Board Meeting Minutes

Our Mission

We advance responsible alpaca ownership and breeding through our world-renowned registry, comprehensive education, leadership, and vibrant member community. We build a community, *through member and volunteer support,* where we ensure the long-term sustainability and success of alpaca livestock for current and future generations.

Our Vision

To be the definitive livestock model and global leader advancing all aspects of alpaca ownership—from breeding and health to fleece utilization and business development—while growing a thriving community that champions the alpaca industry's future.

Board of Directors

Jennifer Hack, President
Brian Houchin, Vice-President
Jason Gill, Treasurer
Michael Livingston, Secretary
Gina Glasscock, Director
Scott Miller, Director
Sharon Milligan, Director
Jay Penica, Director
Mike Walsh, Director

Executive Director: Robin Gifford - Absent

Meeting: Video Board Meeting
Thursday, November 13, 2025; 4:00 PM Pacific/7:00 PM Eastern

1.0 Meeting Opening Call to order: 6:02pm Central — Hack0

2.0 Strategic Goal 2: Fortify AOA's Financial Position

2.1 Investment Policy Review — Penica
Per policy, Penica, Gill and Gifford will meet with the WF advisor to review investment performance and FDIC insurance.

2.2 National Show 2027 Venue discussion 3 — Hack
(See survey outcomes in folder)
2.2.1 Marketing — Miller
2.2.2 Annual Auction Fundraiser
2.2.3 The AOA Cup: East vs West
2.2.4 Novice Championships
2.2.5 Sponsorships
2.2.6 Arte Michell
2.2.7 Invited Champions

- Tulsa emerged as a strong contender with its strategic location surrounded by 5 million people within driving distance, representing a significant marketing opportunity in an untapped market for alpaca breeding.

Oklahoma State University Support

- OSU has committed $12,500 in cash or services to support the event, including vet check-in and education. The Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) has verbally committed $5,000-$8,000 in support, with formal confirmation expected next week.
- The board reviewed a letter of commitment from Oklahoma State University regarding their support for the Tulsa venue, which included either providing staffing (veterinarians and educational speakers) or a $12,500 financial commitment.

Budget Analysis of Venue Options

- Houchin calculated the Tulsa costs as potentially equivalent to Fort Wayne when accounting for all expenses. The final comparison showed both venues at approximately $56,000 if carpet costs $11,000 and assuming only partial sponsorship.
- Creative financing approaches were suggested, including regional sponsorships for carpet/turf. One board member immediately committed $3,000 as a Northwest carpet sponsor, demonstrating the viability of this fundraising approach.

Annual Auction Fundraiser

- Miller emphasized that the annual auction fundraiser is critical this year and proposed an ambitious goal of raising $100,000 in one night, suggesting that board members auction off worthy alpacas. He committed to donating an alpaca for the auction and suggested including strong herd sire breedings and a small pen sale group similar to what was done in 2011 when they cleared $100,000.
- Board members were asked to consider not just what they personally can contribute to the auction, but also to identify valuable items that others might have available.
- An auction committee was formed including Scott, Jennifer, Brian, and Jay, with mention that Randy Strong was very helpful last year and might assist again.

East vs West Competition

- Scott proposed creating an AOA Cup with East versus West competition, which would be separate from the Breeders Cup but use the same points system, awarded annually to the winning side. The award will be primarily for bragging rights with a permanent trophy that stays at the AOA offices but is brought to the national show each year and engraved with the winning team's name.

Marketing Strategy for National Shows

- Scott proposed a shift in how national shows are managed, suggesting that board members take a more active role in marketing rather than leaving most work to the office and simply showing up individually.

Board Meeting Minutes

- The board approved purchasing seven pop-ups and two stand-up banners for display materials, including Suri and Huacaya Fleece exhibits that attendees can touch and interact with, costing under $1,500.

Championship Structure Revisions

- Invited Champions: allow alpacas that have championed at AOA shows to receive six points for showing up at nationals, as if they were in a preliminary class. After preliminary classes are judged, blue ribbon winners would compete for the championship alongside champions from other AOA shows who would join the same ring.
- The board unanimously approved the new championship structure after a motion from Penica and second from Houchin.

Novice Championships Concept

- Miller proposed creating novice championships where smaller breeders would be recognized for competing against one another, with high placers still eligible to compete against everyone else in the main championships.
- Gill suggested mandatory novice classification criteria such as "under five years, under nine years or haven't won a banner" to increase participation and create meaningful championships for newer breeders.
- Gina recommended an achievement-based advancement system with three tiers: novice, middle section, and upper section, with progression based on banners won (5 banners to advance to middle, 15 to advance to top).
- The board determined Novice Championships would not be implemented for 2026, but could potentially be introduced for the 2027 show season if judges approve and scheduling can accommodate it.

Sponsorship Opportunities

- Scott proposed creating a sponsorship where a ranch could sponsor dinner for everyone at the Friday night fundraiser event to increase attendance and engagement at the auction.
- Jennifer suggested offering multiple dinner sponsorships at lower price points (potentially $2,000-3,000 each) rather than seeking a single larger sponsor to fully cover the banquet costs.

3.0 Strategic Goal 1: Leverage Marketing — Houchin, Livingston, Miller

No report

4.0 Strategic Goal 3: Enhance Member Value — Gill, Glasscock, Penica

- Glasscock noted the task force is closing gaps on key items for member value initiatives.

5.0 Strategic Goal 4: Alpacas as a True Livestock Model — Walsh

No report

6.0 Other Business — Hack

6.1 Request to change Corporate Member to Industry Partner

Board Meeting Minutes

(See doc in folder)

- Proposal to change the terminology from "corporate member" to "industry member" to reduce confusion with other membership categories like business member. The board unanimously approved this change. Motion by Houchin. 2nd by Miller.

7.0 **Adjournment** Motion to adjourn: Miller 8:20pm Central. Hack

Next regular meeting: November 24, 2025