Government & Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom) MINUTES May 10, 2021

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

Board Liaison: Wendy Dittbrenner

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm ET.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Dittbrenner/Huntley

- A major portion of the most recent Board meeting was about the Colorado ballot Initiative 16, which puts unrealistic limitations on being able to provide reasonable medical care for animals. This will be discussed below in Section 4.2 of New Business.
- There have been a couple of video-conference calls with candidates for the AOA Board, enabling Q&A between members and candidates. Bonnie commended this approach, stating that being able to query candidates was a common request from members when she was on board.
- Dan reminded committee members about the questionnaire that was sent out. We should be sure we fill it out.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- There was a report of llama antibodies being used to help a person fight a rare virus.
- Covid-19 and pets: Pets can get Covid from humans, but there have not been reports of pet-to-human transfer.

3.0 Unfinished Business

3.2 IRS and State Tax Audits - defer — Smoker

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

4.0 New Business

4.1 eBlast for New USDA Aid Program — Potter

- The committee has reviewed the draft Bonnie sent out, with one typo found and corrected.
- Tom said he has heard that three Calpaca members have contacted FSA agents and received aid. (Charlene Schmid, Deb Galway, and Maureen Macedo). Wendy suggested that, in addition to an eBlast, perhaps we can get an article for Alpacas Magazine, and have information to hand out at the Fiber show.
- Pat moved and Tom seconded a motion to send the corrected eBlast to the Board for distribution to the membership. Motion approved.

4.2 Board request regarding Colorado Initiative 16 Dittbrenner

- This Initiative was created by some animal activist individuals, not the legislature. They are working on getting enough signatures to get it on the ballot to be voted on in the general election.
- The Governor of Colorado has already spoken out against it.
- As written, this bill will prohibit many routine veterinary procedures for the health and welfare of animals, such as ultrasounding pregnancies, assisting with dystocias during birth which may save the life of dam and/or baby. It would also make it illegal to spay and neuter animals. Many animals would suffer or die unnecessarily if this initiative becomes law.
- The Colorado Veterinary Association thinks this bill would redefine standard health care procedures for the health and well-being of animals to the extent that veterinary professionals would need to be indemnified when they refuse to do routine procedures that have been declared criminal.
- Pat said that there are people working on a similar initiative in Oregon. So we can expect to see more of this.
- The committee agreed that Bonnie will work with Pat on drafting an opposition statement for AOA.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval: (4/12/21) Clappier

- Motion to approve the minutes of 4/12/21 was made by Pat seconded by Joan. Motion was passed.

6.0 Meeting Wrap

6.1 Review Action Items Potter

- Bonnie: Correct typo and send USDA Aid eBlast to Board.
- Bonnie: Talk to Charlene, Deb, Maureen about their experiences and tips working with FSA agent for USDA aid.
- Bonnie and Pat: Write draft of statement on CO initiative.

6.2 Next Meeting Date: 6/14/2021 Potter

6.3 Adjournment Potter

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm ET.