



1 a 15 percent drop from 2019. Gross expenses are budgeted at \$748,993, which is 12 percent  
2 lower than in 2019. After adjustments and designated reserve, the budget projects a net deficit  
3 of \$18,446. However, it also projects \$14,909 in designated reserve funds, which leaves the  
4 actual operating deficit at \$3,537. Because key activities are conducted in January, a significant  
5 level of 2020 income and expenses occurred prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the close-  
6 out of the two USDA grants means that \$26,000 in salary covered by grant funds in 2019  
7 reverts to the NBA. A motion was made by Brian Grubb to approve the budget, as presented.  
8 The motion was seconded by Alan Douglass and carried.

9 Mr. Carter reviewed with the board the year-to-date financial report through April. The  
10 Executive/Finance Committee met May 20 to review that report. This report is based on the  
11 nine month budget that was recommended by the Finance/Executive Committee. That means  
12 that the period from January – March is closed, and this report reflects April’s performance  
13 compared to the proposed 9-month budget. However, there were some adjustments in April that  
14 were allocated to the first three months of 2020. After adjustments, the YTD income through  
15 April of \$459,634 was \$1,1824 below forecast. Total expenses of \$403,464 were \$114 above  
16 budget. After adjustments and designated reserves, the year-to-date net income of \$47,029 was  
17 \$1,222 below budget. A motion was made by Joe Graham to approve the YTD financial report,  
18 as presented. Said motion was seconded by Mimi Hillenbrand and carried.

19 Jim Matheson provided a membership report to the Board. Total membership as of May  
20 21<sup>st</sup> was 1,149, which is down from 1,164 on March 24<sup>th</sup>. This is a category the staff will  
21 monitor closely moving forward. Mr. Matheson has been working with the NBA accountant,  
22 Teresa Amos, to calculate the actual expenses per member.

23 Mr. Carter provided a report of legislative and regulatory activities.

24 He reported, that, despite the strong efforts of the National Bison Association,  
25 state/regional associations, several U.S. Senators and the North Dakota Commissioner of  
26 Agriculture, bison were not included as eligible livestock in the Coronavirus Food Assistance  
27 Program Package announced May 19th. He said that USDA has now issued a Notice of Funding  
28 Availability (NOFA) announcing that an additional \$637 million is being offered for  
29 commodities not covered in the May 19 announcement, but which can demonstrate at least a  
30 five percent drop in market value. USDA is gathering information under the NFA to determine

1 which additional commodities should be covered. June 22<sup>nd</sup> is the deadline for filing for  
2 comments under that NOFA. The NBA is developing some on-line surveys to capture  
3 quantifiable information for the following sectors: processor/marketer, finishers, cow-calf  
4 operators, and farm-direct marketers.

5 He also reported that he met with the board of directors of the InterTribal Buffalo  
6 Council regarding the fact that USDA did not consult with them as required under Executive  
7 Order 13175. ITBC's legal counsel will be contacting USDA regarding the lack of consultation.

8 Mr. Carter reported that U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) is preparing to introduce the  
9 Small Packer Overtime Relief COVID-19 Act. The legislation would provide relief to small and  
10 very small meat processing plants who are operating overtime and during holidays to keep retail  
11 stores and other customers stocked with meat. The NBA has contacted several Senate offices to  
12 request cosponsors for the bill.

13 Mr. Carter noted that it appears that some interests are pushing to urge USDA to begin  
14 formal rulemaking to establish bison as an amenable species. While designation would  
15 eliminate USDA inspection costs during normal business hours, it would prohibit interstate  
16 shipment of state inspected meat, and would seriously limit the ability to conduct field  
17 slaughter. Mr. Carter noted that the Memorandum of Understanding with the ITBC commits our  
18 organizations to "advocate the elimination of USDA meat inspection fees without  
19 compromising the current allowance for field slaughter and traditional tribal practices." He  
20 discussed this issue with the ITBC board and urged them to closely monitor any developments  
21 on this issue.

22 The Executive Director reported on international trade developments. The formal  
23 opening of Mexico for the export of U.S. bison meat was very welcome news on May 15<sup>th</sup>.  
24 Several marketers are already contacting distributors and marketers in Mexico. Offal is not part  
25 of the original library posting. USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service is working with Mexico to  
26 get that added.

27 The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) will be considering establishing  
28 specific HS (Harmonized System) Codes for bison meat during its meeting this week. HS Codes  
29 are a standardized international system to classify globally traded products. The system  
30 maintained by the World Customs Organization. Bison meat is currently listed under the HS

1 codes used for beef. The lack of unique HS codes for bison meat make it extremely difficult to  
2 measure the level of bison meat moving in international trade.

3 Formal negotiations have been initiated between the U.S. and the U.K. for a free trade  
4 agreement as a part of the U.K.'s Brexit. The NBA is urging negotiators to push for the  
5 elimination of the current 20 percent tariff on bison meat into that country.

