Board Meeting Minutes

Board of Directors:

Mike Vigus, President	Joe Crocco, Treasurer	Patty Hasselbring, Director
Jeff Williamson, Vice President	Karen Ball, Director (joined late)	Andy Merriwether, Director
Steve Aitchison, Secretary	Vern Butler, Director (absent)	Laurel Shouvlin, Director

Executive Director: Bud Synhorst

Meeting: Conference Call - **March 26, 2019**
6:00 PM Eastern Time

Meeting called to order by Vigus at 6:05 PM.

1.0 Ratify Email Votes Vigus

1.1 Motion by Shouvlin, second by Crocco to approve Sarah Donahoe be added to the membership committee. Motion passed unanimously 9-0.

1.2 Motion by Shouvlin, second by to accept the minutes of the January 2019 meeting. Motion passed unanimously 9-0.

Hasselbring moved to accept the Email Votes, Shouvlin seconded. Approved 7-0-0.

2.0 Financial Report Crocco

Registry is down about $15,000 so far this year. Shows are about $4,600 under budget. Show Membership is down to start 2019 as well. Total Income is below expected budget by $51,000. Expenses were down $43,000, so the organization is in the red by approximately $8,000 so far this year.

2.1 AOA Tax Return

Board will review and vote via email after meeting.

2.2 ALCI Tax Return

Board will review and vote via email after meeting.

2.3 AOA Nebraska Tax Return

Board will review and vote via email after meeting.

3.0 Old Business

3.1 Fleece Show membership add on Crocco

In the interest of bringing the cost down to show fleeces, the board is discussing allowing Registry Members (the $15 membership level) to add on a Show Membership to show fleeces, rather than requiring people to be Association Members (the $110 membership level). This would reduce the cost from $170 to $75 to allow a member to show fleeces through the year. Shouvlin moved that AOA make a special trial offer starting April 1 through the remainder of 2019 that allows Registry Members to purchase the Show Membership add-on for $60 for showing in Fleece, Cottage Fleece, Spin-Offs, and Fiber Arts only, but not Halter or Walking Fleece competitions. Crocco seconded. Approved 7-0-0.

3.2 Membership committee recommendation — Hasselbring

Ball joined meeting at 6:40 PM.

The Membership Committee recommended that the Board consider the proposal of creating a new Gift Certificate program that would allow existing Association Members to provide new alpaca owners with a gift certificate for a free membership to AOA upon transferring ownership of their new alpacas. Board discussed the pros and cons of such a program. Hasselbring moved that the board accept the Gift Certificate program as recommended by the Committee for a trial period. Shouvlin seconded. Approved 8-0-0.

3.3 Other Old Business

No other old business to discuss.

4.0 New Business

4.1 Registration match report — Synhorst

Synhorst provided the board a report of the statistics of the DNA matching since 2014 to help the board better understand how many cria registrations get held up in the process, particularly those animals that never get a match and registration. The board asked for Synhorst to revise the data report and provide at next meeting.

4.2 Social Media Policy — Hasselbring

Hasselbring presented a proposed new Social Media Policy for AOA Directors and Executive Director. The board discussed adjusting the wording and having legal counsel review. Further discussion will be tabled until the next meeting.

4.3 National Show discussion — Vigus

Board discussed experiences from the 2019 National Halter Show in Denver. Shouvlin reported that many Suri breeders felt the break in the middle of their show day was disruptive and would like AOA to reconsider the suri ring schedule in future shows. Williamson reported that many were concerned about the concrete floor of the show venue and the board will visit this further. Williamson also reported that many participants expressed concern about how AOA determines the small, medium, and large breeder awards and the board will visit this issue in the near future and make recommendations to the Show Rules Committee.

4.4 Member Petition — Vigus

Vigus reported that a petition had been created by a member asking AOA to move the National Show back to May rather than March due to the tough weather conditions that might prevail that early in the year. If the petition is formally presented to the board, it will be discussed then.

4.5 GIRCOM addition of committee members — Merriwether

Merriwether reports that one committee member has stepped down and there were four applicants to the committee and wanted to accept two of them, increasing the size of the committee by one member overall. The board agreed that expanding the committee was worthwhile and would review the new applicants via email.

4.6 Updates from committees on Strategic Plan Document — Vigus

Discussion on this will be done later in the meeting during the reports from each of the committees.

4.7 Other New Business

No other new business.

5.0 Executive Director Update — Synhorst

5.1 Dashboard review

Synhorst presented the dashboard - membership is up overall, registrations and transfers are down. The new Alpacas Magazine was well received at the National Show.

6.0 Committee and Other Reports

6.1 Government and Industry Relations Committee — Merriwether
Gircom wants to add two new members, they are still discussing the Strategic Plan implementation and how it affects them.

6.2 Judge Training and Certification Committee — Williamson
No meeting, no report.

6.3 Judges Advisory Committee — Aitchison
No meeting, no report.

6.4 Show Rules Committee — Shouvlin
No meeting, no report.

6.5 Fiber and Fiber Products Committee — Ball
Continued efforts are being made to test alpaca fiber to provide members data on its characteristics and performance. "Why Alpaca Poster" is close to completion.

6.6 Alternative Products Committee — Butler
Butler absent. No report.

6.7 Membership Committee — Hasselbring
Hasselbring reported that the committee finalized the Gift Certificate program proposal and committee members would start to make personal contact with past or lapsed members to see if they might rejoin.

6.8 Affiliates Council — Vigus
No meeting, no report.

6.9 Ad hoc Youth Committee — Shouvlin
No meeting, no report. Board decided to drop the Youth Committee for the present and have the Membership Committee cover its responsibility for the time being.

6.10 Ad hoc Fiber Committee — Shouvlin
The members developed objectives for the committee and brainstormed about what a new and improved AOA Fleece Show model should accomplish to benefit the exhibitor, the alpaca industry, the association, the processors, and the consumer. The members also reviewed the current Fleece Show System and analyzed its strengths and weaknesses. Members offered suggestions of specific items to address.

7.0 Action Items Update — Williamson
List provided by Williamson/Synhorst

8.0 Meeting Wrap

8.1 Contact the Board Update — Vigus

8.1.1 Nationals Contact the Board
A letter from a breeder expressed concerns over how the Invited Championships were handled. Vigus will follow up with the member and recap what AOA provides on them and ask them to provide input on how to make the process more clear in the future.

8.1.2 Alpaca Pet Video — Merriwether
Board discussed the current video going around social media that is leading the public to believe that alpacas can be pets. Hasselbring proposed that AOA develop a response that breeders could have that give proper understanding for alpaca care. Shouvlin, Aitchison, and Merriwether will work on a program for AOA to try to address this.

8.3 Next Meeting — **Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 6:00 PM via conference call** — Vigus

8.4 Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM Eastern. Vigus