Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2015

Meeting: Special Meeting—Business/Operations, Conference Call—August 24, 2015, 6:00 p.m. EDT

Board of Directors: Bonnie Potter, President
Scott Miller, Vice President
Laurel Shouvlin, Secretary
Mike Vigus, Treasurer
Julie Delaney, Director
Don Greene, Director
Steve Hull, Director
Norm Johnson, Director
Andy Merriwether, Director

Executive Director: Darby Vannier

Meeting opened at 6:04 p.m. EDT.

1.0 Meeting Opening:

1.1 Ratify Email Votes:

1.1.1 I move that we approve Jay Reeder, Courtney Williams, Stacie Chavez, Linda Bat, Tim Vincent, Jeff Williamson, Joe Crocco, and Bob Pulse to serve on the Revenue Generation Task Force. (Motion: Miller / Second: Johnson) Motion passed 9–0.

1.1.2 I move that we approve the minutes from the July 13th meeting. (Motion: Johnson / Second: Miller) Motion passed 9–0.

1.1.3 I move that we approve the AlpacaGram proposed for GIRCom related to the livestock designation of alpacas. (Motion: Vigus / Second: Greene) Motion passed 9–0.

Hull moved to ratify the above email votes, Johnson seconded and the motion passed (9–0).

2.0 Financial Report:

2.1 Financials: Vigus provided the financial report for the month of July and year-to-date. Vigus requested that Vannier provide projections for the remainder of 2015.

3.0 Old Business:

3.1 Strategic Plan Scopes / Steps Forward: After receiving the Strategic Plan Scopes from the Board members, Vannier collated them, added some comments related to the work that staff might have to provide, and then placed this document on Dropbox. The directors are to look at the document within the next several days to review and discuss at the next meeting. Potter asked that the directors think about what process the Board should use to ultimately select the Strategic Goals to move on with.

3.2 Member Petition: In March at the end of the National Halter Show, a petition was circulated and given to the AOA Board requesting that the Board "immediately enter into an Executive search for new management leadership." This new Executive would work to attract new individuals to the "alpaca lifestyle." Potter explained that in April after receiving the petition, each of the directors attempted to contact each of the petition signers to gather more input. Potter provided the Board with a synopsis of that information. It was decided that Potter would draft a letter of response to send to the petitioners to let them know the Board had attempted to contact each petitioner to hear their concerns and that all of the information that was gathered has now been provided to the entire Board.

4.0 New Business:

4.1 Discussion About Minutes: Shouvlin requested a brief discussion regarding what the Board expects in the minutes with regard to the level of detail the majority of the Board is seeking.

4.2 Supreme Champion Award: The opportunity to compete for the new National Supreme Championship was announced at the 2015 National Show, and Show System Administrator Ault has been sending letters to each owner whose alpacas have won a championship in 2015. This letter encourages their participation in the competition at 2016 Nationals and describes how they can participate. There will be 8 awards (4 suri and 4 huacaya) and we will need to have a new trophy or award for each of the winners. Vannier has researched the design and production of separate huacaya and suri sculptures to be utilized as awards and presented that information to the Board. There was discussion regarding the cost of the design and casting of the sculptures and whether that cost of producing such a trophy is justified by the excitement and prestige that the award will provide. It is hoped that the desire to compete for the National Supreme Championship will increase show participation at both the local affiliate level as well as at Nationals. The Board will discuss this further next month.

4.3 Market Research & Plan Development: Vannier provided a proposal from a company for doing market research and developing a marketing plan. Vannier will be talking to another company within the next week to acquire their proposal. There is no money currently budgeted to pay for such research and planning, but Vannier wants the Board to have an idea of what the process might look like and what the costs might be as we move forward with next year's planning and budgeting.

4.4 2016 Auction Vendor: Two bids were submitted for the auction vendor at the 2016 National Halter Show. As directed by the AOA Policies and Procedures, Vigus left the meeting at 7:42 because his wife's company was one of those submitting a bid. As per the AOA Policies and Procedures, Hull made the motion that Vigus does have a conflict of interest as defined in the AOA Policies and Procedures. Merriwether seconded the motion and it passed (8–0). Vannier provided additional information about the two bids. Utilizing the current submitted bids, he applied them to the auctions of 2014 and 2015. This provided the Board with figures for each company showing what the outcome of each bid would have been in terms of money made by AOA. After Board discussion considering both the bids, and the presence of a conflict of interest, Shouvlin moved that we select Celebrity Sales to be the auction vendor, Johnson seconded, and the motion passed (7–0, Delaney abstained).

