Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 24, 2017

Board of Directors: Don Greene, President; Mike Vigus, Vice President; Jeff Williamson, Secretary; Joe Crocco, Treasurer; Vern Butler, Director; Patty Hasselbring, Director; Steve Hull, Director; Andy Merriwether, Director; Laurel Shouvlin, Director

Executive Director: Bud Synhorst

Meeting: Monthly Business Meeting
Conference Call — October 24, 2017, 6:00 p.m. EDT

Others Present: Jeri Booher, Show Rules Committee Co-chair, and Margie Ault, Show and Marketing Division Administrator, for agenda item 1.

Proceedings: Meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m. EDT by President Greene.

1.0 Show Rules Committee recommendations for the 2018 Show System Handbook: Jeri presented the SRCC recommended rule changes to the show system. There was a lengthy discussion regarding Walking Fleece. It was decided to move this review to an additional sub-group meeting due to a number of concerns and time constraints. The sub-group meeting will take place before the November 14th AOA Board meeting. Participants will be Synhorst, Ault, Williamson, Vigus, Croco, Booher, Anderson, and Gehly.

Booher and Ault left the meeting.

2.0 Ratify Email Votes: Vote to ratify email voting approved by the board on October 24, 2017 (Motion by Shouvlin, Second by Hasselbring, Approved 9–0).

2.1 Approve AlpacaGram on Disaster Preparedness. Motion by Greene, Second by Vigus. Approved 7–0–2 (Votes not cast by Butler and Hull).

2.2 Approve President's Letter for *Alpacas Magazine*. Motion by Shouvlin, Second by Crocco. Approved 8–0–1 (Vote not cast by Butler).

3.0 Approve minutes of September 26, 2017, Board Meeting: Vote to approve meeting minutes (Motion by Hasselbring, Second by Shouvlin, Approved 9–0).

4.0 Financial Report and Quarterly Investment Report: There were no questions as to the monthly financial report or the quarterly investment report.

5.0 Old Business:

5.1 Membership Survey: Membership Committee is working on a survey to assess how members value the benefits they receive. It will also highlight/educate them on what all the benefits are. First draft completed with questions currently in the editing phase.

5.2 Suri Breed Standard Status Report: An extensive discussion was held regarding the reply letter from the Suri Network with changes made by their attorney to the proposed draft agreement for AOA to use the Suri Network's suri breed standard. Language was removed that would allow AOA to have a license to use, to prepare derivative works, and to have no infringement claims without approval from the Suri Network. AOA's attorneys recommended that unless the Board is willing to move forward with attempting to have the AOA membership adopt a breed standard that AOA will have no control over in the future, it is most likely best for AOA at this point to develop AOA's own suri breed standard. Vigus moved that AOA develop a single alpaca breed standard with separate fleeces sections for huacaya and suri. Seconded by Butler. Yes votes were cast by Vigus, Butler, Crocco, Williamson, and Greene. No votes were cast by Hasselbring, Shouvlin, Hull, and Merriwether (Approved 5–4).

5.3 Strategic Plan Update and Discussion: Reviewed top 10 ranked priorities by the previous directors of the Strategic Plan Goals. Briefly reviewed each of these items. Some of the previous assignments need to be reassigned due to previous board members no longer being on the board. Listed below are these items with the current assignments. Further conversations will be held at an upcoming meeting. Responsible board members are to put together a brief bulleted plan.

1.	Marketing	Bud Synhorst
2.	Marketing funding	Don Greene
3.	Education regarding member benefits	Patty Hasselbring
4.	Branding alpaca fleece	Laurel Shouvlin
5.	Evaluating membership levels and services	Patty Hasselbring
6.	Breed standard development	Mike Vigus
7.	Educating members on registration	Needs reassignment
8.	Education strategy to attract members	Patty Hasselbring
9.	Defining models of pathways to profitability	Bud Synhorst
10.	Increasing awareness of value of EPDs	Andy Merriwether
11.	Doing studies on fleece science and data	Andy Merriwether

6.0 New Business:

6.1 Membership Renewal Discussion: The survey that the membership committee is working on will also include questions that are demographic in nature to gather data about our members' herds.

6.2 Marketing Plan Discussion: Synhorst reviewing which avenues are the best for AOA to pursue to promote our industry. Also identifying who our target market is.

6.3 *Alpacas Magazine* Advertising Discussion: Synhorst proposed having the AOA staff handle all advertising sales for *Alpacas Magazine*. The staff has worked on a plan to sell a bulk of the advertising during the membership renewal period (December and January). Individual ads beyond renewal sales will be sold on a per issue basis, at full price. Selling advertising in advance would allow better adherence to the print deadlines. The go ahead was given for Synhorst to move forward with his proposal.

6.4 Draft Budget Discussion: Moved to November 14th interim meeting.

6.5 Members Services Following Disasters: Synhorst put forward the idea of reducing/waiving the fee for those farms that have gone through a recent disaster and may have lost their copies of their AOA certificates. Current policy has a fee associated with it. Motion made by Shouvlin to provide the staff the latitude to reduce/waive the fee for replacement of AOA certificates in specific situations where alpaca owners have experienced disasters. Second by Butler (Approved 9–0).

7.0 Executive Director Update: Synhorst reports.

Report submitted prior to the board meeting. Synhorst advised at the meeting that Angela Nosal joined AOA on October 16th as the Event and Member Services Coordinator. Angela will be traveling to Nashville in a few weeks to train with Margie Ault on the show system and she also will be traveling to Peoria to visit the 2018 National Show facility. Hasselbring and Williamson traveling to Lincoln for the new board member orientation on November 6–7.

8.0 Committee and Other Reports:

8.1 Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom): Merriwether
No report.

8.2 Judge Training and Certification Committee (JTCC): Hull
No report.

8.3 Judges Advisory Committee (JAC): Williamson
No report.

8.4 Show Rules Committee (SRC): Vigus
See agenda item 1.0 that covered the SRC report.

8.5 Fiber and Fiber Products Committee: Shouvlin
At 10/2/17 meeting, the focus was on the upcoming National Fleece Show. Executive Director Bud Synhorst had requested that each focus of the conference have a leader on the committee who would serve as a point of contact. The committee developed the areas of focus and individuals on the committee accepted responsibility for serving as those points of contact. The final list will be available at the next meeting of the committee currently scheduled for November 6, 2017.

8.6 Alternative Products Committee: Butler
No report.

8.7 Membership Committee: Hasselbring
At 10/11/17 meeting, discussed Camelid Companion Certification status. Youth Membership—will be scheduling joint meeting to ensure that work is being coordinated. A survey of membership will be conducted to determine perceived value of benefits. Draft questions discussed, next steps determined. Discussed development of a plan to promote membership benefits after survey results are in.

8.8 Affiliates Council: Greene
No report.

8.9 Ad Hoc Youth Committee: Shouvlin
No report.

8.10 US Alpaca Fiber Council: Synhorst
No report.

9.0 Meeting Wrap:

9.1 Contact the Board Update: Member reached out to the board over concern of the tone of the recent AlpacaGram that went out regarding Senator Flake. Greene to work with Synhorst on a response.

9.2 Action Items Review: Vigus will email to all following the meeting.

9.3 Next Meeting: November 14, 2017, 6:00 p.m. EST.

9.4 Adjournment: Motion by Greene, second by Butler to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by Jeff Williamson, Secretary.