

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION**

July 20, 2022

Via Zoom

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Bison Association was convened at 5 p.m. MST, Wednesday, July 20, 2022, via the Zoom virtual platform pursuant to the bylaws and notification by the Executive Director.

Present were:

Donnis Baggett	Mary Adams
Chad Kremer	Kevin Leier
Mimi Hillenbrand	Carie Starr
Ken Klemm	Elizabeth Riffle
Boyd Meyer	

Jeremy Allemann and Moritz Espy joined the meeting in progress at 6:15 and 6:20 respectively. Also present: Jim Matheson and Karen Conley.

Absent were: Robert Johnson, Campbell Burgess and Stuart Schrag.

Donnis Baggett presided and called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm, and Karen Conley served as recording secretary.

President's Report – President Kremer that the International Bison Convention event appeared to be a success and organizers did a good job pulling it together. The amenable species designation seems to be winding down but Chad has had some calls and discussion about it with members. Promotions are going well and will continue through the summer. The first round of interviews for the Program Manager job are going well, with the second interviews scheduled for the first week of August and Jim is hoping to have a new hire in place by August 15. Chad thanked Jim, Barb and Karen for their dedication to taking on the additional workload during the transition time.

Approval of the Minutes

May 19, 2022 Board Minutes	Attachment B
June 27, 2022 Board Minutes	Attachment A
June 23, 2022 Finance Committee	Attachment C

Motion to Approve the Minutes as presented by Mimi Hillenbrand. 2nd Mary Adams. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report- Jim presented on behalf of the Treasurer. He shared the May profit and loss statement and noted the association is maintaining a healthy bottom line. Membership has been challenging and the economy could be playing a part in some of the non-renewals. We are still \$2000 ahead in membership revenue. Bison World magazine is tracking well. Jim reviewed the June financials today and it appears they are tracking similarly to May. Overall, the association is 19% ahead over budgeted projections.

Ken Klemm noted that something is going right, as the financials shouldn't look this good given the current economy. He feels we can learn from this and then asked Jim what he feels is going right. Ken also said whatever we are doing we need to keep doing it!

Jim noted that some can be contributed to spending less on staff, with the departure of Dave Carter and Eloise Mongillo, and less staff expenditures. On the income side, there is a dedicated membership, as reflected in the membership renewals and he feels the membership likes the changes they are seeing with regard to staff, new membership levels, etc.

Chad noted that we need to continue moving ahead and showing member value through good social media, and creating ways to monetize that.

Jim noted the 2021 audit is underway. The accounting firm conducting the audit was behind, but they are now in progress on our review. Jim thanked Barb and Teresa for the efforts to get all the materials together for the audit.

Jim also noted there will be an investment portfolio review forthcoming. He also explained about the Sponsor Packages concept for 2023. Those would create a one payment scenario for sponsors, to include event sponsorship, magazine and online advertising opportunities and more. Staff is currently working on ideas for

this concept and how to best implement it.

Motion to accept the Financials by Carie Starr, 2nd Mimi Hillenbrand. Motion passed.

Membership Report- Current membership is down 17 members, mostly active memberships. Reasons for why this has dropped are likely economic. Jim, Karen and Anita are working on an electronic membership recruitment flyer to accompany a membership recruitment campaign that will begin in the fall. The flyer will highlight membership benefits/activities based on season and will include some current member testimonials. Along with the flyer, membership outreach will include the regional webinars and a Facebook Members Only group.

Jim recently meet with Google Ads representatives to discuss our advertising opportunities. This is part of an effort to diversify our outreach. Jim is waiting for a proposal from them to see what the costs would be for this service.

Ken inquired about an auto-pay/renewal system and if we have something in place. Jim noted staff has not visited that topic yet, but we are now offering a click through payment portal for invoices generated out of Quick Books. He would like to set up the Partners in Restoration program for an auto-renewal and if that happens, it would be a good test run for larger auto-renewal options.

Grants- NCSARE Field Days are underway. The first one at Heartland Bison Ranch was a success. Jim thanked the Leier family and North Dakota Buffalo Association for all their work in organizing the day's activities. About 30 people attended the event. The NBA will be partnering with local associations when possible. The next one is September 10 at Antelope Creek Bison near Mission, SD and the Dakota Territory Buffalo Association is on tap to be a partner in this field day. The October 11 Field Day near Chicago will feature an agri-tourism segment and a chef will be on hand to do a cooking demonstration.

The second HerdDogg app webinar will be tomorrow night. These are 30-45 minute recorded sessions that are placed in the member's only area on the website. Liz noted that she had reached out to HerdDogg for assistance after the first webinar and had not yet received a response. It was noted that they have not been very good with

responding to customer requests/inquiries. Ken asked what happens if we move away from HerdDogg? Jim noted that there shouldn't be any repercussions if we move away from HerdDogg and these webinars are much like a last ditch effort to get producers to start using the program. Chad is running a pilot program for their tags on some of his personal herd. He is using their tags, but not their program. He uses AgriWebb, which he feels is way ahead of HerdDogg. Mimi noted that she also uses AgriWebb and really likes the program. She asked if someone could visit with the AgriWebb folks about a possible partnership with NBA if the HerdDogg project goes away.

Committee Reports

GTSS - Boyd noted the board needed to vote on the auctioneer recommendation. Jim explained that there were 5 bids for the 2023 event. The committee unanimously voted to hire Quality Auction Services, Inc. for the 2023 GTSS. Ken made a motion to accept the committee recommendation for Quality Auction Services. 2nd Liz. Motion passed.

NABR - Connor had nothing new to report for this meeting.

