

Virginia Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association
Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2009

Attendees:

Ken Crews – President
Keli Harold – Past President
Fred Obenchain – Treasurer
Hank Boyd – Director at Large
Les Fuller – Director at Large
Robin Watson – Secretary

Committee Reports submitted in writing by: Ray Tubbs and B-J Ellis.

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 pm. The minutes from the November 2nd meeting were approved and unanimously accepted.

Treasurer's Report:

Beginning Balance: \$47,872.82
Available Balance: \$37,406.98

Fred reported that all deposits are in, all payments for the Expo have been made. However there is close to \$3,000 from the silent auction that is not included as income just yet. The loss from the show is approximately \$8,000 after the silent auction income is reported. Fred will finalize the report and then a motion will be made to accept the report at that time.

Committee Reports:

Youth Committee: Ray reported he started research for the Spring Youth show but because of conflicts in his schedule for Spring 2010 he is unable to do the show. He would like to plan for it Spring 2011. Fred thought a local show may still be possible in the spring for 4H members and guests – he will check out costs at the local county fairgrounds. Fred motioned, Hank seconded and all approved the report.

Education Committee: No report submitted (need Volunteers). We have not had any volunteers – need to try to draft someone for this position.

Fiber Committee: The Fiber Committee report was given to the Board in writing by B-J Ellis – items 1 thru 6 as follows:

The Fiber Committee has address Virginia's Finest issues as follows:

1. We drafted and edited a letter of thanks to the original Committee for setting up the VA Finest standards, explaining that Olivia Wilson (VA Dept. Agric.) had recommended annual review in an e-mail to B-J. We will meet with the original committee in

December, either in Charlottesville or Orange, combining in-person with telephone conference on a speakerphone.

- A. To be sure we have addressed members' concerns and suggestions in all respect, we need the Board to provide (by memory or names blacked out) information about members reactions to the original Standards.
 - B. Changes in the working Draft of the Amendment Proposal (See attachment) are based on VA wool standards, USDA Wool Standards, what we know from former and current members, and what the other states (Alabama through Wyoming) are doing for their logo marketing program to promote their local agricultural goods. Many of the other states compile an online directory of various goods, photographs online of actual goods, hang tags and signs for promotion of goods, in addition to all sorts of regulations as to how the logo is to be used and displayed.
2. 4-H item: In the process of discussing the points of the VA Finest Standards, Judy Schroeder has developed a concept for how VAOBA farms can support 4-H without running a club. We call this "Adopt a 4-H Fiber Project" (Judy's Wish List). This is currently in Ray Tubbs e-mailbox for additional co-ordination of state-wide logistics.
 3. Our first fiber article was published in the Dec. Newsletter. The column has been named THE FIBER CORNER. Our articles for the Newsletter will focus on encouraging increased participation in fleece competition, spin-offs, and fiber arts through education and sharing tips for success from guests, such as Wini Labrecque.
 4. AOBA: We are very pleased that the student VAOBA sponsored (\$100) in the AOBA student design competition met all deadlines for submissions. The student fashion design entry was from VA Katelynn Lemons, Radford University, Junior in Fashion Design.
 5. We are dropping the idea of Socks for Wounded Warriors, even after finding a manufacturer to work with us in addition to hand-knit socks. There is not enough interest in selling socks to get the manufacturer's donation. We will have to think of another "campaign" to get the public acquainted with alpaca goods.
 6. Linda Polak has the attention of Ruth Fuqua of AOBA's Fiber Committee for development of "post college-student" categories in the Fashion Design and Textile Design competition at AOBA. Virginia may have a pilot program ready for VAOBA next fall: we already know of 7 persons who would be interested in submitting something. WE need a Fiber Arts show manager who would help co-ordinate and join us in the development of guidelines and advertising. We need to have the Board decide the cost of these entries. What information would be needed from the Fiber Committee to decide the entry fee?

Fred talked about the fiber arts show and expanding the activities at the show banquet night instead of a speaker (not an AOBA sanctioned activity). Les commented that fiber arts entries are few at any show. Fred thought we could set up a display of fiber arts, don't have to pay an entry fee and is not a competition. Les thought it could be part of the banquet, we would not need an AOBA certified judge. Fred said there were nice entries at Nationals and thought that the 4H projects could use fiber from VAOBA farms (farms would get credit for donating fiber) everyone liked the idea. Hank commented that B-J has worked really hard on the Fiber Committee. Fred asked if there were any significant responses to #1-A of B-J's report. Keli said

there were a few responses to member concerns. Les and Hank said we needed to consider what members' concerns were in the past. Ken thought that some members' minds may have changed. Les will provide any emails that he has from the past and Hank will check with Sue to see if she has any old emails on the subject. The Board is asked for a timely response to item #1-A and acknowledges and appreciates the contribution of the fiber committee to the VAOBA members from this point. Fred accepted the Fiber Committee report, Hank seconded and all agreed.

