

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
 OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION
 February 24, 2021
 Via Zoom Videoconference**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison Association was convened at 5 p.m. MDT, Thursday, February 24, 2021 via on-line video conference pursuant to the bylaws and notification by the Executive Director.

Present were:

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|-------------------|------------------|
| Donnis Baggett | Dick Gehring |
| Joe Graham | Robert Johnson |
| Kristopher Kelley | Chad Kremer |
| Jeremy Allemann | Mary Adams |
| Ken Klemm | Boyd Meyer |
| Kevin Leier | Campbell Burgess |
| Carie Starr | |

Absent was Mimi Hillenbrand. Also present were Dave Carter, Jim Matheson, Karen Conley, Eloise Mongillo, and Connor Elliott. Dick Gehring presided, and Dave Carter served as recording secretary.

Donnis Baggett provided a report of the President. He commended the staff for working hard to make the Winter Conference successful.

The Chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the meeting for January 26, 2021, which were previously distributed to the board, and were presented for approval. No changes were noted. Mary Adams made a motion to approve the minutes as distributed. Said motion was seconded and carried.

The Chair called for a review of the proposed Three-Month Budget.

Mr. Carter reviewed the proposed Three-Month Budget, as recommended by the Finance Committee, with the board. Mr. Carter also noted that NBA accountant Teresa Amos found a formula error in the previous version of the budget. The updated recommended budget now projects gross revenue of \$204,205 for the first three months of 2021, compared to actual gross

1 revenue of \$429,194 in 2020. Gross expenses are projected at \$202,606, compared to \$348,473
2 in 2020. After adjustments and designated reserves, the net results will be \$-6,943, compared to
3 net results of \$72,179 in 2020. He added that Winter Conference and Gold Trophy net results
4 will both be more positive than the budgeted amount. Discussion was held. A motion was made
5 by Joe Graham to approve the budget as presented. Said motion was seconded and carried.

6 The NBA has primarily operated with a virtual office for the past 13 years. However, we
7 still have a formal physical office in an executive suite at a cost of \$649/month. Barb Dowdy,
8 our bookkeeper, has been the primary person using that office space. Since the onset of
9 COVID-19, we have all moved to working from home. Barb comes into the office about once a
10 week to print checks, but the office is otherwise vacant. We will be conducting a cost benefit
11 analysis for moving to a 100% virtual operation. President Baggett noted that there may be
12 some options that would allow the business to have an actual address.

13 The Chair called on Connor Elliott for a report on the North American Bison registry. He
14 noted that the NABR has recommended a one-year extension on the waiver of the fee for
15 entering animals into the NABR registry. Discussion was held. A motion was made by Ken
16 Klemm to waive the fee for the next year. Said motion was seconded and carried.

17 The Chair called on Boyd Meyer for a report of the Gold Trophy Show and Sale. He said
18 that he thought that the sale went very well. He commended the staff and volunteers for making
19 the sale a success. Robert Johnson noted that the internet quality was not good for the Canadian
20 buyers. Discussion was held. Karen Conley reported that there was only one buyer registered
21 from Canada.

22 The Chair called for a report from the Science and Research Committee. Dave Carter
23 reported that four new members have been added to the Science and Research Committee.
24 Those members are: Joe Graham of Oklahoma, Corissa Busse of South Dakota, Matt Ruhter of
25 Illinois, and Dr. Margaret Parker of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in
26 Colorado.

27 Jim Matheson provided a report on planning for the 2021 Summer Conference. He is
28 working with Rocky Mountain Buffalo Association President John Graves and Boyd Meyer to
29 plan the event. Potential activities include local ranch tours and perhaps a dance. The
30 conference will be held June 27-29 in Cheyenne, WY.

1 The board turned to discussion of the National Buffalo Foundation and the Throlson
2 American Bison Foundation. Mr. Gehring reported that the board will need to appoint an NBA
3 board member to serve as the NBA representative on the National Buffalo Foundation board of
4 directors. Joe Graham is the current representative. Ken Klemm moved to reappoint Joe Graham
5 as the NBA representative on the NBF board. Said motion made seconded and carried.

6 Mr. Gehring noted that the Throlson board met in Rapid City and voted to change the
7 foundation's name to the National Bison Foundation. The board will need to appoint an NBA
8 board member to serve as the NBA representative on the that foundation. Dick Gehring is the
9 current representative. A motion was made by Joe Graham to reappoint Dick Gehring as the
10 NBA representative on the National Bison Foundation.

