Government & Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom) MINUTES January 13, 2020

Committee Members: Bonnie Potter, Chair
Joan Clappier
Dr. Pat Long
Tom Petersen
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Andy Merriwether

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. ET.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Merriwether/Huntley

- The 2019 EPT calculations have been published and are posted online.
- It is audit season. The AOA accountant is coming in next week
- Robin, our new Executive Director, is settling in well. She has traveled to some show events.
- Planning is underway for Nationals in Ft Wayne in March. This is our 30th anniversary show.
- Membership renewal opened in December. Thus far, renewal rates look comparable to last year.

1.2 Membership Renewal Reminder

- Brion said that when the PA affiliate started sending renewal notices to members the renewal rate increased significantly.
- Andy emailed Brion's suggestion to the Board.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- Not much of direct interest to alpacas.
- VS: the quarantine has been lifted for the last (non-alpaca) farm that had been quarantined. Thus that outbreak is over for the season.
- There has been a lot of talk about chronic wasting disease.
- The FDA is planning to push more restrictions on antibiotics by 2023.

3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 Alpaca Business Benchmarks — Potter/All

- No feedback has been received yet. Dan will check with De to see if anyone has filled out the form.
- Brion will be giving seminars at alpaca shows and has prepared information about the benchmark study to bring it to the attention of attendees.
- Suggestion: Have Gircom send something to AOA to be sent to affiliate presidents so that they can encourage their members to enter their information. We need to get through to people that it benefits the industry and the individuals to have this data.

3.2 IRS and State Tax Audits — Smoker

- It is non-audit season.

3.3 Agritourism … How We Can Help Our Members — Potter/All

- Bonnie started a paper a couple of months ago and she has resumed work on it. It will include some background, explanation of what it entails, potential problems or legal issues. It will also include links to relevant websites. She requested that we keep sending her any information or links that we have found.

- Pat saw an article in Capitol Press magazine which referenced a Univ of Vermont study on agritourism. They are doing research to find out what makes it work for people. Since he does some agritourism at his farm, he took the survey and will let us know if he gets any results

3.4 eBlast about CVI/microchips/MI requirement — Potter

- The eBlast went out Dec 20. Dan said the office has not received any questions about it.

4.0 New Business

4.1 US to Europe Transport Question — All

- AOA received a support ticket at AOA from someone who wants to know requirements to transport alpacas from US to Europe.
- Pat looked up info. This year he was involved with 2 exports to UK. Brion has worked on exporting alpacas to Germany.
- Alpacas cannot be shipped directly from US to any EU countries. It is difficult and expensive, but it can be done. The steps are:
  - Meet requirements to export to Canada, i.e. quarantine requirements before transport
  - 6 months in Canadian quarantine station
  - Then they can be transported from Canada to Europe.
- UK has more stringent standards than some of the other European countries.
- Suggestion was made to put something on AOA website with guidelines for doing import/export, with links to relevant websites. USDA sets regulations for import/export for US. Each country sets its own import/export requirements for livestock. Some countries won't allow any ruminants into their country from US.
- Brion commented that it is also challenging to move animals between countries in EU. This limits the gene pools in the countries. Expanding gene pools is a reason for Europeans to spend the time and money importing from the US.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval 12/9/19) — Potter/Clappier

- Motion to approve the minutes of 12/9/19 was made by Pat, seconded by Joan. Motion was passed.

6.0 Meeting Wrap

6.1 Review Action Items — Potter

- Bonnie: Continue work on draft article on agritourism.
- All: Continue to send information / links to Bonnie for agritourism article.
- Brion will send his Benchmark power point to Bonnie; Bonnie will put something together for committee review and then send it to AOA.
- Bonnie: Put something together for Dan to respond to inquiry person.
- Summary paper with links about import/export
- Bonnie: Include international transport of alpacas on next meeting agenda.

6.2 Next Meeting Date 2/10/2020 — Potter

6.3 Adjournment — Potter

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm ET.