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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION
May 17, 2018
Conducted by Telephone Conference Call**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison Association was convened at 5:00 p.m. MDT on Thursday, May 17, 2018, by telephone conference call, pursuant to previous action by the board and notification by the Executive Director.

Present were:

Roy Liedtke	Dick Gehring
Mimi Hillenbrand	Tom Barthel
Debbie Thieman	Donnis Baggett
Gerald Parsons	Brian Grubb
Alan Douglass	Boyd Meyer
Paul Kolesar	Jeremy Allemann
Keith Yearout	Patrick Toomey (Ex Officio)

Absent was Kristopher Kelley. Also attending were Dave Carter and Jim Matheson. Roy Liedtke presided, and Dave Carter served as recording secretary.

Dick Gehring provided a report of the President. He reported that he attended the Minnesota Buffalo Association meeting in April. He commended the leaders of the association for that conference. Dick said he is looking at reorganizing the Grass Fed Committee into a Feeding Protocol Committee. He also reported that there will be a mycoplasma working group within the Science and Research Committee. Dr. Dustin Oedekoven, South Dakota State Veterinarian, will participate in that working group.

The Chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the meeting of March 15, 2018, which minutes were previously distributed to the board. No changes were made. A motion was made by Alan Douglass to approve the minutes, as distributed. Said motion was seconded and carried.

1 The Chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the general membership
2 meeting of January 19, 2018, which minutes were previously distributed to the board. No
3 changes were made. A motion was made by Tom Barthel to accept the minutes as distributed.
4 Said motion was seconded and carried. These minutes will be formally approved at the next
5 general membership meeting.

6 The Chair called upon the Executive Director to provide a review of the financial report.
7 The Finance Committee met April 25th to review the Year-to-Date financial report. Year-to-date
8 (YTD) income through March was \$390,539, which was \$30,515 below budget. Slow Growth
9 Fund fundraising and timing of Farmers' Market Program reimbursement were the primary
10 factors in the shortfall. On the expense side, total YTD expenses of \$364,763 were \$30,501
11 below budget projection. Growth Fund expenses and Farmers' Market Promotion Program
12 activities again were the primary factors. After adjustments, net results of \$58,646 are \$10,686
13 above budget. A motion was made by Deb Thieman to approve the financial report as
14 presented. Said motion as seconded and carried.

15 Discussion turned to adoption of the nine-month budget. The Finance Committee in
16 April thoroughly reviewed the proposed nine-month budget. That budget projects annual
17 revenues this year of \$852,029, compared to \$700,574 in 2017. Summer Conference revenues,
18 Farmers' Market Promotion Program activities, and the strong Winter Conference and GTSS
19 results are the primary factors in the increased revenues. Expenses in 2018 are projected at
20 \$816,155, compared to \$669,720 in 2017. The same categories are the primary factors. After
21 adjustments, net results for 2018 are projected at \$29,013 compared to \$3,731 in 2017.

22 Mr. Carter noted that there are some proposed changes to the budget recommended by
23 the Finance Committee:

- 24 • The contract for Marilyn Bay Drake, *Bison World* editor, will continue through July
25 2018, rather than June 2018.
- 26 • The contract fee for the communications director will be partially offset by Farmers'
27 Market Promotion Program grant activity reimbursements; and
- 28 • The money budgeted for a grant writer under contract services may not be necessary
29 because of outside commitments.

1 A motion was made by Mimi Hillenbrand to approve the budget with adjustments. Said
2 motion was seconded and carried.

3 Jim Matheson provided a membership report. Our membership count as of May 15th
4 was 1,128. This is a drop of nine members since the March report, but still 42 higher than in
5 January 2017. The drop occurred in our active and multi-year categories. We now have 81 life
6 members in the NBA. Mr. Carter reported that the staff is beginning to analyze alternatives for
7 specific membership software, which will allow us to better manage the member database, and
8 target fundraising and information efforts.

9 Jim Matheson provided a report on the Summer Conference, set for June 27-29 at the
10 Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, MO. He thanked the Kansas Buffalo Association for their
11 assistance in planning the conference. The vendors' booths have sold out. The agenda is nearly
12 finalized. The planning committee has finalized plans for the KC Culinary Cookoff Challenge
13 and the virtual tour of several Kansas bison ranches. Organizers are also pulling together a
14 starter herd for the benefit auction. The Friday afternoon program will include a new producers'
15 session. He said the committee is hoping for attendance between 350-400 attendees.

