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3 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**
4 **OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
5 **OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION**
6 **October 1, 2019**
7 **Via Telephone Conference Call**
8

9 The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison
10 Association was convened at 5 p.m. MDT, October 1, 2019 via telephone conference call,
11 pursuant to the bylaws and notification by the Executive Director.

12 Present were:

13 Roy Liedtke	Dick Gehring
14 Tom Barthel	Robert Johnson
15 Brian Grubb (joined at 6 p.m.)	Boyd Meyer
16 Jeremy Allemann	Mimi Hillenbrand
17 Keith Yearout	Alan Douglass
18 Donnis Baggett	Kristopher Kelley

19
20 Absent were Debbie Thieman, Mike Faith, ITBC, and Gerald Parsons.

21 Also attending were Dave Carter, Jim Matheson, Karen Conley, Campbell Burgess and
22 Ken Klemm. Roy Liedtke presided, and Dave Carter served as recording secretary.

23 Dick Gehring provided a report of the president. He reported that the NBA Washington
24 Roundup in September was extremely successful. He noted that the relationships being
25 developed in Washington, D.C. are strongly positive. He urged that the NBA develop a game
26 plan for addressing fake meat.

27 The chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the meeting of July 8, 2019,
28 which minutes had been previously circulated to the board. No changes were made. A motion
29 was made by Mimi Hillenbrand to approve the minutes as distributed. Said motion was
30 seconded and carried.

31 The chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the meeting of August 15,
32 2019, which minutes had been previously circulated to the board. No changes were made. A

1 motion was made by Mimi Hillenbrand to approve the minutes as distributed. Said motion was
2 seconded and carried.

3 The chair directed the board's attention to the minutes of the Finance Committee from
4 July 24, 2019, and August 28, 2019. A motion was made by Mimi Hillenbrand to accept those
5 minutes as distributed. Said motion was seconded and carried.

6 The chair called on Donnis Baggett, chair of the Finance Committee, to provide a year-
7 to-date financial report. The Finance Committee met on September 26th and reviewed the Year-
8 to-Date financial performance through August. Total income in August of \$18,552 was \$2,804
9 below budget. Year-to-Date gross income of \$647,569 is \$40,856 below budget. The shortfall in
10 the Summer Conference benefit auction, and the timing of grant reimbursements are primary
11 factors. Total expenses in August of \$41,318 were \$6,473 above budget. However, YTD gross
12 expenses of \$658,089 were \$19,262 below budget. After adjustments and designated reserve,
13 August net results of (\$30,154) were \$9,198 below budget. Our YTD net results of (\$15,453)
14 were \$14,754 below budget. Total equity in the NBA on August 31st was \$326,813, compared
15 to \$327,029 on August 31, 2018. Mr. Liedtke noted that the Summer Conference operated
16 according to budgeted levels, with the exception of the benefit auction. Dave Carter noted that
17 grant reimbursements not yet received are impacting the financial performance. A motion was
18 made by Robert Johnson to approve the financial report, as presented. Said motion was
19 seconded and carried.

20 Jim Matheson provided a membership report. The membership count as of September
21 27th is 1,112, which is a decline of 15 members since July 2. Most of the decline was in the
22 Junior Membership category. The NBA has picked up three new members since the report was
23 issued. He reported that the staff has discussed implementing a membership drive this fall. The
24 campaign will focus on participants in upcoming auctions, and on social members. Barb Dowdy
25 has suggested that we offer members a "finder's fee" that will include a 10 percent discount on
26 renewals if they sign up a new member. Discussion was held. No action was taken.

27 The Chair called on directors for regional reports.

28 Robert Johnson provided a report of the International Director. He reported that
29 conditions have turned cold and wet in his region. The Canadian Bison Association annual
30 meeting is scheduled for November 23-26.

1 Alan Douglass provided a report of Region I. The Western Bison Association is
2 planning its annual meeting in early December. He noted that he is receiving a number of calls
3 from producers worried about current market conditions.