6 At the request of the NBA, USDA's Livestock and Grain Market News Service is  
7 implementing an annual calving report. Eighteen of the major cow/calf producers have agreed  
8 to participate.

9 Mr. Carter reported that The Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act has been largely put on the  
10 back shelf as Congress is preoccupied with legislation to address the COVID-19 pandemic. That  
11 process may have to be restarted in the next Congress.

12 The Chair called on Jim Matheson to provide a report on the alternative plans being  
13 developed as a replacement for the 2020 summer conference, which was cancelled due to  
14 COVID-19. Mr. Matheson said that the NBA is scheduling a Week of Virtual Learning, with  
15 three days of two-hour on-line seminars on June 22, 24 and 26. The Monday session will focus  
16 on the commercial marketplace in the wake of COVID-19. Carlotta Mast, senior market  
17 analyst for Informa Markets, and Christine Kaperman, editor of Natural Foods Merchandiser,  
18 will provide new consumer research information for participants. The day will include a panel  
19 of bison marketers who have been forced to pivot their strategies during the pandemic. June 24<sup>th</sup>  
20 will focus on bison management and production. Keynoting that day will be Ray Archuleta,  
21 certified professional soil scientist and farmer. Ken Klemm will also provide an overview of the  
22 NBA's new Conservation Management Plan. June 26 will be devoted to bison start-up  
23 operations and the NBA semi-annual membership meeting. Mr. Matheson reported that he is  
24 confident that the association can generate \$5,000 in sponsorships for the Week of Virtual  
25 Learning. Speaker expenses are expected to total about \$2,500. Brian Grubb noted that, under  
26 the NBA bylaws, one qualification for serving on the association's board of directors was  
27 participation in at least one NBA event in the past year. He asked if participating in the Week of  
28 learning webinar series would qualify. Discussion was held. Donnis Baggett moved to have the  
29 webinar meet the requirement for qualifying for board participation. Said motion was seconded  
30 by Ken Klemm and carried.

1 Mr. Matheson reported that he has been communicating with Winter Conference  
2 Committee Chair Beverly Brown regarding contingency plans in the event that an in-person  
3 Winter Conference and GTSS is not possible in January 2021. The committee will be working  
4 through early fall to assess the potential COVID-19 impact on activities in January. In the  
5 meantime, the NBA staff have participated in webinars designed to provide associations with  
6 guidance on planning and hosting virtual conferences that include break-out sessions, vendors,  
7 and other activities.

8 Mr. Matheson added that the association is also assessing options for the Gold Trophy  
9 Show and Sale in January. In addition to the potential for the Stock Show to be impacted by  
10 COVID-19, we are concerned that construction of the sale arena may not be completed in time.  
11 The Chair called on Directors for Regional Reports.

12 Mary Adams provided a report from Region I. She contacted her state/regional  
13 associations but didn't receive responses regarding upcoming activities. She said that small  
14 producers are having difficulties finding a processing plant.

15 Boyd Meyer provided a report from Region II. Hay prices have moderated.

16 Mimi Hillenbrand provided a report from Region III. She said moisture is good in  
17 western SD.

18 Ken Klemm provided a report from Region VI. He said that Kansas Buffalo Association  
19 members are concerned about processing capacity. The KBA also suggested that the NBA could  
20 assist state/regional associations with social media.

21 Jeremy Alleman provided a report from Region V. He said that the Minnesota Bison  
22 Association is weighing options for its fall auction.

23 Brian Grubb provided a report from Region VII. He contacted the Eastern Bison  
24 Association regarding ongoing activities but did not hear back.

25 Kristopher Kelley provided a report from region VIII. He noted that processing capacity  
26 is very tight. High retail and direct buying demand is putting a strain on processors.

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1 Discussion was held regarding the adoption of new regional boundaries for 2021-2016,  
2 as required under the NBA bylaws. Following the discussion at the March 26<sup>th</sup> board meeting,  
3 the staff had updated the primary draft under consideration at that meeting. The Executive  
4 Committee voted in April to recommend that the  
5 board adopt that revised draft. However, as advised  
6 during the March meeting, the recommended draft  
7 was sent to state/regional associations for review.  
8 Based on feedback from state/regional associations,  
9 the staff, along with the President and Chair  
10 developed an additional draft for consideration by  
11 the board. Mr. Carter presented that draft to the board. A motion was made by Ken Klemm to  
12 adopt the draft presented by Mr. Carter. The motion was seconded by Mimi Hillenbrand and  
13 carried.



14 Mr. Carter mentioned that he was contacted recently by a regional director who was  
15 wondering about the level of advice NBA directors were expected to provide to new members  
16 as a part of their board responsibilities. In some instances, new members are expecting directors  
17 to provide in-depth business consultation. Mr. Carter brought to the board's attention a  
18 discussion document regarding establishing a board policy regarding consulting services to  
19 members. Discussion was held. No action was taken.