Science & Research – Nothing to report.

Commercial Marketers- Chairman Dick Gehring was unavailable for the meeting but Jim noted that the May Marketers Survey saw only 5 respondents. Jim is working with the committee to develop other options to gather information. The Section 32 solicitation has officially been closed. AMS opened a second solicitation for approved vendors only and was able to fill more loads. There was talk of a third bid, but AMS has declined. With \$17 million available in this purchase, about \$12 million was filled. Jim noted that they price per pound on this last solicitation was about \$10 per pound on frozen ground. He would like to sit down with the AMS face to face in DC this September and discuss options for Section 32 and FDIPR.

Conservation – Ken says the CMP has built a great program, but how do we market it? He is wondering if they could develop something along the lines of the Executive

Link program that Ranching For Profit offers where like-minded producers can meet to exchange ideas and information. He noted the committee will be meeting soon and will begin to develop a feeder module for the CMP.

State-Regional – Jim reported the Chairman John Graves called for the first meeting of this previously closed committee about two weeks ago. There were ten active associations represented on the call and it was a good introductory meeting. The committee plans to meet on a quarterly basis.

Winter Conference – Jim has talked with Chairperson Beverly Brown and she is working on contest ideas (video in lieu of photo contest and others TBD), looking at theme ideas and raffle items. The committee will meet soon and there will be a full update at the next board meeting.

Program Manager Hiring Update- Jim shared that applications for this new position closed on June 30. He said there were about 50 good applications, with 8-10 NBA members applying. There were nearly 300 resumes from Indeed, but most did not include a cover letter, thereby excluding them from review. Jim selected 11 potential candidates and has been conducting interviews this week. The final 3 finalists will have a second interview the first week of August with Jim, Chad and Kevin. August 15 is the target hiring date.

Partners In Restoration – We are working on a promotional campaign to feature these partners on social media and in Bison World magazine. There are about 6 partners in the program, each of which pays \$4500 per year in licensing fees, which allows them to use the logo and information on their bison products. Mimi asked if this program could mesh with CMP and perhaps Rocky Mountain Natural Meats as a push for CMP participants.

Continental Bison Working Group- Jim and Mimi were asked to be on the steering committee for this new group, which is an offshoot of the American Bison Society.

Many of the same stakeholders as ABS are in this group. ABS lost its funding from the Wildlife Conservation Society. Ken is a member of the group and Mimi is also on the steering committee. ITBC Executive Directory, Troy Heinert, is also in the group. Jim noted it was good to be asked to participate in this group.

Regional Reports

Regional Directors to share pertinent items occurring in their region.

International Director - no report

Region 1 – Mary: No reply from Western Bison Association on their activities. Hot and dry weather in this region.

Region 2 – Boyd: Very dry where he is. Feed costs are very high and prices are in flux. Could be a tough fall and winter.

Region 3 – Kevin for Moritz: Kevin participated in the Bison Symposium in Bismarck in June. Good group with a cultural restoration theme. Some places too wet, some places too dry. Concerns about high input costs are weighing on producers.

Region 4 – Ken for Stuart: Western Kansas is in the grip of the third year of drought. Further east conditions seem better.

Region 5 – Jeremy: Rain is hit or miss in his region. Main concern is input costs.

Region 6 – Donnis for Campbell: Texas is hot and dry. High diesel costs are concerning.

Region 7 – Carie: EBA will be attending Farm Progress Days in PA. They are preparing for a Fall meeting on September 16 & 17. Too wet, now too dry and hot. Fuel prices are trending down now. Product sales on her ranch are holding steady.

Region 8 – Liz: Decent moisture but feed and hay costs are high.

Region 3 – Moritz joined the meeting: He attended the ITBC safety meeting in Pierre recently. Toured the Crow Creek processing facility. Lots of good things happening with ITBC.

ITBC – no report.

Legislative and Regulatory Update- Jim reported that plans are to send a small delegation to D.C. for the Fall Roundup in September. He noted that the 2023 Farm Bill is coming up and he did attend a listening session in Limon recently. Waters of the United States is surfacing again and merits our attention. There is a possibility of reintroducing the NBA Truth in Buffalo Labeling legislation. Bison import to Japan is still in the works. USDA is waiting to hear back from Japan on their request with potential site visits on the horizon.

While in Canada, Jim spoke with Murray Feist, DVM about possibly hosting a second International Bison Health Symposium.

The letter of support for the TBA to the Texas Animal Health Commission has been finalized. Donniss noted that the TBA will present to the TAHCC on July 26.

Foundations Update- Jim said there is not much to update. The NBF has agreed to help pay off the Raiser's Edge contract amount, in cooperation with NBA and the Throlson Foundation. We will try to utilize the program as time permits.

Communications Report – Karen reported that the Fall Bison World is on schedule and advertising is going well. Should have some very good content in this issue. Social media is doing well and she explained about the project she did for Jim in comparing our Facebook page to other similar association/industry pages. That information is in the Executive Director's report, but we are trending very strongly in comparison. Karen noted that in her mind, quality and correct information is a priority over likes in social media. We should be putting out correct and factual information, not just seeking attention.

Executive Director Report- See attachment for the report. Jim noted the July Bison Month has been garnering a lot of attention and traction for us the past few weeks. Need to be thinking about when and where for the next IBC event. He is pushing for seven years in lieu of the current five years.

Other Business

Chad thanked Ken for stepping up to the executive committee on the board and Stuart for stepping up to fill Ken's regional position. Good work from the board and staff and keep it up.

Adjourn- Motion by Mary Adams, 2nd by Carie Starr. Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Conley

Recording Secretary