5.0 Committee & Other Reports:

5.1 Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom): No meeting, no report.

5.2 Judge Training and Certification Committee (JTCC): Miller reported the committee met August 12th and discussed a couple of language changes to the Show Rules Handbook. The Board will see those recommended changes when the Board is given the revised Handbook for review and approval later in the year.

5.3 Judges Advisory Committee (JAC): No meeting, no report.

5.4 Show Rules Committee (SRC): Shouvlin reported the committee met August 6th. There was discussion about an affiliate show requesting the SRC approval to award a special spin-off award, but the committee is seeking more information before making a decision. The rest of the meeting was spent working on the changes to the Show Rules Handbook.

4.5 Fiber and Fiber Products Committee: Johnson reported that the committee met on August 3, 2015. The committee is focused on making the National Fleece Conference bigger and better in 2016 and have forwarded several ideas to Andrea. The committee is looking forward to seeing the updated Fiber to Fashion brochure. The Resource Directory is being finalized in preparation for publication to the AOA Website. The committee is beginning the development of a Fiber as a Business Brochure and looking forward to contributing to the AOA Strategic plan development for Goal 4.

5.6 Alternative Products Committee: No meeting, no report.

5.7 Revenue Task Force: Greene and Miller reported that they will be meeting with that committee for the first time tomorrow (August 25th).

5.8 Executive Director Update: Vannier provided his "dashboard report" for Board review. He has a meeting with a researcher from Colorado State University regarding the meat study requested by the Alternative Products Committee. Two major initiatives are underway in the office: National Alpaca Farm Days and the *Alpaca Owners Guide* (AOG). He is happy to report that there are 450 listings in the upcoming AOG as opposed to 215 last year. That number is final for the deadline to sign up has passed. He feels that the doubled increase in participation is due to the new website. 150 farms have signed up for National Alpaca Farm Days (NAFD). This number is close to last year's total and there are a few weeks left, so he is hoping that participation will be increased in that as well. The office will be sending a promotional packet to the NAFD participants with samples of AOA marketing products that members might want to buy and distribute at their farm day event. The autumn edition of *Alpacas Magazine* is now on track for mailing in 2 or 3 weeks. After some editing, the office is close to sending the Fiber to Fashion brochure out for printing. Copies of the Meet the Alpaca brochure that was jointly produced by AOBA and ARI have finally run out and has been redesigned and updated to include "AOA" instead of "ARI" and "AOBA." The design of the front and back cover of the Show System Handbook is now complete.

6.0 Meeting Wrap:

6.1 Contact the Board Update: A member contacted the Board hoping that the AOA office would be interested in several old issues of *Alpacas Magazine*. Because the office already has copies, the Board encouraged them to potentially sell or give them to other members who might be interested in having them.

A member contacted the Board regarding some questions she has about how to deal with the USDA inspections and labeling. These questions have been sent on to both GIRCom and the Alternative Products Committee.

A member contacted the Board after listening to an affiliate presentation on the Strategic Plan and provided some bullet points suggesting some ideas about how AOA should move forward. After passing that letter along to the Board, Potter responded to thank them for their ideas and inform them that we are in the middle of that process.

6.2 Action Items Discussion: Shouvlin suggested that a list of action items generated by each Board meeting be tracked and kept by the vice-president. This list would represent all of the items the staff and Board have been tasked with as a result of the current meeting. The list created at that meeting, would be reviewed at the end of the meeting, included in the minutes, and then emailed the following day to the Board. The Board agreed that this would be a good procedure and Miller accepted the responsibility.

6.3 Next Meetings: September 14th (Strategic Planning and National Show/Conference) and September 28th.

6.4 Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Miller. Meeting adjourned 9:06 p.m. EDT.

Respectfully submitted, Laurel R. Shouvlin