Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 22, 2016

Meeting: Special Meeting — Business/Operations, February 22, 2016, 6:00 p.m. EST

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

Vannier was unable to attend due to an illness in the family.

1.0 Meeting Opening: Meeting opened at 6:02 p.m. EST.

1.1 Ratify Email Votes:

1.1.1 I move we approve the proposed AlpacaGram from the Fiber & Fiber Products Committee. (Motion: Shouvlin / Second: Johnson) Motion passed 9–0.

1.1.2 I move we approve the January 28th minutes. (Motion: Johnson / Second:Hull) Motion passed 9–0.

Motion to ratify the above email votes was made by Johnson, seconded by Greene, and passed unanimously (9–0).

2.0 Financial Report: Vigus reviewed the year-to-date financials with the Board.

3.0 Old Business:

3.1 Nationals Update: Vannier will provide the update via email due to his absence from call.

3.2 Bylaw Amendments: The Board reviewed the AOA Bylaw amendments to be presented to the membership for their vote. The Board decided that the voting record of the Board will be included with each amendment as well as a statement that represents the opinion of those that voted against presenting the 8th amendment to the membership.

4.0 New Business:

4.1 Committee Appointments: The Board reviewed the list of each committee and their chairpersons.

Judges Advisory Committee: Jude Anderson — Chairperson, Wade Gease, Cheryl Gehly, Cathy Merkley, Ursula Munro, Helen Testa, Diana Timmerman with Board Liaison — Julie Delaney

Judge Training & Certification Committee: Beth Sheets — Chairperson, Mark Bradley, Bill Clapsaddle, Mary Lou Clingan, Faye Farley, Jerry Forstner, Sharon Milligan with Judge Liaison — Diana Timmerman, Judge Liaison — Amanda VandenBosch, and Board Liaison — Scott Miller

Show Rules Committee: Dr. Jerilynn Booher — Co-chairperson, Michelle Swango — Co-chairperson, Dennis Balbac, Myndee Jung, Sue King, Linda Kondris, Joyce White, Chris Works with Judge Liaison — Jude Anderson, Judge Liaison — Cheryl Gehly, Show Superintendant Liaison — Cathy Oyster, Board Liaison — Laurel Shouvlin, and Board Liaison — Mike Vigus.

Fiber & Fiber Products Committee: Stacy Heydt — Chairperson, Launda Soper — Secretary, BJ Ellis, Ruth Fuqua, Chris Reachard with Board Liaison — Norm Johnson and Staff Liaison — Andrea Harrington

Government & Industry Relations Committee: Deborah Bailey, Lynn Boak, Joan Clappier, Pat Long, Brion Smoker with Board Liaison — Bonnie Potter

Alternative Products Committee: Wayne Dorband, Mary Forte, Eric Stoneberg with Board Liaison — Scott Miller

Revenue Generation Task Force: Bob Pulse, Tim Vincent, Jay Reeder, Joe Crocco, Jeff Williamson, Courtney Williams with Board Liaison — Don Greene and Board Liaison — Scott Miller

Shouvlin moved to approve the committee members and their chairpersons as listed above. Hull seconded and the motion passed unanimously (9–0).

4.2 Executive Director Performance Measurements: Potter presented the Executive Director proposed Performance Measurements to the Board. There were some suggestions for modifications and Potter agreed to take those suggestions to Vannier for his review. She will bring an amended document back to the Board for its approval next month.

4.3 Embryo Transfer/Artificial Insemination Member Vote: Greene proposed via email that the Board consider presenting to the membership for their vote an amendment to the Bylaws to remove the restriction that disallows the registration of ET and AI alpacas in the AOA registry. The reasoning for allowing ET and AI is to increase revenue for AOA through increased registrations, and to improve the overall North American herd quality. He also expressed concerns that their might be rival organizations creating systems that register and accept AI and ET crias. Potter noted that in an AOA survey conducted in 2014, 59% of our member respondents stated that they did not feel knowledgeable enough about ET or AI to make a decision. Potter and Shouvlin would like to see more time taken for member education before presenting this proposed amendment to the membership for their vote. Potter also expressed concern that one of the other justifications for placing this amendment before the membership now as opposed to the next election cycle that was made by a board member was that there is a strong potential to have more voters after our next election, which would raise the bar to get the amendment passed in 2017. Shouvlin expressed concern that ET is an expensive technology for the wealthier breeders to take advantage of and that this could become a divisive issue within our membership.

Johnson moved that we add to the 2016 voting ballot a question to ask the membership if they wish to keep Policies AOA 5-01 and 5-02 in force or if they wish to have it removed from our current policies effective 1 January 2017. Greene seconded the motion. The motion passed (5–4 For: Delaney, Greene, Johnson, Miller, and Vigus; Against: Hull, Merriwether, Potter, and Shouvlin). Those voting against the motion asked that the minutes reflect that while they are for AOA allowing the registration of alpacas resulting from ET and AI reproductive technologies, they wanted to see more educational opportunities for members about ET and AI before sending this for a vote, in order to assist the membership in making an informed choice.

