

Minutes for Calpaca BOD Strategic Planning Meeting

Meeting held Saturday, January 10, 2015 at the Green Tree Golf Club in Vacaville, CA..
Attendees: Karen Ball, Karen Kelly, Lisa Beatty, Sandra Wallace, Steve Aitchison

AGENDA

1. IT Issues

Yahoo Groups attributes: Presented by Steve.

There are still many obstacles and access issues to be worked out with Laurie Findlay. The Yahoo groups are working for the BOD (Lisa B. has had some issues). Yahoo groups' functionality seems to have gotten worse since the last Yahoo upgrade.

We need a safe repository for our documents—Yahoo just isn't working for us. Bylaws are on Yahoo, but not the amendments, for example. Items are hidden too well on Admin. Perhaps OpenHerd would give us a restricted access tab for BOD members only? We could keep info on our financial data—bank accounts, credit cards, etc. ***Steve will talk to Joe Preston about this.***

Alternatively, suggested Lisa B., we might investigate an account with www.huddle.com as a repository for important data. We could send out a "chain" email to BOD members to add what documents they have that should be in such a repository.

With any account we have for important documents, we should change the password annually, or whenever there is a change in administrators.

Other OpenHerd issues: we need to remove Joan Clappier, Joyce Judy, and Laurie Findlay as administrators, and add Karen Ball. This would make only Karen Ball and Steve administrators.

Review of proposed changes to Calpaca website: We need a "payment" button for credit card payments. Many members have complained that they could not renew their membership on line. This would facilitate membership growth. ***Steve suggests we do this through a PayPal account***, which could be set up before next weekend's Symposium in order to facilitate signing up members at the course. We probably won't have a "slider" for credit cards by that time, but we can manually enter the data in PayPal. A new PayPal account would also allow "Don" from the show system registration, to transfer funds from show registration into the PayPal account. ***We do need to update Pam Brady with any new members who have paid with this new on line system.***

In general, we have too many bank/credit card accounts. Previous BOD members have set up various accounts that may be inactive now, or that may have been passively renewed. We need to consolidate the accounts through our treasurer. We must contact prior BOD members, especially Jack Jordan, Dave Scroggins, and Phyl Clempson to ask them to review any Calpaca

accounts and initiate closing those accounts. We have a BofA account with an expired credit card, but it may have been renewed. This needs to be closed by Jack Jordan.

They should notify either Karen Kelly or Karen Ball of any actions taken. ***This contact will be made by Sandy by email.***

The notification of renewal of the SoCalpaca website (GoDaddy) is going to Joan Clappier. ***Sandy will let Tom Goehring of SoCalpaca know.***

In order to bring down costs of communication, BOD members will each open a Skype account and future meetings will be held via Skype. Steve will let us know how to set up the accounts, and we need to notify each other of our contact information.

We think it prudent to keep as many web domains as possible. ***Karen K. will look into which accounts are up for renewal and we will decide which ones to drop.***

2. Decisions about Ag Day in Sacramento

We will do the same Sponsorship level as last year: \$1500. ***Karen Ball will inform Bruce Nelson.***

3. UC Davis Symposium

Sandy will be the designated liason to the planning group. She will contact Bonnie Potter and Joan Clappier. The BOD approves the donation of the Syllabus to the AFW Silent Auction, but it needs to be approved by the Symposium planners. Sandy will communicate with them. Since this is an excellent way in which to promote the exceptional scope of the conference, it was suggested that the syllabus be donated to Silent Auctions at the National Show as well.

Calpaca will make a \$1500 donation to the Symposium as in past years, and in return the Symposium will contribute \$300 to the Endowment. Calpaca will also have a table display—Lisa B. will bring a table. She and Karen Ball will procure the Calpaca flyers and marketing materials for the table.

4. Update on Gold Country AlpacaMania Show Merger

SOJAA having a special membership meeting today to decide whether or not to join in the venture. If approved, there will likely be changes made to the proposed contract approved by our BOD.

Having reviewed our Bylaws, we are reminded that we do not need to put the question of a merger for the show to a vote by our membership: It involves a \$5K expenditure which is well under the \$10K limit.

5. AOA Strategic Planning Meeting

Karen Ball will be our representative in February, 2015. As one of the participants in the meeting, Karen will report to our membership meeting in February.

There was much discussion about our general disappointment with AOA.

