

VAOBA Board of Directors Meeting August 7, 2007

Attending:

Sue Ives (President)
Linda Polak (Past President)
Sherry McEvoy (Treasurer)

Keli Harold (President Elect) (via conference call)
Joanna Maas (Secretary) (via conference call)
Les Fuller (Director At Large) (via conference call)

Judy Howe (Director At Large) did not attend.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm.

Linda moved to approve the minutes of the Aug 7th minutes; Les seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Education Committee:

1. Hardship case (discussed without naming the subject out of respect for this individual.) This farm had suffered a loss of one owner and a concurrent major illness of the other owner. The farm's VAOBA membership had not been renewed in 2007.

Sue introduced this issue with a review of an email previously sent to board members.

VAOBA has planned a table at the 2007 VAOBA show with photos of Cleve Fredricksen and Glenn Berns, with donations to ARF collected in their memory at the VAOBA store. We could put this person's photo up too; respect could be paid without directly involving VAOBA.

Les brought up the Wilkins' family accident a few years ago; he is not uncomfortable with this idea.

Linda reminded us that this incident happened shortly before our show; what if this had happened in April?

Sue noted that we had sent out an email notification for Mr. Fredricksen's death; we could extend a notice to VAOBA members and accept donations for the family.

Les noted that Poplar Hill's donation to the silent auction was designated as a fundraiser for ARF. He suggested that we could extend this farm's recently lapsed VAOBA membership at a minimum, but noted that maybe the family is in more dire need of direct financial support?

Sue was concerned about the precedent that any action on this case might set. She made a suggestion that VAOBA could dedicate 10% of the proceeds from the upcoming VAOBA show silent auction to ARF and an additional 10% of the proceeds to a Memorial fund that could be dispersed at the BOD's discretion to VAOBA farms in need.

Linda moved that we extend this farm's VAOBA membership for the upcoming year; that the BOD allocate 10% of the VAOBA show's silent auction proceeds to ARF; and that the BOD allocate 10% of the VAOBA show's silent auction proceeds to a VAOBA Memorial Fund. Sue seconded the motion; passed unanimously.

(Additional discussion was held via email that significantly modified this decision; see Attachment A.)

2. Raffle and Auction.

VAOBA has 5 completed donated breedings for the VAOBA show's silent auction. This is significantly fewer than last year (although there are additional breedings that have been donated but paperwork has not been completed.) Dawn also reiterated that she would not be able to man the silent auction as she was already taxed with the seminars and showing her own animals.

Sue spoke with Catie Dutcher – she will set up the VAOBA store so cashiers can keep an eye on both the store and the raffle/auction items.

Sue is checking with Dawn re: the finalization of the seminar schedule for the VAOBA show. Sue asked about the previous offer from Dr. Merriwether to attend the VAOBA show, give a seminar on his color inheritance research, and collect blood for his research at the show. She noted that she has not received entries from Dr. Merriwether for the show. Les noted that a one-hour seminar was not nearly long enough to present much of Dr. Merriwether's research; additionally, most seminars at shows are geared toward the new/perspective owner as the exhibitors at the shows who would be otherwise be interested in the seminars are either too busy with showing to attend or too busy/engaged to get much out of the seminar. Sue recommended that we revert to the previous idea of collecting blood samples for the research (to be forwarded to Dr. Merriwether's lab) and invite Dr. Merriwether to give another seminar at a later date.

3. Seminars, Education Chair

We have received an email from Dawn indicating that she was resigning as Education Chair. Sue said that she had been expecting more of a response from the districting idea, but didn't get it. We will need to fill this opening right away.

Keli created an email blast for the membership re: this need; she will forward it to the BOD for review and send it out once it is approved.

Someone suggested we ask DeeDee Greer about becoming the new Chair; DeeDee had stated she was cutting back on volunteering but indicated that she would be glad to help with seminars when she could.

Linda noted that we have to try to engage the membership as this is a great benefit of membership – we need to directly ask people to do specific things as this is more likely to get a positive response.

Les said that he and Patty would be planning another neonatal seminar with Dr. DeWitt, probably in February 2008.

4. Fiber Committee

We need to set up a fiber committee.

5. Legislative Watch

Linda said that VAOBA had joined the VA Agribusiness Council. She had talked with Todd Haymore at the VDACS. She said that it will be extremely beneficial to go to the Agriculture meetings. At the recent meeting, she brought up the testing procedure for import of alpacas into the state (VA has testing requirements that the surrounding states do not.) We were told by Katie Frazier when the next Ag Dept. hearings would be. The point is to be as visible in the agriculture world as possible to bring attention to the industry.

There was a request by several members asking for talking points to refute the Sexton article that was referenced in the Wall Street Journal. Linda relayed Nancy Ogan had talked about two people leaving the industry due to this study. Geoff Whiting pulled the article apart and identified the faulty premises of the study.