4 Jim Matheson reported that he and Karen Conley participated in the Rocky Mountain
5 Bison Association fall tour in September. The tour included a stop at Brush Meat Processing in
6 Colorado and the Monkey Ranch in Nebraska.

7 Mimi Hillenbrand reported on Region III. Members are concerned about current market
8 conditions. The Dakota Territory Buffalo Association is planning its meeting in February, 2020.

9 Keith Yearout provided a report from Region IV. The Illinois-Indiana Bison Association
10 is conducting its meeting on October 19.

11 Jeremy Allemann reported on Region V. Minnesota Bison Association is planning for its
12 Legends of the Fall sale in November.

13 Jim Matheson reported on Regional VI. He said that the Texas Bison Association has
14 scheduled its fall meeting October 19th.

15 Kristopher Kelly provided a report from Region VIII.

16 The Chair called on Jim Matheson to report on the 2020 Winter Conference. The Winter
17 Conference Committee has largely finalized the agenda for our 25th anniversary gathering. Mr.
18 Matheson reviewed the conference agenda with the board. Laurie Demeritt, CEO of the
19 Hartman Group, is confirmed as a keynote speaker. There will be a beer tasting, and a bison
20 soup contest. He noted that the NBA is making some changes in the vendor pricing. The theme
21 for the 2020 conference is "*Let the Good Times Roam*".

22 Mr. Matheson also reported on the 2020 Summer Conference. Rocky Mountain Bison
23 Association is working to finalize plans for the 2020 Summer Conference in Cheyenne, WY or
24 Loveland, CO in mid-to-late June.

25 Dave Carter provided a report on legislative and regulatory issues.

26 He reported that the Washington, D.C. Roundup was extremely productive this year.
27 There were 25 participants from 12 states. The delegations held more than 40 meetings with
28 members of Congress and their aides, and had six meetings with officials from key USDA
29 agencies.

30

1 He reviewed the highlights of the meetings with officials at USDA.

2 Mr. Carter reported that U.S. Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Michael Bennet (D-CO)
3 introduced the Truth in Buffalo Labeling Act into the U.S. Senate on September 16th. Co-
4 sponsors include Sens. Mike Braun (R-IN), John Thune (R-SD), and Tina Smith (D-MN). Our
5 priority right now is to obtain additional co-sponsors for the legislation. On the House side, U.S.
6 Rep Jim McGovern (D-MA) has taken the lead on similar legislation, but wants to have good
7 support from Representatives in the west and Midwest.

8 USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service awarded a contract for the purchase of up to 1.8
9 million lbs. of ground bison to Rocky Mountain Natural Meats in September. The ground bison
10 will be earmarked for tribal food and nutrition programs. The amount to be purchased will
11 depend on demand from the tribes. Mr. Carter said that the NBA will be working to encourage
12 tribes to utilize the program. He also said that the Commodity Procurement Division of AMS
13 seems receptive to NBA suggestions to utilize smaller, more frequent purchases, and to include
14 more than ground bison.

15 USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service informed the NBA in September that they expect
16 Mexico to be open for bison meat exports within the next few months. FAS is waiting for
17 APHIS to complete some of the background information necessary to complete the
18 arrangement. In a related development, FAS will include a representative of the bison business
19 in a trade mission scheduled for Mexico in November. Mr. Carter said that he has informed all
20 of the NBA member-marketers who have expressed an interest in the Mexico market about this
21 opportunity.

22 He informed the board that the tariff reduction language contained in the emerging U.S.-
23 Japan trade agreement specifies "bovine" rather than beef. This will be a positive development
24 once the Japanese open their marketplace for bison.

25 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA has filed a petition with USDA's Food Safety and
26 Inspection Service to allow producers of nonamenable species products to utilize the "generic
27 approval" process that is allowed for producers of beef, pork and poultry. The NBA also
28 requested that FSIS use a process called "Direct Final Rule," which allows them to implement a
29 minor regulatory change without the full—and lengthy—rulemaking process. In a September
30 meeting with FSIS officials, Administrator Carmen Rottenberg informed the NBA that the

1 agency will be initiating rulemaking for this petition, but will not grant a Direct Final Rule.
2 However, she indicated that FSIS will issue an interim directive that will allow bison marketers
3 to utilize the streamlined process.

