Government and Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom)

Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2016

Meeting: Conference Call—January 20, 2016, 7:30 p.m. EST

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

Board Liaison: Bonnie Potter

Staff Representative: Darby Vannier

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

1.0 Meeting Opening

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

- Financially, AOA ended the year in the black despite continued decline in registration and transfer income. Expenses were managed very well. It was also the first year operating as a single business instead of two businesses.
- The official audit will begin next week.
- Participation in the *Alpaca Owners Guide* and the benefactor programs have been better than expected.
- The National Halter Show will be in March in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. It is shaping up to be a spectacular show, with a wonderful area for the auction. People planning to enter animals should not delay because there is a possibility of selling out the available stall space.
- The National Fleece Conference in July will be in Arlington, Virginia. Having two shows back-to-back keeps the office staff very busy, but separating the fleece show to a separate fleece/fiber/educational event has worked well.
- Jan has a contact at USDA who may help line up a keynote speaker for the conference.
- The Board is researching the possibility of putting Bylaw changes before the membership to (a) allow electronic voting, and (b) provide voting to all members for free. The two need to be passed together because mailing and auditing the results to all 10,000 current members would cost approximately $40,000. If both measures pass, paper ballots would be available to those requesting them. With major issues, it is important for all members to be voting members and exercise their right to vote.
- The election committee will be formed soon.

2.0 Health Related

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

- Things have been relatively quiet recently.
- A large number of cattle died in a recent huge snowstorm in NM & TX, a lot of cattle lost. Haven't heard of alpaca losses.
- Vesicular Stomatitis is still active, with some ranches still quarantined in CO and TX.
- Some cases of WNV have been reported.
- Equine Herpes Virus, which can potentially affect alpacas, has been seen recently in PA.
- Rabies cases are up in KS.
- TB was found in MI in cattle.
- There is a new avian flu outbreak in IN, resulting in euthanizing more birds.

- A national summit is underway to discuss policy and economic issues related to antibiotic use in food animals.

3.0 Government Related

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

- Brion has heard positive comments about the article. The rest of the committee members have not heard any feedback.

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

- Lynn has been really busy. She will get back to working on the articles.

4.0 New Business:

4.1 Microchip Requirements Question (P. Long):

- The Show Rules committee told Margie that there are new regulations in place for ear tag IDs. Pat Long is looking into it. Pat's impression is that if you elect to use chipped ear tags you must use their specified type, but that if you are microchipping the way alpacas have been done the new regulation does not apply. However, he will continue to research this.
- Bonnie found a website where you could ask questions about this requirement so she posted a question. She should have a response within a few days.
- Further discussion about tracking microchip information:
    - Darby asked how closely chips are tracked. Pat said that when he fills out a CVI, he sends two copies to his state office and they send one of them to the destination state. Thus the movement of each animal is being tracked from state to state.
    - Bonnie had been asked by an owner if AOA can identify the owner based on a chip number. The answer is only if the owner has entered the chip number into the database. Darby mentioned that any owner can go online at any time and update microchip information for free.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (J. Clappier):

- The motion was made by Pat and second by Jan to approve the minutes of 12/16/15. The minutes were approved.

6.0 Meeting Wrap:

6.1 Review Action Items (B. Potter):

- Lynn: Continue to work on the "Things You Should Know" articles.
- Pat and Bonnie: Follow up on the ear tag/microchip question.
- If anyone hasn't renewed their membership, you must do so to remain on the committee.

6.2 Next Meeting (B. Potter):

- February 17, 2016 (third Wednesday).

6.3 Adjournment (B. Potter):

- A motion to adjourn was moved by Joan and seconded by Pat. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m. EST.