Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom)

Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2015

Meeting: Conference Call — January 28, 2015, 7:30 p.m. EST

Members: Joan Clappier
Erin Egan (absent)
Jan Hamby
Dr. Pat Long
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Bonnie Potter

Staff Representative: Darby Vannier (absent)

Meeting called to order at 7:34 p.m. EST.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance (B. Potter, D. Vannier):

1.1.1 The new AOA website came up in December, integrating all of the functionality of the previous ARI and AOBA sites, and designed for ease of use by owners, prospects, and anyone looking for any information about alpacas. There have been rollouts of additional features since initial launch.

1.1.2 Strategic Planning: AOA is working with the company that previously worked with both ARI and AOBA. They have a good knowledge and understanding of our business. A membership survey was conducted to find out what the members are the most interested in and those results have been collated. People were also asked if they were interested in working on the strategic planning the first weekend of February. A second follow-up survey was sent to the people who were both interested and available, and from those respondents 35–40 people have been invited to join the Board and staff at the strategic planning meeting.

1.1.3 AOA is working on the budget. Registrations are still down, transfers are fairly stable, memberships are picking up and AOA is getting more sponsors. There is some expectation that registrations will increase but there is a lag of 1–2 years from breeding to registration.

1.1.4 AOA is looking at ways organization can provide value to the members. For example, *Alpacas Magazine* has been increased from 3 issues/year back to 4 issues/year and people who are just registry members will have access to an online copy of the magazine.

1.1.5 AOA is working on Nationals, which will be in March. It looks like there is going to be good participation in the show.

1.1.6 There is a lot of interest in the June Fleece/Fiber event which will be in Denver the last weekend in June.

1.1.7 The annual meeting will be at the fleece show rather than Nationals so there is time to have election prior to it.

1.1.8 An Election committee has been formed. The election will be in a couple of months. The first AOA board has 10 members — 5 from the AOBA board and 5 from the ARI board. This first election, 4 directors will end their terms and 3 will be elected, bringing the board to the final size of 9 directors.

2.0 Health Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts (P. Long, B. Potter):

On January 2, Colorado thought they had seen last case of vesicular stomatitis, but one week later 2 horses were diagnosed with it in Arizona.

The federal government's final $300 million investment in construction of the National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility for research on extremely toxic animal diseases resides in a new House bill. This new facility in Manhattan, Kansas, will replace the aging facility at Plum Island.

There appears to be low risk of transmission of MERS from camels to humans. Humans transmit it to other humans.

There have been a lot of cases of bird flu on West Coast and it is crossing over to backyard flocks that are exposed to wild birds.

Colorado State University received a large grant from the Dept of Agriculture to investigate antibiotic resistance.

In 2010 a Veterinary loan repayment program was started, enabling veterinarians to "work off" their loans by providing care for 3 years in high priority areas. This program appears to be successful…bringing veterinary care to areas that have suffered from shortages of service.

3.0 Government Related

3.1 Development of "Talking Points" for Members (B. Potter, B. Smoker):

There was discussion among the committee members about the draft report and where we should go from here. Following is a synopsis of the discussion.

The end of life section should perhaps move to the new alternative products committee rather than this document. However, the information in this document is very informative and shouldn't be "lost."

At the strategic planning meeting, ask if anyone knows of alpaca owners who have used any of the indemnity programs available to operations.

Some members who didn't realize alpacas are livestock may not have applied for programs. We should put out an eblast to let people know alpacas are livestock, and programs may be available to them. This document could be an article in *Alpacas Magazine*.

Perhaps give some action item suggestions to members, such as being sure their state/federal representatives are aware the alpacas are classified as livestock.

Information in this report is important, thus we should consider putting it out in several different ways to reach as many members as possible, such as eblast, post on AOA website, and article in *Alpacas Magazine*.

3.2 IRS Farm Audits — Status of Lessons Learned (B. Potter, B. Smoker):

Brion will beef up the section on 1099's. We should get it out soon because it is tax season and some alpaca owners don't understand that they need to provide 1099s to some of their providers (veterinarians, shearers, etc.). The penalties for not filing 1099s by the end of February can be very expensive.

The rest of this document presents other core issues that have been coming up in audits.

Bonnie and Brion are working on this document. The rest of the committee has not yet seen it.

As soon as the 1099 information is available it should go out in an eblast.

As we enter tax season there is some urgency to getting this information out to the membership.

4.0 New Business & General Discussion

4.1 UCC Issue with Ranch Stores (B. Smoker):

This issue has come up in Pennsylvania, but is undoubtedly an issue in other states. Ag buildings do not have the same construction requirements as habitable homes or commercial structures. If someone builds a barn as an "ag building" but then turns part of the barn into a ranch store they may be in violation of the Uniform Construction Code. That portion of the barn now needs to be brought up to UCC standards. Ag building requirements typically do not include habitable space or commercial space.

Pat mentioned that there may also be different codes for a roof depending on the use of the building.

If you are planning to do something such as put a store in part of the barn it is easier to build that part of it to the appropriate standards in the first place than to retrofit it later.

5.0 Approval of Minutes from December 17, 2014 (B. Potter):

Pat moved that the minutes be approved and Jan seconded. The minutes were approved.

6.0 Meeting Wrap (B. Potter):

6.1 Review Action Items:

Bonnie will take the Talking Points document to the strategic planning session and get their input.

Brion will augment 1099 information in IRS Audit document. Brion and Bonnie will get the document to the rest of the committee.

6.2 Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 7:30 p.m. EST.

6.3 Adjournment:

Jan moved and Pat seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m. EST.