20 Karen Conley provided a communications report. She reported that Social Media  
21 outreach is increasing. NBA has now joined LinkedIn. She is now working to add content to the  
22 NBA YouTube Channel. She is working on the summer issue of *Bison World* and has a goal for  
23 getting the magazine publication schedule back on track. Ms. Conley said that the NBA will be  
24 initiating a podcast series, entitled the *Bison Chronicles*.

25 Dave Carter provided a report of the Science and Research Committee. The bylaws for  
26 the Center for Excellence in Bison Studies are nearly finalized. A copy of those bylaws was  
27 distributed to the board prior to the meeting. South Dakota State University legal counsel is  
28 reviewing the draft bylaws, they should be ready for formal approval within the next few weeks.

1 Ken Klemm provided a report of the Conservation Committee. He reported that the  
2 committee has gone through the editing of the CMP on the Producer App. He stressed that he  
3 wants to make sure it is live prior to the Summer Week of Virtual Learning.  
4 Boyd Meyer provided a report of the Gold Trophy Show and Sale Committee. The Committee  
5 met on May 27<sup>th</sup> to review the proposals submitted for 2021 GTSS auctioneer. Five bids have  
6 been submitted under the Request for Proposals issued by the NBA. The committee  
7 recommended that the bid submitted by Quality Auction Services be approved. A motion was  
8 made by Alan Douglass to approve Quality Auction Services. Said motion was seconded.  
9 Kristopher Kelly asked if approval of the bid would bind the NBA to financial commitment. Mr.  
10 Matheson noted that payment was based only on the actual sale of animals. The motion was put  
11 to a vote and carried.

12 Mr. Carter noted that Les Kroeger of Canada has agreed to serve as a judge for 2021 and  
13 2022. A motion was made by Boyd Meyer to approve Les Kroeger as the second GTSS judge  
14 for 2021. Said motion was seconded and carried.

15 Mr. Klemm reported on the NBA Conservation Committee. He noted that he and Mr.  
16 Matheson have been working with HerdDogg, Inc. to incorporate the Conservation  
17 Management Plan into the newly launched Producers' app. He stressed the importance of  
18 having that material ready to go live prior to the official launch at the Week of Virtual Learning.

19 Mr. Carter provided a report on NBA grant activities. He reported that the association  
20 has a \$25,000 digital advertising campaign to promote the BuySome Bison app with  
21 publications produced by Meredith Corp., including *Food & Wine*, *Eating Well*, *Simple Living*,  
22 *All Recipes*, *Martha Stewart*, etc. Those ads are being underwritten by our FMPP grant.  
23 Because the COVID-19 pandemic may impair the association's ability to utilize remaining  
24 FMPP funds, he said that the staff will be submitting a request to USDA for reallocation of  
25 funding.

26 Mr. Carter reported that the association has been working with SDSU, Sinte Gleska  
27 University, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council to submit a \$103,994 grant proposal under  
28 USDA's Regional Food Systems Program grant program. The grant will also include \$26,000 in  
29 matching funds. However, there was a problem with the online application process and the

1 application wasn't able to be submitted prior to the deadline. However, USDA has a process for  
2 appeal of late applications., so the NBA has filed a formal appeal.

3 Mr. Matheson provided a report on the implementation of the Producer Herd Management  
4 app. Following discussion at the previous NBA board meeting, Jim worked with HerdDogg,  
5 Inc. to finalize an agreement for HerdDogg to continue to allow NBA members to continue to  
6 access the app. The agreement calls for the NBA to pay an annual fee of \$3,000, with members  
7 able to subscribe for \$25. The agreement also covers the ability to purchase HerdDogg ear tags,  
8 administer the Conservation Management Plan, and support other NBA-selected products and  
9 services.

10 Dave Carter reported that the National Buffalo Foundation Board of Directors met on May  
11 25<sup>th</sup>. Part of the discussion was the proposed fundraiser to be engaged jointly by the Foundation,  
12 and the NBA. There is general support among the NBF board to move forward, but there is not  
13 a consensus regarding whether this is full-time or part-time, and how the support is allocated  
14 among our organizations. NBF Chair Cecil Miskin, Mimi Hillenbrand and Mr. Carter are  
15 scheduled to meet by phone on June 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss.

16 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA is pursuing the transition of its online store order  
17 fulfillment function. Jim Matheson added detail to the online store transition discussion. NBA  
18 member Ron Miskin has offered to take on the NBA's order fulfillment program. Mr. Miskin  
19 operates a commercial company that heavily utilizes order fulfillment. If arrangement can be  
20 finalized, the NBA will be able to reduce monthly rent costs by about \$240. Discussion was  
21 held. Mr. Grubb recommended that a written agreement be established with Mr. Miskin.

22 There being no further business to come before the board, and upon motion made,  
23 seconded and carried, the meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m. p.m.

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25 Respectfully Submitted,

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Joe Graham, Secretary

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Dave Carter, Recording Secretary