16 The North Dakota Buffalo Association is preparing to submit a proposal to host the 2019
17 Summer Conference.

18 Dave Carter provided a review of the NBA Strategic Plan. The staff (including Karen
19 Conley) met May 8-9 to plan summer activities, and to review the strategic plan responsibilities.
20 Mr. Carter reported on the following Strategic Plan developments:

- 21 • Karen Conley began work as our new communications director on April 2nd and is
22 working to map out a communications strategy as specified in the strategic plan.
- 23 • Front Range Source has been engaged to develop fundraising strategies for the NBA.
24 Mimi Hillenbrand and Mr. Carter met with Front Range Source personnel on May 7th to
25 review the progress. He said that more detailed information would be provided to the
26 board at the June meeting.
- 27 • The NBA Science & Research Committee has been working with South Dakota State
28 University, Microsoft, InterTribal Buffalo Council and Sinte Gleska University to
29 develop the framework for a significant funding proposal to be submitted to USDA
30 National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

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- He has completed the draft white paper on finishing protocols used in the bison business. That paper is being reviewed by a Review Committee of NBA board members.

Karen Conley provided a report on NBA communications programs. She said that she is focusing on the association’s social media accounts. She is working with Anita Shaver on ideas for a relaunch of *Bison World* beginning in January 2019.

The Chair called upon Dave Carter for a report of the Science & Research Committee. He said that the committee met in Minneapolis, MN April 10-11 to develop a strategy in anticipation of the release of a request for proposals for six \$10 million sustainable agriculture grants that will be awarded by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture. That request for proposals has been issued, and the deadline for submitting a letter of intent is June 27th, with the final grant application due in September. The committee is working to identify a qualified grant writer to develop the letter of intent and -- if that is approved -- the full grant proposal.

The committee is also working to provide new information and resources to help producers address the issues relating to *Mycoplasma bovis*.

The literature review funded through the National Buffalo Foundation has been completed. This 75-page document summarizes an extensive range of topics relating to herd health. The committee is now working to put this into an accessible database. Some information will be available to the public, with some available only to NBA members.

Boyd Meyer provided a report on the Gold Trophy Show & Sale Committee. The committee has prepared three Requests for Proposals for auctioneers at the next GTSS sale. One proposal would be to auctioneer only, one would be to provide analysis (color commentary), and the third would be for both auctioneering and color commentary. The RFP will be issued by June 1st, and the deadline for submissions will be July 15th. The committee expects to have a recommendation to present to the board in August. Mr. Meyer and Mr. Gehring have visited with Mr. Bradeen regarding the concerns from the January Gold Trophy Show and Sale. Mr. Bradeen has submitted a letter, which the committee has reviewed. The chair asked that Mr. Bradeen’s letter be distributed to the Board of Directors. The Committee has also selected judges for the 2019 GTSS. Susan Maass will be a judge for 2019, and Jeremy Allemann will be a judge for 2019 and 2020.

1 Jim Matheson reported that the State/Regional Committee is planning a two-day
2 meeting in Kansas City October 12-13. Key topics on the agenda for the session are developing
3 apprenticeship programs, and succession planning for organizations. The committee will be
4 meeting at Summer Conference.

5 Connor Elliott, the new chair of the North American Bison Registry, joined the meeting
6 to provide an update on NABR. Mr. Elliott reported that there have been some difficulties with
7 developing a stand-alone website. The committee is now working with the NBA website
8 developer. The proposed cost for developing the website is \$3,000.

9 Mr. Carter reported on the Commercial Marketers' Committee. As reported previously,
10 Bob Stirling stepped down as chair of the Commercial Marketers' Committee. Peter Cook has
11 agreed to take the reins of the committee as chair. Mr. Carter said that the twice annual
12 marketers' survey was issued on May 16th. He also said that the staff is working on new ideas
13 for the Growth Fund, both in terms of expanding the funding base and developing a targeted
14 consumer campaign.

15 The Chair called upon Mr. Carter for a report on legislative and regulatory issues.

16 As reported in March, the USDA Farm Service Agency has implemented new
17 compensation rates for eligible bison loss claims filed under the Livestock Indemnity Program
18 for losses experienced in 2018 (LIP rates are supposed to be at 75% of the market value at the
19 time of the loss). However, FSA has not yet announced any move to adjust the rates for 2017
20 losses. U.S. Sens. Michael Rounds (R-SD) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) recently wrote to
21 Undersecretary Bill Northey to request that the rates be retroactive to include 2017 losses.

22 On trade issues, the ongoing negotiations over NAFTA seem to have stalled. On the
23 issue of bison tariffs on meat exports to the EU, the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service is
24 contacting the U.S. Trade Representative's Office to begin the process of establishing a unique
25 export code for bison. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is beginning to
26 develop a petition to Japan to open that market for U.S. bison meat. The USDA Foreign
27 Agriculture Service is also initiating work to open Mexico for U.S. bison meat exports.