5.0 Committee & Other Reports:

5.1 Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom): Potter reports that GirCom met on February 17, 2016. From USAHA Alerts, there have been several more Equine Herpes V1 cases reported; TX reported cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis, which is the furthest west Dr. Long has heard about this "Eastern" disease. There is still concern that the antibiotics that we can currently purchase OTC from feed stores might be changed to prescription drugs, which has been considered in some States. Article on "Things You Should Know" still being drafted for committee review. Someone at an alpaca show contacted an AOA Board member with a concern about his county (Westmoreland County in Virginia) starting to charge personal property tax on alpacas. The Board asked GIRCom to discuss it. Personal property tax laws vary from county to county in Virginia (personal property is defined and segregated for local taxation per state code/constitution). Some counties tax all tangible business personal property, some exempt livestock from taxation. There was discussion among committee members about their experiences with property taxes in business situations. An alpaca owner in Virginia has experienced some difficulties with local government taxing alpacas. Several suggestions were made for who that owner should talk to: VAOBA—they should be aware of this and may be able to offer advice or assistance; VA Cattle Association as it sounds like the county is also taxing cattle and they are a larger organization than the VA alpaca association; Agriculture Commissioner or Extension Agent in the county; Grange as they are a lobbying organization that represents agricultural interests; and State and County Representatives to ask how can this county tax alpacas when none of the others do? Potter (AOA Board Liaison to GIRCom) will email the person with the committee's suggestions.

5.2 Judge Training and Certification Committee (JTCC): Miller reported that committee is working on upcoming clinics. Wini Labrecque and Cheryl Gehly have been spearheading a JTCC project to create better consistency among spin-off judges.

5.3 Judges Advisory Committee (JAC): Delaney reported that there has been no meeting.

5.4 Show Rules Committee (SRC): Shouvlin and Vigus reported that The SRC has met twice since the Board's last meeting, once on January 29 and again on February 8. They discussed concerns about the upcoming dual show in terms of logistics, recognized that the risks identified remain with the show management, and decided to compose a letter identifying their concerns for show management to consider. There were additional wavers considered including the addition of walking fleece classes to upcoming shows this spring and fall, and a correction to a show that awarded a championship banner with insufficient entries to do so secondary to last minute class changes.

5.5 Fiber and Fiber Products Committee: Johnson reports that the committee met on 1 February 2016. The meeting focused on the open items for the AOA National Fleece Conference to ensure that Andrea's expectations of the committee are being met and to continue to align on the AOA Marketplace at the 2016 National Fleece Conference. The committee is excited about this opportunity for AOA Members. The 2016 Student Design Competition is moving forward extremely well and the committee is excited to see what great ideas are created for using alpaca fiber through this great event. The Fiber as a Business brochure is moving forward and they plan to complete the review of the brochure in March in order for it be printed and available for the National Fleece Conference. The committee continued discussing the North American Alpaca branding by brainstorming slogan ideas to close out the meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for 7 March, 2016.

5.6 Alternative Products Committee: Miller reported that there has been no meeting and that Brad Delaney resigned from the committee.

5.7 Revenue Task Force: Greene and Miller reported on the meeting of February 9th. The meeting's topic is "value to members," or how AOA can retain remembers, attract new members, and reclaim lost members through value-added offerings, promotions, products/services, and savings that can be offered as incentives to our membership. It was suggested that AOA look into product discounts from various businesses such as what AOBA arranged several years ago with John Deere tractors. Also discussed were online webinars and educational events "published" on a monthly basis, to be organized and offered free to members. It was recommended that non-dues paying members or others outside our membership should have to pay to take advantage of those. The question was raised about AOA developing aps to work on smart phones, tablets, laptops that could be made available to our members free or for a nominal charge to make the life of the alpaca person easier, more productive, and profitable? The committee also discussed the "leads system" and modifying that. Fleece collection was brought up and the committee also recommended establishing a technology committee to investigate creating aps that would be useful to our membership.

5.8 Leadership Council: Potter reported that there has been no meeting, but she is following up with the affiliate presidents to get their input about how the meeting went.

5.9 AFNCA: Hull reported that there has been no meeting.

5.10 Executive Director's Report: Will be sent via email since Vannier was unable to attend the meeting.

6.0 Meeting Wrap:

6.1 Contact the Board Update: No contacts other than the item mentioned in 5.1.

6.2 Action Items: Miller reviewed the action items generated by the meeting.

6.3 Committee Liaisons: Follow through on contacting any of the committee members to be certain they are willing to continue to serve on a committee.

6.4 Next Meetings: March 14 (Strategic Plan) and March 22 (Business Meeting).

6.5 Adjournment: Miller moved to adjourn and the meeting ended at 8:50 p.m. EST.

Respectfully submitted, Laurel R. Shouvlin