



1 The Chair directed the board's attention to the Executive/Finance Committee Meeting  
2 minutes for November 24, 2020, January 7, 2021, and January 15, 2021, which minutes were  
3 previously distributed to the board. A motion was made by Mary Adams to accept the minutes  
4 as distributed. Said motion was seconded and carried.

5 The Chair called for a financial report of the NBA. Mr. Carter reviewed the 2020 year-end  
6 financial statement with the board. Despite extensive disruption created by the pandemic, the  
7 NBA ended 2020 in extremely strong financial condition. The 2020 gross income of \$780,006  
8 was \$34,549 ahead of budget. Strong membership performance accounted for most of that  
9 excess income. The 2020 membership revenue of \$260,386 was \$14,743 higher than year-end  
10 2019. The Growth Fund also had significantly higher gross revenue than budgeted. The actual  
11 gross revenue will likely increase approximately \$15,000 when the NBA receives the payment  
12 from Nationwide Insurance for the override on policies written. Total expenses of \$740,566  
13 were \$8,427 below budget. Lower grant expenses (matched by lower grant income) accounted  
14 for the significant share of that deviation. After adjustments and designated reserves, we ended  
15 the year with net results of \$23,840, which is \$42,286 above our budget. Motion was made by  
16 Mimi Hillenbrand to approve the financial report, with the reconciliation to be made with  
17 Nationwide Insurance revenue, as presented. Said motion was seconded and carried.

18 Mr. Carter reviewed the proposed 3-Month Budget, as recommended by the Finance  
19 Committee, with the board. The budget contains updated information based on actual Winter  
20 Conference registrations and Gold Trophy Show and Sale consignments. Mr. Carter also noted  
21 that he had discovered a significant formula error in the previous version of the budget. The  
22 updated recommended budget now projects gross revenues of \$215,068 for the first three  
23 months of 2021, compared to actual gross revenue of \$429,194 in 2020. Gross expenses are  
24 projected at \$206,029, compared to \$348,473 in 2020. After adjustments and designated  
25 reserves, the net results will be \$497, compared to net results of \$72,179 in 2020.

26 Mr. Carter noted that the re-scheduling and relocating of Winter Conference, along with  
27 other COVID-related issues, has created some bylaws complications. He reviewed each of  
28 those.

1 Section 3.3 specifies the timing and location of the annual meeting of the Board of  
2 Directors. That provision reads:

3 **Section 3.3 Annual Meeting.** An annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be  
4 held without other notice than this Bylaw immediately after and at the same place as the  
5 annual meeting of members.  
6

7 Mr. Carter requested a waiver of the bylaws' requirement so that the annual meeting could be  
8 conducted virtually following the Winter Conference. A motion was made by Donnis Baggett  
9 to waive the requirements for Section 3.3. of the bylaws for 2021 only. Said motion was  
10 seconded and carried. Mr. Carter suggested February 24<sup>th</sup> as the date for the annual meeting of  
11 the Board of Directors. No objection was made.

12 Mr. Carter reviewed with the board the Proxy voting requirements are specified in  
13 Section 2.14, which reads:

14 **Section 2.14 Proxies.** At all meetings of members, a member may vote in person or by  
15 proxy executed in writing by the member or by their duly authorized attorney in fact. No  
16 person may act as proxy for more than two (2) members. Such proxy shall be filed with  
17 the Corporation at least 24 hours prior to the voting meeting, and all proxies shall be  
18 approved by the Secretary/Treasurer of the Corporation before or at the voting meeting.  
19 No proxy shall be valid after eleven (11) months from the date of its execution, unless  
20 otherwise provided in the proxy. A proxy will state in writing the name of the member,  
21 shall contain the signature of the same, the name of the proxy (person authorized by the  
22 voting member to carry out the voting) and the date on which the proxy was executed.  
23

24 The issue had been discussed by the Executive Committee in a meeting held earlier in the day.

25 Mr. Carter conveyed the committee's recommendation that members not attending the  
26 conference whether in person virtually or in-person could still utilize the traditional proxy ballot  
27 format. Members registered virtually would receive an email ballot, which they could return up  
28 to 24 hours prior to the election, with the ballots to be emailed to the chair of the Past  
29 President's Council, with a cc to the Chair of the Board. Robert Johnson made a motion to  
30 approve the Executive Committee recommendation as presented. Said motion was seconded and  
31 carried.