28 Mr. Carter reported that the Farm Bill legislation is now under consideration in the
29 House of Representatives. The Senate is expected to start working on the legislation in the
30 coming weeks. U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) visited the West Bijou bison ranch in eastern

1 Colorado on May 1st, and met with a small group of producers, including Assistant Director Jim
2 Matheson. Following that meeting, Mr. Carter participated in a conference call discussion with
3 the Senator as a part of a working group developing specific proposals for the Senate version of
4 the Farm Bill.

5 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA sent the board-enacted resolution regarding the use of
6 “buffalo” to describe water buffalo to the Pet Food Committee of the Association of American
7 Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). The Pet Food Committee Chair determined that this issue was
8 more appropriate for the AAFCO Ingredients Definitions Committee. On April 10th, Mr. Carter
9 met in St. Paul, MN with Brett Boswell, a member of that committee. Mr. Boswell is pushing
10 this issue on the NBA’s behalf. AAFCO is a very deliberative body, so this issue likely won’t
11 come to the full AAFCO group until the association’s annual meeting in August.

12 Mr. Carter has also contacted the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service to inquire
13 about any developments in issuing a new Food Labeling Policy Book. The agency is postponing
14 development of a new policy book. However, FSIS is accepting requests for modifications to
15 the current book. The NBA will be making a request.

16 Mr. Carter reported on issues relating to the Farmers’ Market Promotion Program
17 Grant.

18 He has completed training workshops in Texas and Indiana. The Missouri Bison
19 Association will be planning a workshop in the coming months. A workshop in Ogden, UT, will
20 be scheduled in conjunction with the Western Bison Association meeting in Denver.

21 On May 21st, Mr. Carter will be working with the Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary to
22 produce three on-line videos that will help educate consumers on cooking with ground bison,
23 bison roasts, and bison steaks. These videos will be placed on line and with links (or QR codes)
24 made available to bison farmers’ marketers (and other marketers) that can be distributed to
25 customers at the point of sale.

26 The NBA is working with the website administrator to create the on-line directories for
27 farmers’ marketers and agritourism operators.

28 Patrick Toomey provided a report from the ITBC. He reported that the ITBC’s new website
29 is live. The association has a new website domain: ITBCbuffalonation.org. The ITBC board has
30 voted to increase its presence in Washington, D.C. The ITBC is developing a proposal for a

1 tribal bison management act. It is being patterned after salmon management legislation that was
2 passed several years ago. The act would allocate \$5 million for tribal bison registration. Dave
3 Carter noted that the NBA Science and Research Committee is working to expand the bison
4 health field guide that was developed last year by ITBC.

5 The chair called upon directors for regional reports.

6 Paul Kolesar provided a report of the International Director. He reported that the bison
7 industry is very quiet in Canada.

8 Alan Douglass provided a report from Region I. Northwest Bison Association had a
9 successful meeting in March. Western Bison Association will be having its summer conference
10 in Taos, NM.

11 Deb Thieman provided a report from Region II. The Rocky Mountain Buffalo Association
12 is planning its fall ranch tour. She noted that her grandson had an opportunity to meet with U.S.
13 Sen. Bennet to discuss the value of the youth loan program.

14 Keith Yearout provide a report from Region IV. He reported that the members in Region
15 IV have been working with the NBA to plan the Summer Conference.

16 Jeremy Allemann provided a report from Region V. He reported that the Minnesota
17 Association had an extremely successful conference in Watertown, SD.

18 Gerald Parsons provided a report on Region VI. The Oklahoma Bison Association has been
19 contributing some hay to producers who are being impacted by the wildfires in the region.

20 Brian Grubb provided a report from Region VII. The Eastern Bison Association Show and
21 Sale in March was successful.

22 Patrick Toomey provided a report on Region III. He noted that the Grassfed Exchange
23 meeting is scheduled in Rapid City in June. The Dakota Territory Buffalo Association is
24 working to develop resources for producers on Mycoplasma.

25 Jim Matheson provided a report on upcoming state/regional meetings.

26 The Chair called upon Dave Carter for a report of the Executive Director.

27 Mr. Carter noted that Mimi Hillenbrand and John Flocchini represented the NBA at the
28 Microsoft culinary event conducted in conjunction with the James Beard Foundation in April.
29 The NBA is looking into opportunities to work more closely with the James Beard Foundation.

1 Mr. Carter thanked Tom Barthel for his work in organizing the past minutes and corporate
2 records for the NBA.

3 The next meeting will be scheduled for 9 a.m. June 27th at the Westin Crown Center in
4 Kansas City.

5 There being no additional business to come before the board, and upon motion made,
6 seconded and carried, the meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

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9 Respectfully submitted,

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13 Tom Barthel, Secretary

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17 Dave Carter, Recording Secretary

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