Eaton and Lansing locals join District 2 while the Ingham County Local joins District 1. In District 7, the proposal suggests moving the Livingston Charter and Flint locals to District 6, the Mid-Thumb Local to District 8 and the Deford/Clifford-Mayville Local to District 10.

#### **Transition Plan**

If both parts of the proposal are approved by MMPA delegates at the state annual delegate meeting, the District 4 and 7 board members would serve the remainder of their terms in an at-large capacity. When each term expires (District 4 in 2016 and District 7 in 2017), the at-large positions would be filled by directors elected by delegates at the state annual meeting.

Likewise, the advisory committee would shift:

- District 4 and 7's advisory committee representatives would complete the remainder of their terms.
- In 2015, all districts would add one new advisory committee position (five members per district, keeping the number of advisory committee members at 40).

Messenger February 2014

Since the proposed redistricting would result in more lapses in consecutive district numbering, the following district renumbering is being proposed.

- District 11 would become District 3
- District 12 would become District 4
- District 10 would become District 7

#### **MMPA District Historical Changes**

Prior to 1957, all MMPA board members were elected on an at-large basis. The formation of MMPA districts by geographic boundaries was approved by delegates at the 1956 MMPA State Annual Delegate Meeting and implemented in 1957. At the time, 12 districts were formed, including one board member from each district and three board members elected at-large for a total of 15 board members. Since 1957, MMPA has reorganized its districts twice.

	1956 Districts approved by delegates	1972 District 3 and 7 combined	2002 District 9 dissolved	2013 Current
# of Districts	12	11	10	10
Members	16,500 members	5,967 members	1,805 farms	1,269 farms
Pounds of Milk Marketed	2 billion	2.8 billion	3.2 billion	4.3 billion
Board Members	15 (12 district/3 at-large)	14 (11 district/3 at- large)	13 (10 district/3 at-large)	13 (10 district/3 at-large)

In 1972, District 3 was merged into District 7. The board size was reduced by one director at that time.

In 2002, the locals in District 9 were moved into surrounding districts and District 9 was dissolved. The board size was then reduced by another director. The MMPA board currently consists of 13 members (10 elected at the district level and three elected at-large). The proposed bylaw changes would provide for eight district directors and five directors to be elected at-large to maintain the current 13-member board of directors.

In conclusion, the proposed bylaw changes and district realignment plan are designed with the goal of achieving more balanced member representation among districts and positioning MMPA for the future based on changing member demographics. If you have questions about the proposed changes, please contact your district director or Sheila Burkhardt at 248-474-6672, ext. 208.

