Government & Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom) MINUTES April 9, 2018

Committee Members: Bonnie Potter, Chair
Deborah Bailey
Joan Clappier
Dr. Pat Long
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Andy Merriwether

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley [absent]

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 pm ET.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Merriwether

- The National Show was a big success. There will be further reporting later.
- The Board meeting was cancelled because of the show.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- It has been really quiet.
- EHV1 continues to be seen in horses.

3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 Alpaca Business Benchmarks — Smoker/All

- Bonnie has done some more work on spreadsheets. She is still waiting for additional information from the member she has been talking to who is successful in areas of the alpaca business beyond selling alpacas.
- Question from Bonnie to Brion and the group: The initial work divides information by ranch size/region. Should we send the same template and request for information to all alpaca owners? Brion: We need to make it as simple as possible. Send it to everyone. If we get state, number of alpacas and years in business from everyone we'll be able to break out information by these criteria as desired when we do analysis of the data.
- Bonnie will incorporate these suggestions and send it out to the committee. She will also talk to Dan again about having it prepared in GoogleDocs for the membership.

3.2 Education of State/County Officials — Potter

- Bonnie has started work on a draft document and will have it ready for the committee to discuss at the next meeting.

3.3 ELD Mandate Follow-up — Potter/All

- Another 90-day extension has been added because there is still work to be done. Pat has heard it might even be extended to fall. The OR State Vet thinks the primary concern is with large commercial operations, not individual alpaca owners.

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4.0 New Business

4.1 Microchip Requirements — Long/Potter

- A member sent an email to AOA which was forwarded to GIRCom. The member wanted to know if microchips are required in alpacas for disease traceability, which was discussed a few years ago.
- Pat: Called State Veterinarian last week. There is a CFR (federal regulation) on animal disease traceability which requires use of the "840" chips or eartags. 840 is the country code for the US and is the first 3 digits of this series of chips. The 840 chips are more expensive than the Avid chips that are commonly used by alpaca owners.
- Camelids are not included in the list for this CFR. Thus disease traceability is not currently required for camelids. There is no guarantee this won't change in the future.
- Purchasing the 840 chips requires having a premise ID. Pat has obtained a premise ID and is purchasing the chips. He can implant them in other peoples' animals as long as he keeps records.
- Deborah has switched to 840 tags, which are far less expensive than injectable 840 chips, and even less expensive than injectable avid chips. Readers for the 840 chips are very expensive.

4.2 Business vs. Hobby

- An email was received from a Wisconsin member stating that WI is not allowing some of the deductions the member takes on his/her federal return.
- Brion explained that the rules we normally discuss for determining if an activity is a business or a hobby are Federal rules which states are not required to follow. States can do what they want. However, most state tax rates are much lower than federal so the financial effect is often not worth trying to fight it.
- Most states will allow a person to use an accountant rather than an attorney if the taxpayer does decide to fight the state.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval: 3-12-18) — Potter

- Pat moved that the minutes be accepted and Joan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

6.0 Meeting Wrap

6.1 Review Action Items — Potter

- Bonnie: Will incorporate the suggestions from this meeting in the Business Benchmark spreadsheet and send it to Dan to have it prepared for AOA members to enter their information.
- Bonnie: Complete draft of document for educating government officials and send it to the committee.
- Respond to the members who sent inquiries [chip requirements and WI business deductions].

6.2 Next Meeting Date will be: 5/14/2018 7:30pm ET — Potter

6.3 Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned. — Potter