32 Mr. Carter noted that the current bylaws are technically out of compliance with the  
33 membership categories listed in Article II. As per Board action in November, the Friend of the  
34 Buffalo category has been renamed Supporter Member. He said he felt that changing this title in

1 the bylaws to conform to the membership categories constituted a technical correction and does  
2 not require a full bylaws amendment process. Joe Graham made a motion to approve that  
3 change. Said motion was seconded and carried.

4 Jim Matheson provided a membership report and said that the total membership count  
5 on January 21<sup>st</sup> was 1,170, which is the highest count in the last 15+ years. Since the last board  
6 report in November, the NBA has gained 23 new active members, and has picked up eight  
7 members in the new Supporter category. Mr. Matheson reported that the staff is working on a  
8 membership drive.

9 Dave Carter provided a report on the Center of Excellence for Bison Studies.  
10 In November, the Center of Excellence issued a request for Letters of Intent to submit proposals  
11 for bison research projects. Thirty-six letters were submitted from researchers at institutions  
12 ranging from the University of Southern California to the University of Cincinnati. Topics  
13 included bison health, ecosystem management, meat quality, tribal herd development genetics  
14 and other subjects. The Center board has asked 12 of those researchers to submit full proposals.  
15 The NBA Science & Research Committee will review the proposals and make  
16 recommendations to the Center board regarding the priorities for funding. Kevin Leier noted  
17 that he has been contacted by individuals who have been preparing Letters of Intent.

18 Eloise Mongillo, Director of Development, reviewed with the Board her initial  
19 development Plan for the coming years. This plan formalizes the recommendation from Front  
20 Range Source that we could generate \$600,000 over a two-year period. Mr. Carter encouraged  
21 board members to begin developing information regarding potential outside sources of funding,  
22 and to pass that information along to the NBA.

23 Ms. Mongillo also reviewed with the board a proposed job description for individuals  
24 who will be serving on the Development Advisory Committee. That committee will be  
25 comprised of 6-8 members to be selected from the NBA, NBF and Throlson boards. Mimi  
26 Hillenbrand suggested that the committee include some young members who could provide  
27 context regarding the future of the bison business. Mr. Carter noted that it will be important to  
28 have a member of the committee from South Dakota State University.

29 The Chair called on Dave Carter to review the NBA staff's proposed workplan to  
30 implement the 2021 goals established by the Board of Directors during the December Planning

1 Day. The workplan was developed during a staff planning session in early January. No action  
2 was taken because the workplan will be formally adopted by the incoming board of directors.

3 Jim Matheson provided a report on the NBA Winter Conference, to be held February 19  
4 and 20, 2021 at the Ramkota Hotel in Rapid City, SD. He said that 225 members signed up to  
5 attend in-person, and 67 registered to participate virtually. He reviewed the steps being taken to  
6 provide social distancing.

7 Karen Conley provided a report on the Gold Trophy Show and Sale to be held in  
8 conjunction with the Winter Conference. There are 68 live animals consigned for the 2021  
9 GTSS. The consignments include:

- 10 • 2 – two-year-old bred heifers
- 11 • 2 – pen of 2, two-year-old bred heifers
- 12 • 3 – pen of 5 heifer calves
- 13 • 4 – heifer calves
- 14 • 10 – two-year-old bulls
- 15 • 19 – yearling bulls
- 16 • 12 – bull calves

17  
18 She noted that bison coming into the GTSS will be unable to pass through the North Portal  
19 Port of Entry into the United States. That will require Canadian bison to pass through the  
20 Sweetgrass Port of Entry in Montana, located 500 miles west of North Portal. She is working to  
21 try and find another solution to this situation. The NBA will be doing active promotion on the  
22 auction. Because Les Kroeger is unable to attend in person, David Lutt has agreed to join John  
23 Bowron as a judge for GTSS.

24 Jim Matheson provided a report on Summer Conference. The NBA will be working with the  
25 Rocky Mountain Bison Association to host a Summer Conference that will help make up for  
26 lost ground during the COVID pandemic. Boyd Meyer volunteered to serve on the Summer  
27 Conference Planning Committee.

28 The Chair called for reports from directors on activities within their regions.

29 Mary Adams provided a report from Region I. She said there has not been much activity in  
30 her region.

1 Boyd Meyer provided a report from Region II. He noted that he is getting a lot of calls  
2 from producers regarding the USDA Section 32 purchase program. He noted that drought  
3 conditions are serious and that feed prices are escalating.

4 Kevin Leier provided a report from Region III. He has been working with the Dakota  
5 Territory Buffalo Association to help plan the upcoming Winter Conference. He will also be  
6 assisting the judging of the Girlz Going Wild performance yearling heifer competition. He  
7 noted that there is an optimistic mood in his region.

