Government & Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom) MINUTES October 11, 2021

Committee Members: Bonnie Potter, Chair
Joan Clappier
Dr. Pat Long
Tom Petersen [absent]

Board Liaison: Wendy Dittbrenner

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm ET.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Dittbrenner/Huntley

- Annual EPD calculations will be started in November, which is earlier than usual.
- USPS is temporarily suspending mail service to NZ, which is where our fiber testing is done. It is uncertain how long that will last
- Membership renewal will begin in December. Computer testing of new changes will be done so that the system will be ready for that.
- Our Fiber show is moving to Kentucky next year. There will be new branding and a new vision, with more fiber education and new-member education, with less focus on the general public. Some of our industry experts are doing presentations.
- The office staff is making a master-list of educational topics for social media and possible zoom presentations/discussions. They've had some well-attended sessions from other committees and GIRCom is encouraged to brainstorm ideas for future topics. Possible examples: disaster preparedness, alpacas & taxes, animal health, estate planning, etc. Sessions are recorded so that members can access them later, if needed.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- EEE has been reported in MI and NC in horses.
- A lot of information has been posted about African swine fever. It has not reached the US yet and there has been no impact on camelids.
- Bluetongue has been reported in deer and elk in NB. It has been seen in the past in alpacas in CA and llamas in WA. Years ago there was a massive outbreak in England but now it is just sporadic.
- Someone outside Vacaville (near UC Davis) has had 3 cases of bluetongue, 1 of which died. Pat will contact Dr. Julie Dechant at UCD to try to get confirmation and/or more information.
- Questionnaire from UCD distributed to committee members and Calpaca members.
- Llama antibodies were used to treat a hamster that had covid-19. Perhaps it could lead to a nasal spray to treat humans in early stage covid.
- USAHA annual meeting: There are three co-chairs – one each for sheep, goats, and camelids. Pat is the co-chair for camelids. He has lined up a speaker to talk about transition from OTC to prescription-only medications.

3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 International Transport of Alpacas/Info for website – defer — Potter

3.2 Committee Membership — Potter

- Bonnie will email applicant to let him know we have received his application and that we are waiting to receive others.
- AOA will put out another eblast and wait another month

4.0 New Business

4.1 USDA Investment in Agriculture

- Robin & Dan sent info about USDA money available for various purposes. Most of it doesn't apply to alpacas, but there are some parts that could, e.g. drought requirements and water conservation.
- Bonnie will extract the relevant options into a draft email for the members.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval: (9/13/21) — Clappier

- Motion to approve the corrected minutes of 9/13/21 was made by Joan, seconded by Pat. Motion was passed.

6.0 Meeting Wrap

6.1 Review Action Items — Potter

- All: Think of topics for online education
- Dan: Put out another eblast for committee
- Pat: Touch base with Dechant re: bluetongue in Vacaville
- Bonnie: Contact applicant for committee
- Bonnie: Consolidate relevant information from the USDA funding document for eBlast

6.2 Next Meeting Date: 11/8/2021 — Potter

6.3 Adjournment — Potter

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 pm ET.