The study was started/done by academics at UC Davis, which has a conflict of interest with the alpaca industry as ARI cancelled their contract for DNA analysis with them. The document was prepared and has links to Land o Lakes, and was introduced at the Magical Farms' feed poisoning trial. A member of the advisory board of AgMRC is also the director of PR for Land o Lakes.

The study assumes that there is no other income in alpacas other than the fleece and therefore the industry is not sustainable (no cria sales, stud services, etc.) This is an unrealistic assumption – if other livestock industries were subjected to the same constraints, they would not fare well either.

Sue suggests keeping information pertaining to this article to the Members Only section of the website as AOBA is already tackling this article on a national scope. Les agreed with this as we do not want to provide contradictory information to AOBA.

Linda noted that AOBA was commissioning a study to refute this study.

6. Marketing

We were able to get the VA Alpaca Farm Day proclamation signed by Gov. Kaine's office for Sept. 29th.

Information on VAOBA's participation in the NAFD went out to 210 daily and weekly publications; additionally, a page is up on our vaoba.info website with participating members.

Re: publicity for the VAOBA show, AOBA Marketing Committee has a general "alpaca show" commercial that we can get. Jerry Miller recommended running the spot on network television during morning news programs (Good Morning America, etc.) from 7-8 am. He recommended purchasing time starting about 3 weeks before the show.

Keli is working on submitting press releases, getting signs and banners made for the show.

7. Membership

We have 4 new members; membership now is at 111.

Sue heard from Dan Wood re: the membership directories. We ordered 1000 copies and they should ship tomorrow.

There was discussion about how many to send to the State Fair. Les recommended that we have ~250 copies available at the booth to be handed out at the discretion of those manning the booth (shouldn't be just out to pick up.) Joanna suggested attaching a couple copies to the booth for the public to look through and asked if we had business cards with VAOBA's contact info (website, etc.)

8. Newsletter

The company Keli had recommended for newsletter outsourcing came in with a high quote (very expensive for copying) and required at least 200 copies in order to get a bulk processing rate; therefore, she had her assistant do the preparation of the newsletter.

Printing:	\$146.49
Postage:	\$131.
Time of assistant :	6.75 hrs @ 9.50/hr = 60.75

Total cost of newsletter was about \$350.

9. VAOBA show

There have been 444 entries received for the halter show. This doesn't include the entries for Magical Farms, Double "O" Good, etc. This qualifies VAOBA as a Level IV show (we do need to send additional money to AOBA to up from Level III) but we do have enough judges.

We are currently certified for a Level II fleece show with 133 entries received to date. If we receive more than 174, VAOBA will qualify as a Level III show. Ruth Inglefield is open to judge fleeces as well if we need her for the Level III certification.

Patty has received 160 fleeces for the spin-off.

An email blast is going out on the VAOBA store; only a couple of farms have contacted Katie Dutcher so far about selling items through the store.

We need volunteers for the show; please encourage other VAOBA members to help out.

Deposits have been paid on the tents, banquet.

10. MAPACA Affiliate issue

Tabled until after the show.

11. Affiliate Congress

Sue said that while people left the Affiliate Congress meeting excited, nothing has happened. The AC doesn't appear to be sticking up for itself, and members are being talked about as "malcontents" or "big mouths" if they contradict the AOBA BOD. Keli said that there were a lot of complaints over details but no action was being taken.

In the AOBA BOD minutes as posted, it was incorrectly noted that the AC had recommended moving the AOBA incorporation from CO to TN. (AOBA has said they would correct the minutes.)

12. Student Design Competition

VAOBA is sponsoring the Fiber 2 Fashion conference for \$1000. We would like to sponsor Virginia students for entry, but need to have a VAOBA member visit the schools so the competition can send a "goody bag" of fiber samples, fabrics, etc. for inspiration. The fashions do not have to be actually made, just designed.

13. New Business

2008 VAOBA show venue – currently Deep Run – need to sign a contract. We can have the same weekend next year, but we really are outgrowing this show grounds. A contract

will need to be signed by November. Venues are really a problem The VA Fairgrounds will not be ready for the 2008 show (they are using Lexington as a model, which should be great.) Sue mentioned Colonial Downs but said that she really did not have time to investigate at this time. Les asked if there were any indoor venues that might work. Linda said that the Convention Center was really not set up for a livestock show. She will call Katie Frazier to find out about any other livestock show venues.

Joanna asked if VAOBA could serve as a collection point for AFCNA. Sue said that she had contacted John Merrill but he had not returned her calls. VAOBA will support AFCNA through a supportive article in the newsletter and may do a collection point in the future, but probably not this year.

Next meeting – Mondays are generally pretty good for everyone. The next meeting was set for October 15th at 7:30 pm.

Les moved (Linda seconded the motion) for adjournment. The meeting ended at 9:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Maas