8 Ken Klemm provided a report from Region IV. He noted that membership is growing in his  
9 region.

10 Jeremy Allemann provided a report from Region V. He said there will be good  
11 participation in the Winter Conference from his region.

12 Campbell Burgess provided a report from Region VI. He is also getting calls from  
13 members with questions regarding the timing of the Section 32 purchase program.

14 Carie Starr provided a report of Region VII. She reported that the Eastern Bison  
15 Association is proceeding with an in-person conference in March. There is still a serious  
16 problem in getting animals scheduled to be processed in her region.

17 Kristopher Kelley provided a report from Region VIII. He reported that legislation has  
18 been introduced in Congress to strengthen local meat processing facilities. He said he would  
19 send information to the NBA on that legislation.

20 Robert Johnson provided a report of the International Director. He said that auction  
21 prices have been surprisingly strong. He has also been contacted by researchers wanting to  
22 submit Letters of Intent to the Center of Excellence.

23 The Chair called on Dave Carter for a report on legislative and regulatory activities.

24 Mr. Carter informed the board that he was on a telephone call in mid-January with  
25 USDA Agricultural Marketing Service officials in charge of the Section 32 purchase program.  
26 AMS will be conducting the Section 32 bison meat purchase program in two segments, with the  
27 first round of purchases to take place from March – June, and the second round to occur July –  
28 September, 2021.

1 Mr. Carter said that the COVID relief package passed by Congress in December does  
2 not include any new direct benefits for bison producers but does include provisions within the  
3 proposed RAMP-UP Act designed to assist small meat processing facilities.

4 He reported that he has drafted a letter to incoming Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack  
5 and Trade Representative Stephanie Tai to remind them of previous commitments made to  
6 eliminate tariffs on bison meat exported to the EU, and to assure that the tariffs are not part of  
7 the trade agreement being finalized with the United Kingdom. That letter will be sent as soon  
8 as Mr. Vilsack and Ms. Tai are confirmed by the US Senate.

9 Mr. Carter reviewed with the board some of the key appointments being made to the  
10 USDA.

11 He reported that the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act will need to be reintroduced in the  
12 House and Senate this session. There are several changes on the House Energy and Commerce  
13 Committee, which has jurisdiction over this issue.

14 Karen Conley provided a report of the communications director. She said that  
15 advertising is continuing to grow for *Bison World*. She is working to get video testimonials  
16 from members regarding the benefits of belonging to the NBA.

17 Dave Carter provided a report from the Science and Research Committee. He noted that  
18 the Science & Research Committee will be responsible for review and prioritization of  
19 proposals that are submitted for funding to the Center of Excellence. However, seven of the 11  
20 current Science & Research Committee members also serve on the Center of Excellence Board.  
21 President Baggett, Committee Chair David Hunter and Mr. Carter have contacted four NBA  
22 members who have agreed to serve on the Science and Research Committee. Those members  
23 are:

- 24 • Corissa Busse of South Dakota
  - 25 • Dr. Meg Parker of USDA APHIS in Colorado
  - 26 • Jeremy Ruhter of Illinois and
  - 27 • Joe Graham of Texas.
- 28

29 Ken Klemm provided a report from the Conservation Committee. He reported that there are  
30 three pending applications for Conservation Management Plans. He will be participating in a  
31 project to move bison to a “Green List” for the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

1 Jim Matheson reported that he has volunteered to assist with the IUCN Red Line assessment for  
2 American bison. Mimi Hillenbrand said that she is a member of the American Bison Society  
3 steering committee. The American Bison Society will be reaching out to survey NBA members.  
4 No objection was listed.

5 Mr. Carter reported that the Commercial Marketers' Committee participated in the  
6 December call with USDA's AMS personnel in charge of the Section 32 purchase program.  
7 They provided the agency with extensive input regarding how to make the program operate  
8 effectively.

9 Jim Matheson provided a report from the North American Bison Registry. The registry  
10 is recommending retaining the 15-marker panel currently used to detect hybridization in bison.  
11 The registry is also asking the NBA Board for a one-year extension on the waiver of NABR  
12 registration fees with parentage testing. NBA President Donnis Baggett said that he wanted to  
13 hear from NABR Committee Chair Connor Elliott regarding the reason for requesting the one-  
14 year extension before deciding. Consensus was expressed to postpone the decision until the next  
15 board meeting.

16 There being no additional business to come before the board, and upon motion made,  
17 seconded and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

18  
19 Respectfully Submitted,

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22 \_\_\_\_\_  
23 Joe Graham, Secretary

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25  
26 \_\_\_\_\_  
27 Dave Carter, Recording Secretary