4 As the Department of Transportation (DOT) works to implement new Hours of Service
5 regulations, the NBA has joined with other livestock organizations to support legislative
6 proposals to provide flexibility for livestock haulers. Participants in the NBA Roundup
7 informed Senate offices that the NBA is support the Transporting Livestock Across American
8 Safely Act, which was introduced by Sens. Ben Sasse (R-NE) and John Tester (D-MO). In the
9 House, the NBA is supporting the Agricultural Business Electronic Logging Device Exemption
10 Act of 2019, which was introduced by Reps. Collin Peterson (D-MN) and Greg Gianforte (R-
11 MT).

12 Mr. Carter said that the DOT is currently accepting public comments on recommended
13 changes in the ELT Hours of Service for livestock haulers. He is reaching out to some of our
14 members who haul livestock long distances to ask for their input in developing comments.

15 At the request of the InterTribal Buffalo Council, the NBA has signed onto the Indian
16 Buffalo Management Act, which is scheduled to be introduced into the House of
17 Representatives by U.S. Rep. Don Young (R-AK). That legislation will create a permanent
18 program within the Department of the Interior to promote Native American buffalo restoration
19 and management and will authorize the Secretary of Interior to work with Tribes or eligible
20 entities to plan, conduct or implement a buffalo restoration or management program.

21 Mr. Carter said that the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is working with U.S.
22 Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) to circulate a resolution proclaiming
23 the first Saturday in November (November 2) as National Bison Day. The resolution has been
24 adopted. The NBA will be encouraging our members to hold special events to celebrate
25 National Bison Day. WCS is coordinating a reception on Capitol Hill for November 14th and
26 has asked for someone to attend on behalf of the National Bison Association. Mr. Matheson
27 may attend on behalf of the association.

28 Executive Director Carter reported that the Association of American Feed Control
29 Officials' (AAFCO) Ingredients Definitions Committee endorsed two new definitions in
30 August that will halt deceptively labeled water buffalo ingredients in the pet food marketplace.

1 The first definition would require any ingredient from the genus *bubalus* to be labeled as water
2 buffalo. The second would allow any ingredient from the genus *bison* to be labeled either as
3 bison or buffalo. The proposed definitions now go to the full AAFCO board for consideration.
4 That will take place during the association’s mid-year meeting in January.

5 The Chair called for committee reports.

6 Mr. Carter said that the NBA Science and Research Committee met via teleconference
7 on September 30th. That meeting included several representatives of USDA ARS. USDA reports
8 promising developments regarding the development of a vaccine for mycoplasma bovis and
9 Mannheimia haemolytica. The committee is moving forward with South Dakota State
10 University to establish a Center of Excellence for Bison Studies. The committee recommends
11 that a meeting be scheduled at SDSU in mid-November to identify priorities and funding
12 opportunities.

13 Mr. Carter reported that the Commercial Marketers’ Committee has not met since the
14 last board meeting. He will be working with the committee on the twice-yearly survey in
15 November.

16 Boyd Meyer and Jim Matheson provided a report of the Gold Trophy Show and Sale
17 Committee. Mr. Matheson noted that the 2019 GTSS catalog contains the following language:
18 *First time buyers will be required to present a valid and irrevocable bank letter of credit that*
19 *states a specific dollar amount the bank will guarantee on a check written by the purchaser at*
20 *the 2019 GTSS.* He noted that the GTSS Committee is requesting that the board review this
21 language to assure that the language properly provides adequate protections for the NBA. Mr.
22 Meyer noted that there has not been strong due diligence regarding potential buyers, which
23 could present a financial liability for the association. Discussion was held. Dick Gehring noted
24 that the Kansas Buffalo Association has had a similar discussion in connection with their annual
25 auction. Because the Kansas sale barn is bonded, the KBA is paying a one percent fee to be
26 covered under that bond. Tom Barthel asked if there is insurance available to cover this
27 potential liability. Chairman Liedtke suggested that we ask the National Western Stock Show
28 what procedures are used by other breed associations conducting auctions at their facilities. Mr.
29 Matheson said he would contact NWSS to find out how other associations handle this.
30 Chairman Liedtke recommended that—because of the time sensitivity of this issue—any

