Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom)

Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2015

Meeting: Conference Call—November 18, 2015, 7:30 p.m. EST

Members: Deborah Bailey
Lynn Boak
Joan Clappier
Jan Hamby
Dr. Pat Long
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Bonnie Potter

Staff Representative: Darby Vannier (absent)

Meeting called to order at 7:32 p.m. EST.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 Welcome New Members/Introduction (B. Potter):

- Deborah Bailey and Lynn Boak have joined GIRCom. Bonnie gave them an overview of GIRCom and then each member spoke briefly about their background.

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

- AOA is gearing up for renewals in December.
- They are working on the next newsletter.
- AOA sent out an email to the membership to clarify membership classes and voting.
    - There are 2500 paid members; ~ 775 with voting rights and ~ 450 actually voted.
    - 9000 additional people have accessed the registry online in the past year but are not any type of member.
    - There has been discussion among the AOA board about giving free voting rights to everyone and this was announced in the minutes after a September meeting. However, the cost would be significant. It costs about $10 per voter to mail out the voter packets, the auditors are paid to review and certify everything, and the software would have to be modified to reflect the change. Estimated cost to make voting free instead of $15 is approximately $40,000. Further study is being conducted, including exploring the possibility of electronic voting.
- National Shows.
    - 2016 halter show will be in March, in Ft. Wayne, Indiana.
    - 2016 fleece show will be in July in Arlington, Virginia.
    - 2017 halter show will be in Denver, Colorado.
    - AOA is trying to plan shows further out before many of the venues get booked. This gives us more options and potential cost savings.

2.0 Health Related

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

- There was a lot of talk about mosquito-borne diseases during October, e.g. EEE, WNV, Vesicular stomatitis. VS caused quarantine of a number of horse ranches in Wyoming, which can affect transport of animals from that state.
- EHV-1: quite a few cases in horses in recent years. It has occurred in alpacas but not much. Horse shows are going to require vaccination to try to reduce the incidence.
- Antibiotic usage continues to be a common topic.

- The two scientists who discovered ivermectin were two of the recipients of the Nobel Prize this year.
- CA has banned antibiotics that promote growth; this doesn't affect alpacas.
- The loan repayment program is underway. The government pays down student loans for veterinarians who work in underserved areas. Currently, even though the payment goes directly to the lender, the veterinarian is getting taxed. A bill had been introduced to remove the tax burden.

2.2 USAHA Meeting (P. Long):

- The 118th annual meeting was held in Providence, Rhode Island, in October.
- United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) is an international forum that includes producers (ranchers/farmers), veterinary personnel, regulatory agencies, researchers, and scientists who discuss and work to resolve issues involving livestock and wildlife.
- Pat represents AOA at USAHA and is now in his 2nd year of a ten year commitment as vice-chair of the committee on infectious diseases of cattle, bison, and camelids.
- This year, in addition to two topics about cattle and one about bison, there were two presentations about camelids.
    - Presentation on TB in camelids worldwide, including different methods of testing for TB. There are some improved test protocols that we hope will be adopted in the US.
    - Update on use of alpacas as food animals in VT. Bottom line: Alpacas are entering the food chain but we don't have uniform standards or availability for inspection and we don't have any data on drug withdrawal times in camelids.
- Joint session: Use of anti-microbial products in feed. Probably no impact on camelids.
- Blue tongue; there were a couple of cases diagnosed last year in the US in camelids.
- Animal welfare committee: no big issues in camelid industry.
- Pat is getting to know USDA structure and people. This is beneficial to the camelid industry.

3.0 Government Related

3.1 IRS Farm Audits — Status of Lessons Learned/1099 Article (B. Potter, B. Smoker):

- Bonnie did an edit pass on Brion's report and distributed it to the Committee. There is general agreement that this is a good report.
- Lynn has added information.
- We need to add appropriate disclaimers.
- Should we add some references? Possibly a recommendation to read the instructions for forms that are mentioned.
- A couple of areas to really emphasize:
    - It is really important to have representation if you get audited.
    - The emphasis on having a business plan is very good, but people also need to review/update it once or twice per year.
- Jan moved and Pat seconded that we fine-tune the document, approve it by email vote, and get it to the AOA Board for approval so that it can go out to the membership the end of December when members are getting ready to work on their taxes.

3.2 Status of Article on "Things You Should Know: (Zoning, UCC, etc.)" (B. Potter):

- Lynn has a couple of things to add; she'll email them to the committee.
- Jan: List is getting kind of long. We might divide it into several installments.
- Lynn has ideas on organizing topics.
- The committee agreed with breaking it into multiple documents, organized by topics. Lynn has offer to work on this.

4.0 New Business: Nothing at this time.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (J. Clappier):

The motion was made by Pat and second by Jan to approve the minutes of 9/23/15. The minutes were approved.

6.0 Meeting Wrap:

6.1 Review Action Items (B. Potter):

- Lynn: Add to “Things You Should Know” and reorganize the document by topics.
- Bonnie: Fine-tune IRS document and send to the committee for final review and email vote of approval.

6.2 Next Meeting (B. Potter):

December 16, 2015.

6.3 Adjournment (B. Potter):

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m. EST.