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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION  
May 16, 2019  
Via Telephone Conference Call**

10 The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison  
11 Association was convened at 5 p.m., Thursday, May 16, 2019 via telephone conference call  
12 pursuant to the bylaws and notification by the Executive Director.

13 Present were:

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 14 Roy Liedtke     | Dick Gehring      |
| 15 Tom Barthel     | Robert Johnson    |
| 16 Brian Grubb     | Boyd Meyer        |
| 17 Jeremy Allemann | Debbie Thieman    |
| 18 Keith Yearout   | Alan Douglass     |
| 19 Donnis Baggett  | Kristopher Kelley |

20 Also attending were Dave Carter, Jim Matheson, and Karen Conley. Absent and excused  
21 was Mimi Hillenbrand. Absent were Gerald Parsons and Mike Faith (advisory member). Roy  
22 Liedtke presided, and Dave Carter served as recording secretary.

23 Mr. Carter noted that there would be a brief report from the Commercial Marketers'  
24 Committee.

25 Dick Gehring provided a report of the President. He commended the NBA on its quick  
26 response after some members were reporting problems in a small number of animals after the  
27 animals were administered a nutritional supplement. He noted that the NBA may develop a  
28 story for *Bison World* regarding off-label use of medications in bison.

29 The chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the meeting of March 21,  
30 2019. A motion was made by Alan Douglass to approve the minutes, as corrected. Said motion  
31 was seconded and carried.

32 The Chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the Finance Committee of  
33 April 24, 2019, which minutes were previously circulated to the board. No corrections were

1 noted. A motion was made by Dick Gehring to accept the minutes, as distributed. Said motion  
2 was seconded and carried.

3 The Chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the Finance Committee email  
4 vote meeting conducted between April 30 – May 5, 2019. No changes were noted. A motion  
5 was made by Donnis Baggett to accept the minutes as distributed. Said motion was seconded  
6 and carried.

7 Donnis Baggett provided the Financial Report. The Finance Committee met on April  
8 24<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the Year-to-Date financial performance through March. YTD income through  
9 March was \$418,803, which is \$85,335 above budgeted levels. More than half of that deviation  
10 was the result of booking \$43,000 in income for the RMA grant to offset an identical expense  
11 for the development of the producer app. Checkoff income was \$16,882 above budget and new  
12 DNA profiles through NABR were \$9,905 above budget. Membership income was \$958 below  
13 budgeted levels for the period.

14 Total Year-to-Date expenses of \$369,297 were \$49,077 above budget. The \$43,000  
15 RMA payment booked for the period was the major factor in that overage. Following  
16 accounting for designated reserves and other adjustments, net income through March was  
17 \$34,927, which was \$28,420 above budget.

18 Total equity in the NBA on March 31<sup>st</sup> was \$384,590, compared to \$385,407 on March  
19 31, 2018.

20 A motion was made by Dick Gehring to approve the financial report, as presented.

21 Mr. Carter reviewed the proposed nine-month budget with the board. He noted that there  
22 are two versions of the 9-Month Budget attached with the board packet. The version attached as  
23 Attachment E1 is the budget that was reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee in  
24 the email vote that was conducted April 30 – May 5. Since then, there have been some revisions  
25 in the Summer Conference projections that will alter the budget. Mr. Carter said that he  
26 amended the draft budget in Attachment E2 to include those adjustments. The adjusted budget  
27 projects \$891,222 in gross revenues in 2019, compared to \$851,197 for 2018. The new RMA  
28 grant activities are a major factor in the increase. Gross expenses are budgeted at \$873,122,  
29 compared to \$843,266 for 2018. After designated reserves and other adjustments, the budget  
30 projects new income of \$45.

1 A motion was made by Donnis Baggett to approve the draft budget, as presented. Said  
2 motion was seconded and carried.

3 Jim Matheson provided a membership report to the board. He reported that the  
4 association has experienced a slight drop in membership since the last board meeting. Our  
5 membership as of May 13<sup>th</sup> stood at 1,131, compared to 1,151 on March 18<sup>th</sup>. There has a been  
6 a drop of seven members since March. He said that he re-ran the report on May 16, and the new  
7 level is 1,138.

8 Mr. Matheson also reported that the staff is working on learning how to use the new  
9 Apricot Essentials Membership Management software. There will likely need to be additional  
10 training before it can be effectively utilized. Discussion was held.