1 information obtained from NWSS be circulated to the board prior to the November meeting.
2 Later in the meeting, Bob Dineen, the bison sale superintendent at National Western Stock
3 Show, joined the meeting to report that he contacted the National Western Livestock Sale
4 manager to inquire about the bonding procedures used by other breed associations. Mr. Dineen
5 reported that Mr. Ernst informed him that only one other breed association uses a bonding
6 procedure. Mr. Dineen recommended that the NBA obtain a \$100,000 bond. Mr. Dineen also
7 provided a brief report on the progress of the National Western Stock show improvements. He
8 specifically mentioned that NWSS is requesting input regarding the type of chute to be used for
9 the bison show and sale at NWSS. Discussion was held. No action was taken.

10 Mimi Hillenbrand provided a report of the Conservation Committee. She reported that
11 the committee is moving to implement the Conservation Management Plan, as previously
12 authorize by the board.

13 Alan Douglass provided a report of NABR. He reported that the committee has obtained
14 a quote of \$900 from the NBA's website developer to develop a new feature that will provide
15 participants with greater flexibility in uploading data from other laboratories. He said that this
16 would not impact the fee structure that the Board approved in August.

17 The chair called on Executive Director Dave Carter to review Growth Fund activities.
18 Mr. Carter said that Growth Fund resources are being used for the following activities this fall:

- 19 • Sponsorship of and participation at ShiftCon, the largest gathering of social media
20 influencers who are focused on eco-health. Mimi Hillenbrand and Carrie Bennet, along
21 with Karen Conley, will provide a luncheon keynote presentation.
- 22 • Sponsorship of and participation at Impact Unleashed, a conference being hosted by the
23 Pet Sustainability Coalition, a Boulder-based non-profit that works with pet food
24 companies to increase their environmental responsibility.
- 25 • Hosting a booth at the FFA National Convention in Indianapolis. Mr. Matheson and
26 Peter Cook will be hosting that booth.
- 27 • Participation in Trade Talk, an interactive session with journalists attending the National
28 Association of Farm Broadcasting National Convention in Kansas City.

29 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA has paid the fee to host a booth again at the National
30 Agricultural Bankers Conference in Dallas in November. He asked for guidance from the board

1 regarding the value of participating in that conference. Consensus was expressed for the NBA to
2 participate. Mr. Matheson will work with Roy Liedtke and Donnis Baggett to coordinate
3 participation at that event.

4 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA has been promoting the growth fund heavily in *Weekly*
5 *Update* and in *Bison World*. The staff will be sending out some e-blasts in the coming weeks, as
6 members begin their annual roundups.

7 Mr. Carter reported that the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has offered to work with
8 the NBA to develop some type of a bison checkoff and promotion program. He said that
9 checkoffs are controversial topics in the livestock business, but there are several options
10 regarding how a program could be developed. Establishment of a Bison Research and
11 Promotion Board would provide an opportunity to obtain grants and matching funds from
12 USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Campbell Burgess, an NBA
13 member and director-elect from Texas, encouraged the NBA to pursue a USDA-administered
14 checkoff program.

15 Mr. Carter reported that the NBA is implementing a new "Partners in Bison Restoration"
16 labeling program. That program is a licensing concept that will allow companies utilizing bison
17 meat or ingredients to promote that their customers are helping to restore bison herds across
18 North America. The NBA will be trademarking the phrase "Partners in Bison Restoration" and
19 has developed a logo that will direct people to the page on the association's website that
20 highlights the nutritional and environmental benefits of bison. Mr. Carter said that one bison
21 meat distributor is already signing up to use this label. The NBA is in discussion with two pet
22 food brands. Mr. Carter said that he wants to finalize the Terms & Conditions document before
23 finalizing those agreements.

