

## **Minutes of the National Bison Association's Board of Directors' meeting for February 1, 2023 – 2 pm**

Present: Donnis Baggett, Mimi Hillenbrand, Chad Kremer, Joe Graham, Mary Adams, Moritz Espy, Stuart Schrag, Adam Ulbricht, Carie Starr, Liz Riffle, Jim Matheson, Karen Conley, Lydia Whitman

Robert Johnson and Campbell Burgess joined the meeting at 2:15.

Excused: Boyd Meyer

Jim noted that a quorum had been met, and Donnis called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes: Donnis asked for any corrections to the minutes as presented and noted that Campbell did join the Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> board meeting. There being no other corrections, Donnis suggested the motion to approve all three minutes. Mary made the motion, Carie seconded. Vote passed unanimously.

Financial Report: Jim reviewed the modified December financials with the board. No action was taken. Jim then reviewed the 2023 budget with the board. Discussion was held. Campbell made motion to approve the budget, Joe seconded. Vote passed unanimously. Jim also updated the group on Barb's request for support from Andy Amos, the son of our accountant Teresa Amos, who is willing to help with books to get Barb through the New Year/conference/sale workload. The executive committee will discuss further at their next meeting.

Membership Report: Jim reported on current membership, which has jumped by nearly 20 members since the last count in January. That puts us at 1,172 members which is very close to our January 2022 highpoint of 1,177 members. Jim reported that we will continue our membership promotions utilizing Facebook advertising, which has proven to be very cost-effective.

Committee Review: Chad let the board know that he and Jim will visit about 2023 committees, and their chairs and members this weekend at the DTBA conference. Each time a president is elected, they review and analyze current committees.

Winter Conference/GTSS Update: Jim reported that we had a very successful conference and sale this year. Surveys to conference attendees, GTSS consignors and GTSS buyers are out now and due next week. Jim will share the WC survey link to the board to encourage input sharing. Jim and Lydia are currently negotiating with the hotel on a few expense items and hopefully will lower the cost. As expected, the new hotel is much more expensive than the old one. Ken commented that among attendees he visited with about the cost shared that they would not mind paying more in registration for the nicer location. Jim and Lydia plan to increase registration next year once we have a good idea of what to expect in terms of expenses. GTSS prices were likely the highest of this year's bison auction season, and the handling crew, etc. did a great job taking care of animals. Jim noted that 4 full time handlers have been compensated \$1,000/each for their time and efforts.

Communications Report: Donnis reported that the executive committee plans to discuss the 2023 Bison World schedule at their next meeting.

Legislative Report: Jim asked Lydia to give an update on her trip to Washington for the NSAC winter summit. Lydia reported that she had a handful of meetings on the Hill with both Senate and House offices lobbying for our Farm Bill priorities, the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act bill which is being re-introduced this week, the Indian Buffalo Management Act and the Strengthening Meat Processing Act. She also commented that after her participation in the NSAC summit, we may not need to continue our membership as they service very small, regional organizations and the NBA is large and mature enough now to not need their services. Jim commented that he and Lydia have developed comments on the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) EPA rule that was recently implemented, and will submit those to the right contact at the right time. He also mentioned that they are currently developing comments on the APHIS proposed rule for mandatory EID for interstate movement of bison not destined for slaughter. Those comments are due on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Executive Director Report: Jim reported that his ED report from the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting should cover our work largely up to today. He also discussed the need for an international director candidate for the CBA, as our previous three suggestions fell through. Discussion was held. The group agreed that Moritz Espy would make for an excellent candidate and Moritz agreed to serve in the position. Discussion was held. Robert made the motion to recommend Moritz as the CBA candidate, Ken seconded. Vote passed unanimously. Jim will notify the CBA of the board's recommendation.

Jim next discussed the issue of a donated Throlson benefit auction item that was inadvertently chosen as a prize for winning the Heads or Tails game on January 19<sup>th</sup> at the winter conference. Discussion was held. Jim suggested that we find the average funding Throlson has received at past comparable sized benefit auctions, say 2019 and 2020, to match that average, as the item was never sold at the auction. Mimi made a motion to support this approach and Mary seconded. There was one "nay" among the board of directors. Motion carries.

2023 Board Meeting Schedule: Donnis asked the board about scheduling 2023 board meetings and the group agreed to the third Thursday of every other month at 2 pm MT. Jim will send out calendar invitations for the year's meetings, which will take place in March, May, July, September and November.

Jim asked the board to review the attached strategic plan outline update, which shows significant progress on our current priorities.

Other business – Stuart followed up on his offer to seek volunteer legal counsel to NBA from his employer. While the staff legal counsel's office can't provide services directly to the NBA, the staffer is willing to donate his time to review legal documents, etc. If too frequent, or high profile cases are needing review, they would likely pull back, but this should work great for our limited needs of looking at things like MOUs, etc. His name is Dan Riley and he previously worked for the KS Dept. of Agriculture prior Parks and Wildlife, so will be a great fit. The group thanked Stuart for his efforts.

There being no other business, Mary made a motion to adjourn at 3:43 pm MT, which Carie seconded. Vote passed unanimously.

Recorded by Jim Matheson, executive director.