Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom)

Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2017

Meeting: Conference Call—August 16, 2017, 7:30 p.m. EDT

Members: Deborah Bailey (absent)
Joan Clappier
Dr. Pat Long
Bonnie Potter—Acting Chair
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Andy Merriwether (absent)

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley

Meeting called to order at 7:34 p.m. EDT.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance (Huntley):

- Andy Merriwether has been appointed AOA Board Liaison for GIRCom. We welcome Andy to the committee.
- The 2016 Annual Report is posted on the AOA website. In the "Year in Review" three of the items listed as things done by AOA for the membership were done by GIRCom during 2016. These were
    - Notified members about conferences around the country for veterinarians.
    - Released a three-part series on "Things to Consider when Starting or Operating an Alpaca Business.
    - Developed an eBlast on "Emergency Preparedness for Alpaca Owners.
- The Fleece Conference went well.
- The staff is currently putting together the AOA *Alpaca Owners Guide*, which is provided for new owners and prospects to provide them with information and resource lists.
- AOA is ramping up the advertising for NAFD.
- AOA is searching for a new conference manager, hopefully in the Lincoln office, to replace the previous manager who has left.
- The new AOA Board Members will be coming to the Lincoln office for orientation.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts (Long, Potter):

- Mosquito-related disease reports are increasing with warmer weather. These include WNV and EEE, which we follow because they can be transmitted to alpacas.
- Serious drought in ND is affecting cattle and presumably other livestock.
- UC Davis had emergency training for large animals.
- Changes in the way the government will put out information about any diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease coming into US. There may be a vaccination protocol for animals who have been exposed to the incoming diseased animals.
- One report was made on August 7 of an alpaca dying from WNV in Iowa.
- The USAHA annual meeting will be October 15–18 in San Diego. The Committee structure has been changed to move camelids from the group with cattle and bison to the group with sheep and goats. Dr. Pat Long has been co-chair of the committee on infectious diseases and is assuming he will still be co-chair.
    - Pat has been representing AOA and the alpaca industry at USAHA for many years, which is good for our visibility, legitimacy, and opportunity to influence government actions that can affect alpacas.

- Becoming co-chair gives him a better opportunity to influence the amount of attention alpacas get by USAHA.
- USAHA members represent academics, research, regulatory agencies, and stakeholders. Committees are formed to discuss important topics and to make recommendations to Congress and the USDA.

3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 Estate Planning/Preparedness (Potter, Smoker):

- Bonnie made a few changes and added some references to the document and will send the update to the committee members.
- Brion recommended that we consider this a living document and solicit suggestions from the members when we send it out.
- Bonnie asked Dan if he would help her add some language about the AOA recommendation to put certificates in a Business Name rather than Individual names, since it can make paperwork easier in cases of death or divorce. Dan said he will help with that.
- Bonnie asked Dan if De might be able to create a "fill-in-the-blanks" PDF file, like she did for the questionnaire to committee chairs. Dan will look into that.
- By the time the document is completed and formatted, the full package should be send back to the GIRCom committee members for final review before it goes to the Board with a recommendation to send to the membership.
- This would be a good time for committee members to take another look at the document to see if they have any more suggestions.

4.0 New Business:

4.1 Request from ED for Committee Report (Potter):

Bonnie received a request from the Executive Director requesting a report on the GIRCom committee with information about what it does and has done. That has been submitted. She will send a copy to the committee.

4.2 Determining the Actual Finances of Your Alpaca Business (Smoker):

- Brion has been talking to people and working on information for owners for figuring out how they are really doing in their business and how much it costs to raise an alpaca. This may be something we want to work on for the AOA membership. It would be useful to develop benchmarks, and the information will vary in different regions of the country.
- Pat said he thinks that is a good idea. He talks to people about feeding alpacas and what that may cost.
- Brion will send out what he has thus far so the committee can review it.
- Bonnie will put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Clappier, Potter):

5.1 Minutes for approval: 6/28/17

Motion to approve the minutes of the May meeting was made by Pat and seconded by Joan. Motion was passed.

6.0 Meeting Wrap:

6.1 Review Action Items (Potter):

- Bonnie: Send the committee the report she send to ED about GIRCom activities.
- Bonnie: Communicate with ED about Dr. Long's representation of alpacas at USAHA and that AOA reimburses him for his expenses.
- Bonnie & Dan: Work together to add to the Estate Planning document the recommendation about using Business Names on registration certificates.
- Dan: Talk to De about putting the Estate Planning document into a "fill-in-the-blanks format.
- Brion: Send the committee the information he is gathering about alpaca business finances.
- Joan: Send email to committee about meeting dates and compile the results.

6.2 Next Meeting (Potter):

Joan: email options for meeting dates, email it to committee members, and compile the information in a spreadsheet to find the best day of the month for meetings. The date for the next meeting will be determined when we have that data.

6.3 Adjournment (Potter):

Meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m. EDT.