11 Eloise Mongillo provided a report of the Development Director. She reported that the NBA
12 is in process of finalizing an on-line database to manage donors and membership. The NBA is
13 looking at Raisers' Edge. She noted that the association had an extremely successful fundraising
14 launch during Winter Conference, thanks to the anonymous donor and the Durham Ranch
15 challenge grants. Altogether, roughly \$146,000 was pledged to support the Center of
16 Excellence. That leaves about \$26,000 remaining in the Durham Ranch challenge. Ms.
17 Mongillo noted that thank you letters are going out this week to all people who pledged funds
18 for the campaign. She also reported that she is working with the Executive Director to establish
19 a Development Committee to work with her on fundraising initiatives. The people we have
20 identified to serve on the Development Committee to date are:

- 21 • Mark Sangder, SDSU Foundation,
- 22 • Gail Griffin, NBF,
- 23 • Mimi Hillenbrand, NBA and NBF,
- 24 • Beverly Brown, NBA,
- 25 • Peter Cook, Throlson Foundation,
- 26 • Joe Graham, NBA and NBF
- 27 • Kristopher Kelley, NBA.

28
29 Discussion was held on the 2021 Strategic Plan that was developed by the staff following
30 the board's Planning Day in December. Mr. Carter reviewed with the board a dashboard that has

1 been developed to measure the progress of that plan. A motion was made by Chad Kremer to
2 approve the 2021 Strategic Plan as presented.

3 Mr. Carter provided a review of legislative and regulatory issues.

4 The first round of Section 32 purchase awards was announced on February 19th. The four
5 contracts awarded were for one million lbs. of ground bison, with prices ranging from \$6.46/lb.
6 to \$7.48/lb. An additional 160,000 lbs. that were bid were not accepted. A breakout of the
7 awards is listed in the Executive Director's report, which was included with the board packet as
8 Attachment E. Mr. Carter said that USDA's AMS sent across the draft specifications for the
9 second round of purchases, which will occur between July 1 and September 30. The NBA will
10 be working to get companies to submit bids to provide the \$10.1 million still outstanding.

11 He reported that the NBA has worked closely with the National Sustainable Agriculture
12 Coalition over the past few weeks to line up co-sponsors for the bills that were introduced into
13 the House and Senate this week regarding local meat processing. The House Bill, HR8431, is
14 sponsored by U.S. Reps. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE). The Senate Bill,
15 S5066, is sponsored by U.S. Sens. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and John Thune (R-SD). Additional co-
16 sponsors are still being sought. A summary of the bill is included with this report.

17 Ken Klemm recommended that the NBA Board and the Commercial Marketers
18 Committee both adopt resolutions supporting the legislation. Mr. Klemm made a motion to
19 adopt a resolution to support the legislation, and to communicate it to the members of Congress.

20 Mr. Carter reported that he is prepared to send a letter to Agriculture Secretary nominee
21 Tom Vilsack and Trade Representative Designate Katherine Tai to remind them of the previous
22 commitment that Mr. Vilsack and the previous U.S. Trade Representative made to work to
23 eliminate the tariffs on U.S. bison meat exported to the European Union. Those letters will be
24 sent after both officials are officially confirmed. Mr. Vilsack was confirmed on February 24th,
25 and Ms. Tai is expected to be confirmed in the next few days.

26 Joseph Degreenia of USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service informed the NBA that
27 Japan's Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHLW) has sent the USDA their version of a bison
28 questionnaire. They used parts of a questionnaire previously submitted by APHIS/FSIS, so Mr.
29 Degreenia is optimistic that the turnaround could be fairly quick. Mr. Carter said that he will
30 urge FSIS to make this a priority.

1 Both the House and Senate bills regarding truth in buffalo labeling will effectively need
2 to be reintroduced this session. There are several changes on the House Energy and Commerce
3 Committee, which has jurisdiction over this issue. The NBA will monitor those changes.

4 Mr. Carter noted that climate change is a priority issue for the Biden administration. The
5 President has directed the USDA to develop new initiatives to address this issue. Mr. Carter said
6 he will be working to make sure that the NBA is involved in those discussions.

7 There was no unfinished business from Winter Conference to come before the board.

8 Karen Conley provided a report of the Communications Director. She reported that she got
9 sidelined from communications duties while working to get the GTSS organized. She noted that
10 she will be implementing a Membership Monday campaign on Facebook.

11 Dave Carter noted that he had sent conflict of interest statements to the board. Chairman
12 Gehring said that the statements were for the National Buffalo Foundation, and not the NBA.
13 Mr. Carter said that he would send a corrected version. Mr. Carter also reported that he
14 continues to be a partner in a commercial bison herd at the West Bijou Ranch east of Denver.

15 The board discussed potential dates for upcoming meetings. Mr. Carter recommended that
16 the following dates be selected, subject to change:

- 17 • Thursday, April 15
- 18 • Tuesday, June 29 (in conjunction with Summer Conference)
- 19 • Thursday, August 19
- 20 • Thursday, October 21, and
- 21 • Thursday, December 16.

22 No objection was listed.

23 There being no other business to come before the full board, the executive committee entered
24 into executive session at 6:35 p.m. to conduct the annual review of the Executive Director. The
25 committee arose from executive session at 6:50 p.m., with no report. The meeting was
26 adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

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28 Respectfully submitted,
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2 Joe Graham, Secretary

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5 David E. Carter

6 Recording Secretary

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