24 Mr. Carter provided an update on the Farmers' Market Promotion Program grant activities.
25 He noted that Jim Matheson conducted the final Farmers' Market University workshop
26 authorized under the grant in August in Missouri.

27 Last week, the NBA launched the Buysome Bison consumer app, which will link potential
28 customers with local bison meat, agritourism opportunities, and other bison items. Mr.
29 Matheson worked with our web developer to establish this app with a direct tie-in to our
30 Buyers' Guide. The Farmers' Market Promotion program grant allocates up to \$22,000 to

1 promote the new app in publications and through social media. The NBA has conducted two
2 successful pop-events funded through the grant. The first event, conducted in Seattle in July,
3 featured teams of student chefs from Renton Technical College competing in an Iron Chef
4 competition. The second, conducted in Minneapolis in September, featured three local chefs
5 preparing bison-centered indigenous items at a local farmers' market.

6 Mr. Matheson provided a report on the Risk Management Agency Grant. The NBA is
7 awaiting a \$30,000 reimbursement to underwrite the Producer app. The app has officially been
8 launched, and Mr. Matheson has coordinated two training sessions to date. He reported that 184
9 producers have signed up for the app. This app is a major resource for producers, and we need
10 to encourage its usage among our members. The RMA grant provides funds to allow us to offer
11 presentations and conduct workshops to promote utilization of the new app.

12 Mr. Carter reported on developments in working with the National Buffalo Foundation to
13 bring on a professional fundraiser. Through the assistance of Front Range Source, a job
14 description for a fundraiser has been developed. The NBA and NBF are looking at the time to
15 be allocated, and the cost/benefit of having this individual as an employee or a contract position.

16 Dick Gehring reported that he has been in communication with the InterTribal Buffalo
17 Council regarding an individual who wanted to participate in the NABR via his membership in
18 ITBC. Jim Matheson will be attending the ITBC annual meeting in October. He will be
19 encouraging Tribal entities to participate in the bison commodity purchase program.

20 The Chair reported that balloting has been tabulated in our regional director elections. The
21 incoming regional directors are:

- 22 • Boyd Meyer of Colorado, Region II
- 23 • Ken Klemm of Kansas, Region IV
- 24 • Campbell Burgess of Texas, Region VI
- 25 • Kristopher Kelly of Kentucky, Region VIII

26 Mr. Liedtke and Mr. Gehring reported that, as specified in NBA bylaws, the Executive
27 Committee has been working to develop a proposed slate of officers to stand for election at the
28 2020 Winter Conference. The Executive Committee is recommending the following slate of
29 candidates for officers:

- 30 • President – Donnis Baggett of Texas

- 1 • Vice President – Alan Douglass of California
- 2 • Secretary/Treasurer – Joe Graham of Oklahoma
- 3 • Director at Large –Chad Kremer of South Dakota

4 Mr. Gehring asked for board action to recommend this slate of candidates to the
5 membership. A motion was made by Tom Barthel to recommend the slate of officers and the
6 director at large to the general members. Said motion was seconded and carried.

7 Mr. Carter provided a report of the Executive Director. He noted that, in addition to
8 activities previously discussed, he has the following events on his calendar:

- 9 • October 11 – Society of Environmental Journalists’ meeting, Fort Collins, CO;
- 10 • October 29-31 – American Bison Society Conference, Santa Fe, NM;
- 11 • November 12 – Nationwide Insurance Underwriters’ Meeting, Des Moines, IA;
- 12 • November 23-26 – Canadian Bison Association Annual Meeting, Regina, SK.

13 The next meeting of the board of directors is scheduled for November 21st at 5 p.m. MDT.

14 There being no other business to come before the board, and upon motion made, seconded
15 and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

16
17 Respectfully Submitted,

18
19 _____
20 Tom Barthel, Secretary

21
22 _____
23 David E. Carter, recording secretary