11 Mr. Matheson reported that planning is proceeding well for the 2019 Summer  
12 Conference, set for July 8-10 in Bismarck, ND. He reported that 75 people have registered, and  
13 120 rooms have been reserved. The Summer Conference Planning Committee met via  
14 conference call on May 8<sup>th</sup> to finalize details. He said the North Dakota Buffalo Association has  
15 been extremely helpful in helping to organize the event. The conference will include a tour of  
16 Fort Abraham Lincoln, a series of presentations at the Bismarck Radisson, and an optional pre-  
17 conference river boat cruise and post-conference tours of the National Buffalo Museum,  
18 KenMar Buffalo Ranch, and Heartland Bison Ranch.

19 Mr. Matheson noted that Beverly Brown and the Winter Conference Committee have  
20 already started planning several special events and items for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary convention.  
21 The planning committee will be meeting at Summer Conference. Veryl Goodnight is producing  
22 a special sculpture to commemorate the NBA 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. That sculpture will be used as a  
23 fundraiser for the association.

24 The Chair called for committee reports.

25 Dave Carter provided a report of the Commercial Marketers' Committee. He noted that  
26 the semi-annual marketers survey will be going out next week. He also reported that, pursuant  
27 to recommendations from the January Commercial Marketers' Committee meeting, the  
28 association is exploring collaborating with Ted's Montana Grill in a sponsorship at the  
29 upcoming Shiftcon bloggers' conference in Atlanta. That conference attracts 300-400 "social  
30 influencers," primarily female bloggers who have sites pertaining to health and wellness.

1 Jim Matheson provided a report of the Conservation Committee. The Conservation  
2 Committee met in the NBA office on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The committee is finalizing the elements for its  
3 Conservation Management Plan. The committee is working to include its criteria with the  
4 development of the new Bison Producers' app being developed through the Risk Management  
5 Agency grant. Roy Liedtke asked if there would be additional expenses with the consultant for  
6 the Conservation Committee. Mr. Matheson said that the consultant has not indicated a need for  
7 additional funds. He said he would provide the board with an accounting of any projected  
8 additional funds that may be requested by the consultant.

9 Dave Carter provided a report from the Science & Research Committee. He reported  
10 that the committee is continuing to work with South Dakota State University to develop the  
11 framework for SDSU to be designated as a center of Excellence for Bison Research. Several  
12 recent discussions have centered upon the process for handling NBA member contributions to  
13 be used for bison research. This is an area in which the National Buffalo Foundation will be  
14 directly involved. There will likely be a meeting at SDSU with the committee in the coming  
15 months.

16 The committee is also finalizing a Bison Necropsy Handbook, which will be in the same  
17 format as the Bison Disease Field Guide that the NBA produced last year. That handbook is  
18 expected to be completed and published prior to Summer Conference.

19 Boyd Meyer provided a report from the GTSS Committee. The GTSS Committee met  
20 on May 7<sup>th</sup> to review the seven responses that were received from the Request for Proposal that  
21 was issued for the 2020 GTSS auctioneer. The committee voted to recommend that Quality  
22 Auction Services be hired as the auctioneer for 2020. Chairman Liedtke has also developed a  
23 spreadsheet providing some analysis of the responses to the RFP. Quality Auction had a  
24 typographical error on its submission, but has agreed to conduct the auction for a flat \$3,000  
25 fee. Mr. Meyer reported that the committee weighed the auctioneers' ability, the second person  
26 to be included, and other factors. Discussion was held. It was mentioned that the committee  
27 should find out some additional information regarding advertising and promotional support  
28 from the bidders. Tom Barthel moved to table the discussion until the July board meeting in  
29 Bismarck, ND. Said motion was seconded and carried, but not unanimously. Consensus was

1 expressed that the request for additional information be sent to Quality Auction Services and  
2 Bradeen Auction Services.

3 The committee is also considering that Jeremy Alemann be retained as a judge for the  
4 2020 GTSS, and that either Les Kroeger or Dr. John Bowron be added as the second judge. No  
5 action was taken. This issue will be decided at an upcoming board meeting.

6 Dr. Connor Elliott provided a report of the North American Bison Registry Committee.  
7 He reported that there has been a steady flow of orders through the registry. Dr. Rich Tate has  
8 been added to the NABR advisory board.

