

1
2
3
4
5
6

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION
November 18, 2022
Via Zoom**

7 A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison Association was convened at 4
8 p.m. MST, Friday, November 18, 2022, via the Zoom virtual platform pursuant to the bylaws and
9 at the request of the NBA President and Executive Director.

10
11 **Board Members Present:**

12 Donnis Baggett Chad Kremer
13 Robert Johnson Ken Klemm
14 Elizabeth Riffle Mimi Hillenbrand
15 Jeremy Allemann Moritz Espy
16 Carie Starr Mary Adams
17 Stuart Schrag Kevin Leier

18
19 **Board Members Absent/Excused:**

20 Campbell Burgess Boyd Meyer

21
22 **Staff/ Guests Present:**

23 Jim Matheson Lydia Whitman
24 Karen Conley Adam Ulbricht- Region V Elect

25
26 **Call to Order Board Meeting**

27 Donnis Baggett called the November 18, 2022 regular Executive Board meeting to order at
28 4:05pm.

29
30 **Roll Call**

31 Roll call was conducted by Jim Matheson.

32
33 **President's Report**

34 President's reported delivered by Chad Kremer. Reviewed busy outreach schedule for NBA,
35 identified challenges to producers, and encouraged members to keep optimism and weather the
36 storm.

37
38 **Approval of the Minutes**

39 Three minutes were reviewed by board: September 22, 2022 Board Minutes (Attachment A),
40 Finance Committee September 28, 2022 (Attachment B), Finance Committee October 25, 2022
41 (Attachment C). No additions or corrections identified.

42

43 Motion to approve September 22nd Board Minutes, September 28th Finance Committee and
44 October 25th Finance Committee Minutes made by Mimi Hillenbrand, second by Mary Adams.
45 Motion approved unanimously.

46

47 **Treasurer's Report**

48 Reviewed September YTD Financial Report (Attachment D). Update provide by Jim Matheson
49 regarding 2021 Audit.

50

51 Update on Raymond James agreement. Executive board vote was held via email and approved
52 Raymond James proposal. Seeing a return of about 4%.

53

54 2023 Budget Process report by Jim Matheson. 12 month budget will be presented to Finance
55 Committee by the end of November.

56

57 **Membership Report**

58 Year to Date Membership count from November 15th and reflected in Attachment E. Lydia
59 Whitman reported membership is tracking well overall, but have not seen the growth from the
60 current membership drive, which is just getting started. NBA will continue to promote value of
61 memberships and incentive opportunities such as the Join and Go membership for Winter
62 Conference.

63

64 Fall Membership Drive discussed.

65

66 **Grants**

67 NCSARE – Regenerative Field Days progress reported by Jim Matheson. Three field days
68 completed for 2022, three planned for 2023. Great feedback thus far on the workshops.

69

70 Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Proposal was submitted October 6th, waiting to hear if
71 selected.

72

73 Climate Smart Ag Grant – Delayed to January- 3.6 million over 5 years with most of award going to
74 growers as incentive for using climate smart strategies in raising their bison. Jim will attend virtual
75 meeting on December 5th to learn more.

76

77 **Committee Reports**

78 Gold Trophy Show and Sale (GTSS) – Boyd Meyer: Boyd not on call. Jim Matheson reported that
79 auctioneer is confirmed, judges confirmed. Karen managing the sale. Reported on yard crew,
80 media day at the yards, National Western Stock Show to tie in a lunch and activity.

81

82 NABR-Connor Elliott: Conner not on call. Corresponded with Jim, nothing new to report.

83

84 Science & Research – Carter Kruse: Carter not on call. Jim Matheson reported nothing new.

85

86 Commercial Marketers – Dick Gehring: Dick not on call. Jim Matheson reported focus has been
87 on USDA meetings. Reported receiving inquiries from MN and WI for implementing bison
88 processing.

89
90 Conservation – Ken Klemm: Reported ongoing discussions for CMP program with different
91 players.

92
93 State-Regional – John Graves: John not on call. Jim Matheson stated productive call in October.
94 Goal of committee to meet during January conference.

95
96 Winter Conference – Beverly Brown: Via email Beverly reported conference is coming together
97 nicely. Two conference calls remaining. Agenda reviewed. Jim added Early Bird registration is new.
98 Sponsorships selling well. Trying a package approach this year.

99
100 **Program Manager Report**
101 Lydia Whitman reported work products achieved covering legislative work, membership drive,
102 event planning, and support for members and committees.