Industry Relations: (Need Volunteers). Ken reported that he is not sure if John Ferrante is interested in being on the committee. John could not make the Ag Council meeting, time limits for Carl. Hank has not talked with anyone. Fred would like to see if John would be interested.

Marketing: No report submitted. (Need Volunteers).

Membership: (Additional Volunteers welcome). Dan Goebel has contracted with a graphic artist to give us some sample ideas for the license plates. Fred would like to see how many may be interested. Hank and Fred suggested using the current logo, Ken said we need to get an estimate on costs. Moved that Don Goble research and provide estimates for a working model of the license plate so we could promote it at our educational events, membership meetings and alpaca shows.

Hank reported that we have 1 new member, membership starts end of June, the show is over now so can't use the \$50 rebate on the show. Fred also has a new associate member – since can't vote however Hank said that something may come up before July that would require a vote. Fred accepted the Membership Committee report, Les seconded and all approved.

Newsletter: The Newsletter Committee report was given to the Board in writing by Ray Tubbs as follows:

The newsletter went out and we hope that you all enjoyed it. Teresa and I have a suggestion. The newsletter costs just under \$300 every 3 months. That comes to over \$1000 a year. We would like to ask the board for their thoughts on doing an e-newsletter. It would still go on the website but instead of mailing a newsletter to people's homes they would get it in their email. Now there may be some people that still like the paper copy so we could have them elect to receive their newsletter by email or by paper maybe when it is time to renew. This is just a thought but if half the people decided to go paperless then we would save that money. We do not mind doing the newsletter the way it is but if our country and state are going green, shouldn't we too.

Fred thought that one of the membership benefits is the newsletter and is a good service, some people don't open their emails. He added that the newsletter editors need more thanks and credit than they have been given. We need more than 2 inserts to cover the costs of the newsletter. Les thought we could promote to members to put an insert in the newsletter. Fred thought maybe the marketing committee could send out a PDF email to members suggesting this. Hank thought we could start including a business card sized ad or also a sale items column. Les moved that we incorporate an electronic version of the newsletter as well as the direct mail version and that we solicit and incorporate more advertising to offset costs of direct mailing. Hank seconded and all approved.

Show Committee: Fred received 2 RFPs for the manager and super position for the 2010 VAOBA show. Young/O'Leary's had no superintendent proposal, however we have solicited other bids outside our membership, which follows the IRS guidelines. Ken said 3 have not responded. Fred would like copies of last year's RFPs for our records. In light of the lack of any other RFP responses and pending inclusion of the alpaca fee charges received from Sue Ives December 7th that the board accepts her proposal to be the VAOBA alpaca show superintendent for 2010. All approved and the motion was adopted.

Action Items from Previous Meetings:

VAOBA Alpaca Expo: Lexington reserved, need deposit by January. Fred received an RFP from Judy Howe. Ken recommended that we accept the proposal from Judy Howe as the show manager and ask for her to submit a formal contract. Les seconded and all agreed.

Limited Term Committee: Marketing Feasibility (Still need volunteers). Ken would like to solicit everyone to give an idea for how to best market for our members.

AlpacaStreet Marketing Proposal (Status of Dan Coulter Presentation): Fred said we need someone to contact Dan Coulter about his proposal. Les felt it was too complicated with too many variables and not sure how to address members with the idea. He asked if MAPACA or CABO have participated. Fred said there are so many emails, junk emails that people don't open them and that it is a marketing tool that will require continual input. Robin will contact Dan to find out more, spell it out a little plainer and ask Dan to join in.

VAOBA Website: Member farm search - each farm will provide their own info, this will give our members more value and exposure. It is moved that we accept the proposal from Janet Marrow and authorize the treasurer to pay her a \$200 fee to revise the site.

Augusta County Ordinance (Need volunteers to take this on): Fred said we need an Industry Relations Chairman to try to get ag groups, so many farms emerging. Ken will contact John Ferrante about the position.

Virginia's Finest (Current Status): Fred reported that the agenda was not ready yet. Fiber Committee trying to recruit someone with suri fleece. They have contacted Fiber Genix.

New Business:

Virginia Agribusiness Banquet (Individual \$135.00): Keli will go – someone from VAOBA should go. Ken will see if John will go – find out the deadline.

VDACS – Testing Requirements (how best to move forward with our opinion): The deadline to provide input to the Ag Council was July – no input now. We would like to see reciprocity with other states who are TB and Brucellosis free in addition to the proposed regulation which drops the Blue Tongue testing and extends the TB testing from 30 days to 60 days.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Watson
Secretary 2009-2010