9 Dr. Elliott reported that the discussion regarded the type of testing conducted by the  
10 registry. The discussion has centered on microsatellite testing, as compared to SNP (Single  
11 Nucleotide Polymorphisms) testing. This issue has been discussed with the NABR Advisory  
12 Committee. The committee agrees that SNP testing will be more likely to emerge as the  
13 dominant testing procedure in the future. However, because most entries in the registry are  
14 primarily based on parentage, the microsatellite testing is a lower-cost procedure, and is reliable  
15 in determining parentage. Discussion was held. No action was taken. The NABR Advisory  
16 Committee has recommended that the NBA play a role in facilitating collaboration among  
17 researchers and laboratories that are developing the different testing technologies.

18 Mr. Carter provided a legislative and regulatory report.

19 He reported that he is working with the offices of U.S. Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and  
20 Michael Bennet (D-CO) to develop legislation that would require honest labeling of water  
21 buffalo meat and food ingredients. Sen. Hoeven's staff uncovered a bill that was introduced in  
22 the U.S. House of Representatives in 2002, but did not receive any hearings at that time. Mr.  
23 Carter said that he will be meeting with staff members for Sens. Hoeven and Bennet in  
24 Washington, D.C. on May 22 to work on finalizing the language and developing a strategy for  
25 passage.

26 In regard to water buffalo in pet food, the Association of American Feed Officials'  
27 (AAFCO) Ingredients Definition Committee met in April by teleconference. Brett Boswell of  
28 the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, chair of the Bison/Buffalo Definitions Working  
29 Group, only reported that this issue is progressing, and that there will be a formal proposal at  
30 the AAFCO annual meeting scheduled for August 4-7 in Louisville, KY.

1 The NBA has also launched a web page entitled *Sniffing out the Best Pet Food Brands*,  
2 and has issued news releases to several prominent pet-related publications to promote that  
3 website.

4 Mr. Carter said that the association is developing a proposed campaign to partner with  
5 companies that are using real bison (and no water buffalo) in their products. The association is  
6 developing an icon promoting “Partners in Bison Restoration.”

7 On international trade, Mr. Carter reported that USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service is  
8 continuing to move forward to open Mexico, Korea and Japan for imports of U.S. bison meat.  
9 Mexico is likely the first to be approved, because there are not significant phytosanitary barriers  
10 involved. Korea and Japan are more complicated because those countries banned imports of all  
11 U.S. red meat after the 2003 BSE incidence, and then only re-opened their markets to beef  
12 afterward.

13 He reported that any movement on the EU tariff on bison meat is stalled because of the  
14 ongoing trade/tariff dispute between the United States and the EU. The EU has proposed re-  
15 opening negotiations on a new trade agreement, but does not want to include agriculture in  
16 those negotiations. Brexit has been delayed for as long as October 31<sup>st</sup>. When Brexit occurs,  
17 there is a strong likelihood that bison meat can be exported to the UK without a tariff.

18 Overall, the ongoing tariff situation is significantly slowing all efforts to open new  
19 markets for U.S. ag products, including bison. Mr. Carter said that he would be in Washington,  
20 D.C. on May 20<sup>th</sup> for a meeting of the USDA Agricultural Trade Advisory Committees.

21 Mr. Carter reported that U.S. Sen. Ben Sasse (R-NE) and a bipartisan group of 18  
22 Senators have introduced the Transporting Livestock Across America Safely Act to address the  
23 challenges of transporting livestock by providing some fixes for hours of service regulations  
24 and the electronic logging device mandate.

25 Mr. Carter said that he will be joined in Washington, D.C. on May 22<sup>nd</sup> by NBA Vice  
26 President Donnis Baggett and Dakota Territory Buffalo Association President Moritz Espy to  
27 formally present a bison head mount to U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-SD) to hang in the Senator’s  
28 Majority Whip office in the U.S. Capitol. The head mount is being loaned to the Senator, and  
29 will be on display as long as the Senator is in office. Sandy and Jacki Limpert of Slim Buttes

1 Buffalo Ranch are donating a head mount that is now enroute to Washington, D.C. However,  
2 the cost of shipping is about \$650, which the NBA will pay.