AOA ought not to be focused on marketing for individual farms or animals. Their focus should be the promotion of alpacas and alpaca products in general, and bringing in new breeders. This approach would be far more helpful to the majority of AOA members.

We are concerned that the new AOA is just as beholden to the large farms as was the old AOBA. Small farms and new owners are overlooked—even in the makeup of the strategic planning membership.

The new website cannot be navigated and omits features that were helpful, such as the pedigree of an alpaca. It seems that the website was designed by computer “nerds” who have no idea what the alpaca breeder needs or wants from the website. The membership renewal process is almost impossible and would pose a formidable obstacle to new members. It is set up so that you have to opt “out” of services in order to avoid a \$500 bill. There should be a much simpler method to renew ARI membership with show system and voting rights...PERIOD!! AOA shouldn't be doing “gold level” marketing for anyone. That is what Alpacas Magazine ads and OpenHerd and other sites are for. We would be willing to pay a bit more for a simple membership, in order to cover the revenues lost by these elaborate marketing schemes. AOA should refer most queries about individual alpacas or regional farms to the appropriate regional affiliates.

In general we feel that AOA is out of touch with the membership—and “in touch” only with the few large farms who buy the expensive marketing packages. This is not our organization anymore!

Also, the new merged office is not nearly as efficient as the old ARI office.

The BOD thought it would be a good idea to solicit input from the membership about their impressions of the new AOA, so that Karen could share this information at the Strategic Planning Meeting.

6. Membership Renewal Update

Thus far only 47 members have renewed, with about 65 old members who haven't renewed. We are hopeful that this will change with the availability of paying on line, and with the “push” for membership that will be made at the Symposium. Karen Ball will also send out another e-blast to the (old) membership.

Thereafter, the BOD members will personally contact old members who have not renewed.

7. Citizen of the Year Award

Bruce Nelson will be the Citizen of the Year. We (*?K.B.?*) will ask Laurie Findlay to have an award made up and a balloon to give to him at the February meeting.

8. Update on May, 2015 General meeting location

Sawdust Alpacas or Epic Alpacas? ***Lisa Beatty will contact Glenn Waddell.***

9. BOD Goals and Responsibilities

Focus should be on marketing for members. Perhaps we could have a marketing course with fees discounted for members?

There was much discussion of developing a blueprint/format for a course for outreach to prospective new breeders in various regions of California. These courses could be held either at a neutral location such as a county fairground, or at a member's ranch with pens available for a "pen sale" for other participating members. Various speakers on a variety of topics specific to prospective new breeders. This course "blueprint/curriculum and marketing assistance would be available to members only, perhaps for a small price. The goal would be to benefit the host, the member participants, and the industry in general with more new breeders. **Steve and Sandy will work on this to present as a concept at the Feb. membership meeting.**

Payment button on website.

Develop more marketing tools for members

Group purchasing of hay and pellets to bring down costs to members. We need to solicit regional representatives, who would co-ordinate the hay delivery to several central locations, and notify regional members. It would be very cost effective to have the large hay loads core tested for nutritional analysis. We need to send out an E-blast to members to solicit potential regional representatives. **Karen Ball and Lisa will facilitate.**

It would be helpful to have a map of California that shows the location of Calpaca members.

Veterinarian tab on the website. **At the February meeting, we shall ask our members to contact their vets to see if they would like to be added to our list of camelid vets on the website.** The members can then give Steve the information on the vet.

We should formalize a BOD Calendar of activities.

We should also develop a set of instructions for incoming and outgoing BOD members.

10. Review of Calpaca Bylaws:

P. 2—we will provide mutual benefit to members with many of the proposals above—the hay co-op, the "new breeders" course blueprint, the veterinarian list, etc.

Section 7 paragraph 2—Annual budget shall be voted up on by membership. **Ballot measure for November will be to amend Bylaws so that the annual budget will be approved by the membership at the first membership meeting after the annual BOD Strategic Planning Meeting.**

We need to set up the nominating committee by the end of April—likely Bruce Nelson, Dennis Rabe, ?Jan Davis **Discuss at future BOD meetings.**

Sandy will ask Pam Brady if she will oversee the election again this year.

Do we have a "Corporate Seal"? Kay Rodriguez may know. **Sandy will send her an email.**

Karen Kelly will be the Bylaws Specialist for the BOD

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm

Sandra Wallace
Secretary.