103
104 **Winter Conference Update**
105 Jim Matheson presented that registration is now open, with 175 registered so far and goal of
106 500. Reported partner organizations like the Continental Bison Working Group, Intertribal
107 Buffalo Council, and Nature Conservancy are exploring gathering at the Winter Conference to
108 meet. NBA Executive Board interested in meeting at 2pm on Wednesday, January 18th.

109
110 **Next International Bison Conference**
111 Jim Matheson reported he will be attending the Canadian Bison Association Meeting November
112 28th-30th. Anticipates some discussion will be held on next international conference.
113 Recommendation of board to seek a 7 year rotation.

114
115 Presented that 2nd International Bison Health Symposium proposed for June 2024 at SDSU
116 focusing on practitioners and researchers. Potential funding through NIFA/USDA.

117
118 **Outreach and Education**
119 Reports provided on recent outreach and education including the FFA National Convention,
120 Wisconsin Bison Producers Association, Regenerate 2022 Conference, Q-Fest, and World Food
121 Championship. Noted that the World Food Championship was very worthwhile with many
122 connections made. NBA staff encouraged to keep communicating the successes of marketing
123 and outreach to members and commercial marketers.

124
125 Fall Webinar occurring November 21 & 22 for members virtually, with 6 experts presenting on bison
126 health and business health.

127
128 Google Ad campaign is prepped, hitting difficulties with communicating with Google regarding initiating
129 campaign.

130 NBA will be represented by Jim Matheson at TEI and MTBA meetings in January.

131

132 **Regional Reports – Provided via Email**

133 Region 1 Mary Adams- High hay prices still prevail. Meat sales holding even in our region. Western Bison
134 will hold their annual Show and Sale December 1-3 at their new location at River View Ranch in Washing
135 Terrace, Utah.

136

137 Region 2 Boyd Meyer-

138

139 Region 3 Moritz Espy-

140

141 Region 4 Stuart Schrag-

142

143 Region 5 Jeremy Allerman- Wisconsin Bison Producers Association held its Fall Conference October 28th-
144 30th. Thanks to Jim for making the trip to give the NBA update. We are getting an early winter here in
145 the Midwest with cold temps and snow. Feed costs and all other input costs remain very high while
146 animal prices remain far too low to be profitable. I feel a good number of producers will be drastically
147 reducing their herd size or exiting if prices don't increase quickly. Minnesota's 26th annual Legends of the
148 Fall Bison Auction will be held in Albany, MN November 26th.

149

150 Region 6 Campbell Burgess- Texas and surrounding areas are experiencing the worst drought since 2011,
151 Some rain has been seen by a few regions in the last 60 days, Large round bales of alfalfa can fetch
152 upwards of \$350, Bermuda can fetch \$280, Corn is up since July to around 6.50 but has relaxed since
153 early spring this year.

154

155 Region 7 Carie Starr- We held our fall conference near Asheville NC. We had decent attendance for how
156 far south the venue was. The focus was agritourism law and insurance. Charlie and Shauna Rankin were in
157 attendance presenting the trailer for Native-Prodigies of an Icon. Planning is underway for the Winter
158 Conference to be held March 9-11 in Harrisburg PA. We will have an NBA update, Jeff Martin will be
159 presenting as well. We are having someone from the USDA to talk about implementing field slaughter,
160 and Hi-Hog will be doing a Handling presentation. We have a change to our Show and Sale, we are inviting
161 people to bring production animals for a non-judged sale as part of the event. Ohio lost another ranch
162 when Greg Ruter passed away at the end of September. The liquidation sale was held on September 24.
163 Prices were low compared with normal prices in the East. We have had a very dry fall and colder than
164 normal. An early freeze killed our warm season grasses and we started feeding hay about two weeks
165 sooner than normal.

166

167 Region 8 Elizabeth Riffle- Hay is expensive, but there seems to be enough to go around, and many
168 producers have been able to stockpile pastures for winter due to our lack of a summer drought. I have
169 been talking with more and more folks each month who seem to be very interested in getting into the
170 bison business, half of them already know about the NBA, the others I direct over to the website. The top
171 question is whether bison are profitable :) I tell them yes.

172

173 Region 4 Stuart Schrag- Much of the region continues to deal with exceptional to extreme drought
174 conditions. -Some portions of the region have seen precipitation but along with that has come below
175 average temperatures. Hay demand and prices remain high. October/November bison sales (in Kansas)
176 reflected slightly higher prices than anticipated. Kansas Buffalo Association annual auction will be
177 Saturday December 3rd in Salina, KS.