3 Mr. Carter provided a report on the Farmers' Market Promotion Program grant. The  
4 association is busy planning two Pop-Up Bison Dining Events this summer. In July, the NBA  
5 will host an event in Seattle, WA, in conjunction with Sierra Meats, local farmers' marketers  
6 and Renton Technical College. The event will include an Iron Chef Competition featuring three  
7 student chefs, a bison butchering event, and an opportunity for local bison marketers to promote  
8 their products. On July 26<sup>th</sup>, the association will have a similar event in the Minneapolis/St. Paul  
9 area. An event planned for New York City many have to be rescheduled to another location  
10 because of potential cost.

11 The final Bison Marketing University workshop is scheduled for August 24<sup>th</sup> in Galenia,  
12 MO, in conjunction with the Missouri Bison Association.

13 Mr. Carter said the association is working to develop its directory of farmers' marketers  
14 and agritourism as a hand-held app.

15 Jim Matheson provided a report on the Risk Management Agency grant. The approved  
16 contractor, HerdDogg, Inc., is on schedule in developing a producer app that will provide a  
17 valuable resource in monitoring herd health. The app will also be used for the Conservation  
18 Committee's Plan, the NABR Registry, and for the blockchain program. Mr. Matheson reported  
19 that he has assembled a team of NBA members to utilize the app on a pilot basis before it is  
20 released to the general membership.

21 Dave Carter reported that Gregg Barfield has coordinated with the NBA to establish an on-  
22 line ag store (<https://bisoncentral.com/tag-store/>) which will allow producers to purchase tags  
23 that will enable them to participate in the NBA's blockchain transparency and traceability  
24 program. Mr. Barfield is coordinating with the producer app developers as much as possible. He  
25 is also working with one of the major processor/marketers to develop a pilot blockchain  
26 program.

27 Mr. Carter, Mr. Gehring and Mr. Liedtke reported that the National Buffalo Foundation  
28 held a very productive strategic planning session in Rapid City on April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. The NBF established a go  
29 Understanding among the three foundations.

1 The NBF also established a goal to coordinate with the NBA on fundraising,  
2 communication and staff resources. And, the NBF agreed to continue to work with SDSU to  
3 maximize opportunities for bison research.

4 The chair called upon directors for regional reports.

5 Alan Douglass provided a report from Region I. Alan noted that the regional associations in  
6 the Northwest will be coordinating with the NBA on the Seattle Pop-Up event. Bison producers  
7 in Oregon are concerned about potential legislation that would require all non-amenable species  
8 to be processed in a USDA facility. He reported that the Western Bison Association will be  
9 holding its summer meeting June 6-8 at Buffalo Run Ranch in Utah.

10 Debbie Thieman provided a report from Region II. She reported that she is working to  
11 encourage Rocky Mountain Bison Association members to attend the NBA Summer  
12 Conference. RMBA has also launched a new website.

13 Roy Liedtke provided a report of Region III. Perry Handysides has been hired as the new  
14 executive director for the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association.

15 Jeremy Alemann provided a report from Region V. The Minnesota association had a very  
16 informative conference in April. MnBA has changed its name to Minnesota Bison Association.

17 Donnis Baggett provided a report from Region VI. The Texas Bison Association will be  
18 having its spring meeting in Fort Worth this weekend. Jim Matheson will be attending to  
19 provide an update on NBA activities.

20 Brian Grubb provided a report from Region VII. He said it is a slow time of the year in his  
21 region.

22 Kristopher Kelley provided a report from Region VIII. He reported that it has been a wet  
23 spring in his region.

24 Robert Johnson provided a report of the International Director. The Canadian Bison  
25 Association is busy planning its November convention. He anticipated that a number of  
26 Canadian producers will attend the NBA Summer Conference. He reported that A&W  
27 restaurants are doing a six-month bison burger promotion.

28 Mr. Carter reported that he met with the InterTribal Buffalo Council in April, and that the  
29 ITBC board unanimously voted to support the NBA's efforts to address deceptively labeled



1 water buffalo ingredients in pet food. The ITBC also offered the services of its legal counsel,  
2 and developed an excellent White Paper on the subject.

3 The next meeting of the board of directors will be at 7:00 a.m., Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, at the  
4 Radisson Hotel in Bismarck, ND.

5 There being no additional business to come before the board, and upon motion made,  
6 seconded and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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8 Respectfully Submitted,

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11 Tom Barthel, Secretary

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15 Dave Carter, Recording Secretary

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