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

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

Board Liaison: Andy Merriwether

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley, De Monson

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm ET.

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Merriwether/Huntley

- Fiber Extravaganza:
  - There is a full schedule Friday – Sunday.
  - This will be a standard Fleece conference with more education on the side.
  - There is a lot of media buzz about the event
  - Full information is available at: FiberExtravaganza.com
  - The number of fleece show entries is good – better than last year.
- The Annual Meeting will be held at the Extravaganza. The meeting and the presentation of the Jim King award will be live-streamed
- New Board members will be seated and officers will be selected and announced.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- There were a few reports of EHV-1 in horses
- There has been an outbreak of Newcastle's disease in chickens in CA.
- Fire season is upon us.
- Alaska is considering banning llamas in national parks due to concern of spread of disease to bighorn sheep
- There were reminders to people in VA to re-vaccinate horses for mosquito borne diseases
- Approx. 30% of horses infected with WNV die; about 90% of horses infected with EEE die.
- A prion disease has been detected in dromedary camels in Algeria. Some of the prion diseases that have been problematic are BSE ("mad cow disease") in cattle and scrapie in sheep and goats. Prion diseases can spread to humans.
- Registration is open for USAHA meeting in October in Kansas City. Pat Long is co-chair of the alpaca/goat/sheep committee and they are discussing topics for their meeting. He has suggested chronic wasting (prion) disease. They are looking for a speaker for drug resistance toHhaemonchus.
- The AOA Board and Executive Director should discuss and approve Dr. Long's attendance at the USAHA meeting again this year since he represents the alpaca industry to this important government organization.
- Peru has just been declared foot-and-mouth disease free
- The Farm bill has passed the house by a very close vote; it still needs to be passed by senate
- Amendments are being submitted by Nebraska legislators to amend the transport bill to (a) include llamas and alpacas in definition of "livestock" and (b) give more flexibility to livestock haulers.

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3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 Alpaca Business Benchmarks — Smoker/All

- Marketing was not listed as expense. It will be added.
- Bonnie will re-send the spreadsheet to the Committee with her suggested modifications.

3.2 Education of State/County Officials — Potter

- Bonnie sent her first draft to the committee this afternoon.
- There is good information about alpacas in the AOA pamphlet, and the website has general information. Anything we put out to government should be consistent with what AOA has already been produced – but probably more concise. The comment was made that we add something on end about what AOA is and does.

3.3 ELD Mandate/Farm Bill Update — Potter

- Bonnie hasn't heard anything more. Dan confirmed that he doesn't know of any response to the letter we submitted a couple of months ago.
- Bonnie asked Bud about a response and he said we have not gotten one.
- The Farm Bureau newsletter this month says the Ag community has been given an extension until Sept 30. There are various exemptions listed such as for transport of horses or other animals to shows or events that is not business related. It is a bit unclear. Loading/unloading doesn't count in the tally of transport hours. If you operate entirely within the state of California apparently the ELD mandate does not apply.

3.4 Member Concern about IRS and State Tax Audits — Potter/Smoker

- Brion is currently helping several alpaca farms going through audits. The IRS is really focusing on farms making a profit. Smaller farms tend to have more difficulty than larger farms producing numbers to support that they are structured to make a profit.
- Getting data from members in our proposed survey can really help our industry with profitability modeling..
- Brion is focused on Federal audits, not State. He has seen at least one instance where a federal auditor applied a different interpretation than other auditors have done and he was successful in getting that auditor to be consistent with the other auditors.

4.0 New Business

Nothing at this time.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval: 5-14-18) — 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: Send updates of benchmarks document to committee for review
- Committee: Review document Bonnie sent us about information for government officials.
- Brion: keep us informed about IRS audits

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- Andy: Check with Bud and Board for approval to pay for Pat to attend USAHA representing the alpaca Industry.

6.2 Next Meeting Date will be: 8/13/2018 at 7:30pm ET — Potter

6.3 Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18pm — Potter