178
179 International Director Robert Johnson- Sale season is ramping up here. Video auction last night there
180 were 600 head of animals on offer of various weights and classes. Prices were strong on feeder bulls and
181 heifers, but definitely soft on mature animals, or off grade calves and yearlings. The CBA convention is
182 November 27th-29th. There's about 130 people registered so far, and more filing in everyday as people
183 always tend to register late. There are 50 head entered in the CNSS. The Canadian Western Agribition has
184 offered us a "Bison Day" at the CWA grounds. It's an exciting opportunity with a lot of potential to
185 promote both the animal and the product. On the market side this is the busiest season for exports going
186 into Europe, as traditionally during the holidays many Europeans look to wild boar, venison or "game
187 meats" for their meal. Bison slides into that category and sales have been strong. A challenge there has
188 been the EU economy and the difference between the US dollar and the Euro is much narrower now than
189 it has been, so there is less margin for exporters on that currency exchange, also air freight costs are very
190 high. A positive from the EU market is that most consumers there are willing to try different cuts other
191 than tenderloin or prime rib. This has allowed the marketers to be creative with lower value cuts of meat
192 and further utilize the carcasses to recoup some margin, while maintaining the hhw. price in the face of
193 rising expenses. The CBA had a booth at the SIAL food show in Paris last month that helped promote
194 bison. There doesn't appear to be many "prime - under 30 month" animals out in the country now
195 compared to the last couple years at this time, and most feeders I've spoken with up here this fall are
196 pretty current. However feed costs are still very high and the cost of gain will determine where prices go
197 in the new year for feeder animals. In some areas there is ample feed around, but it remains expensive as
198 other regions are still in drought. There overall sentiment is that there is optimism for the industry as we
199 go forward, but uncertainty remains when it comes to interest rates, the economy, and an aging
200 demographic of producers.

201 ITBC Update – Jim attended ITBC 30th Anniversary meeting. Reported MOU has been adjusted based on
202 NBA recommendations. Goal to sign during January Winter Conference. Jim reported Mike Faith is no
203 longer on the ITBC board. Troy, ITBC chair suggested discontinuing the tribal liaison role, and instead Jim
204 and Troy will regularly communicate with each other.

205 206 **Legislative and Regulatory Update**

207 AMS- Monthly Price Report and CP meeting. Jim and Dick met with AMS and continue to explore
208 improvements to report to expand accuracy and participation among marketers. Suggested removing
209 poundage. Potentially create 2 reports- direct to consumer and marketers. Exploring feasibility. Would
210 help to give a good value on grass-fed, which is often direct to consumer. Commodity purchases meeting,
211 talked about challenges with specs and section 32 participation.

212
213 FAS- Representatives from Japan will be touring Bison processing in Colorado in December.

214
215 NRCS- Resource outreach to Grazing and Grassland Specialists.

216
217 FSIS- Bison slaughter facility consultation.

218
219 APHIS- Indemnity Valuation public comments submitted (Attachment H).

220
221 **Foundations Update**

222 COE Fundraiser planned during Winter Conference. The National Buffalo Foundation is exploring
223 letters of intent: 18 received, funding 1. 2023 Throlson American Bison Scholarship recipients
224 selected.

225

226 **Communications Report**

227 Karen Connelly reported working on next issue of Bison World.

228

229 **Executive Director Report**

230 Jim Matheson provided report (Attachment I). Included results of staff retreat and presenting to
231 the Nationwide Underwriters.

232

233 Discussion on Flower Hill request per Dave Carter for a memorandum of understanding between
234 NBA and Flower Hill for a specific USDA grant project. Board concluded to offer Dave Carter 5
235 minutes during January board meeting to present his case.

236

237 Canadian Bison Association international director nomination needed. Board encouraged to
238 suggest candidates. John Commack was suggested by several members. Motion made by Robert
239 Johnson to nominate John Commack, Mary Adams seconded, motion carried unanimously.
240 Conditional upon his acceptance.

241

242 **Other Business**

243 None

244

245 **Adjourn**

246 Motion to adjourn meeting by Mary Adams Seconded by Carie Starr, motion passed
247 unanimously. Meeting closed at 5:32pm.

248

249 Respectfully Submitted,

250

251

252 _____
Kevin Leier, Secretary

253

254

255 _____
Lydia Whitman
256 Recording Secretary

257