Government & Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom) MINUTES August 13, 2018

Committee Members: Bonnie Potter, Chair
Deborah Bailey [absent]
Joan Clappier
Dr. Pat Long
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Andy Merriwether

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm ET.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Merriwether/Huntley

- Fleece conference
  - The Fleece show was successful.
  - The staff received some feedback for improvement of vendors and information about some local groups AOA can work with.
  - Staff is putting together a survey for attendees and participants to get additional input on what went well and where improvements can be made.
  - Public attendance wasn't great
  - There was a good general opinion of the classes.
  - AOA plans to return to that venue next year.
  - Bottom line: It went well but they have learned things to improve on next year
- Staff is now looking ahead to NAFD the last weekend in September
- Andy Merriwether has been appointed to remain the Board liaison to GIRCom.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- Mosquito-transmitted diseases such as EEE and WNV are being reported by many states, including states further north than typical. This is not surprising since the weather has been warmer.
- There have been a couple of Anti-microbial conferences held recently.
- First-responders may need training in animal handling and care for evacuation situations. The report GIRCom is just completing will help provide fundamental information about alpacas.
- Another thing that Pat watches is spread of diseases, since in today's world it keeps getting easier for diseases to travel from country to country.
- The USAHA annual meeting in October. They have located a speaker for haemonchus and are looking for someone to address prion diseases.

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3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 Alpaca Business Benchmarks — Smoker/All

- Bonnie will contact the member who promised additional data, then she will wrap it up with the addition of marketing and send the revised copy to the committee members for review.

3.2 Education of State/County Officials — Potter

- Brion condensed the previous document, Bonnie condensed it a bit more and Joan made a few corrections and suggestions.
- Joan recommended that the current version is ready to be sent to the BOD to be reviewed and sent to the members. Pat seconded the motion and it was passed.
- Bonnie will draft a cover letter to be sent with the document explaining the purpose of the article. When the committee has had a chance to review and approve that letter, it will be sent along with the document to the BOD.

3.3 ELD Mandate/Farm Bill Update — Potter

- There has been no further information on ELD or the farm bill status.

3.4 Member Concern about IRS and State Tax Audits — Potter/Smoker

- Brion is keeping the member being audited up to date.
- Brion is anxious to get the questionnaire out to members so that we can accumulate and summarize data about making money in the alpaca business. This will serve a couple of important purposes:
  - Help members improve the profitability of their businesses
  - Provide documentation for IRS and State auditors that alpaca businesses can and do make profits and they should not be categorically classified as hobbies.

4.0 New Business

4.1 None at this time.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval: 7-9-18) — Potter/Clappier

- Pat moved that the minutes be accepted and Joan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

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6.0 Meeting Wrap

6.1 Review Action Items — Potter

- Bonnie: Contact the member she has been talking to and try to get additional information to add to the benchmark study. Send an update of the study to committee members for review
- Bonnie: Write a cover letter for the State/County officials document; send to committee for review.
- Scan and send copy of 2017 Annual report which has several mentions of GIRCom things has done.

6.2 Next Meeting Date will be: 9/10/2018 at 7:30pm ET — Potter

6.3 Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm. — Potter