

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD BOARD MEETING

April 18, 2017

MINUTES

Welcome and Roll call – Meeting was called to order at 11:00 am Eastern time by Chairperson, Jim Rockis. Board members in attendance: Mark Arkills, Rex Korson, Della Deal, Jim Heater, Chris Maciborski, Jim Rockis, Mark Steelhammer, Paul Battaglia, Beth Walterscheidt and Betty Malone. Board members unavailable: Bentley Curry and Charles Fowler. USDA Representative in attendance: Vickie Carpenter. Staff in attendance: Tim O’Connor and Marsha Gray.

Additional Agenda Items – No items were added to the agenda.

Meeting Minutes – It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the February 23-24, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

New Business

Submitting Names to consider for “Voice of Industry” 2017 - Board discussed funding Voice of the Industry effort again in 2017 in cooperation with NCTA. Jim Rockis asked for recommendations for candidates for this seasonal work. Rockis has a candidate to recommend and asked for the board and Industry Relations Committee as well as NCTA Executive Committee to bring any other candidate recommendations for consideration by May 15, 2017. Staff will discuss the Voice of the Industry project with the NCTA Executive Committee and report back to the CTPB how NCTA would like to handle the project for 2017. Staff will negotiate fee and contract.

Nominations – Staff reported that notice of the nominations process was sent to state associations and industry media, as well as announced in the latest e-newsletter that reaches most qualified (paid) growers. To date, we have received three nomination forms. Forms are due by June 1, 2017.

Committee Reports

Finance – Paul Battaglia provided a financial update and reported that we will not likely collect the budgeted \$2 million in assessments, but anticipates a similar collection to last year’s \$1.8 million.

Promotion - Mark Arkills reported on two conference calls with Concept Farm, Fleishman Hillard, himself and CTPB staff in developing a plan for the 2017 campaign. Team is meeting in Denver on Wednesday, April 19. Having Tim O’Connor in the position to coordinate the team is going well and seeing great synergy from the team. Well into the planning of grower and retailer toolkits. Marsha will use these toolkits when working with growers. Wednesday’s meeting will provide an outline of the campaign structure and activities.

Research – Della Deal reported that she has had great response and support from the academic community. There are five projects set for funding, with some contract wording corrections:

- Regional Adaptability of Turkish and Trojan Firs (Conducted at 6 universities: PSU, WSU, CT, MSU, NCSU & OSU)
- Impact of Elongate Hemlock Scale (Conducted by NCSU & FL)
- IPM Strategies for Slugs (Conducted by OSU & WSU)
- 2 Coning Reduction Projects (Conducted by MSU & NCSU)

Working on the compilation of existing environmental research with Christmas trees for USDA consideration.

Industry Relations – Betty Malone reported that a new e-newsletter was delivered this morning to nearly 3,000 email addresses. It invites readers to link to the campaign summary video. Marsha Gray is creating a master schedule of summer and fall meetings and contacting these groups regarding presentations. The Industry Relations committee will have a conference call and discuss possible recommendations for the Voice of the Industry and discuss the licensing of campaign materials to several industry suppliers. Committee will work with staff on the annual report.

Collections Report – Tim O’Connor reported on the collection process. To date, the collections stand at approximately \$1.7 million. Staff continues to make adjustments to the database and banking report process in an effort to insure accurate data. Currently undertaking a line by line review of every payment. O’Connor suggested future consideration on increasing the exemption production threshold. There is much work involved in tracking and collecting so many small payments and those payments represent a rather small portion of the total collection.

Compliance Audits – Tim O’Connor reported that staff is creating a detailed report, focusing on growers who paid in 2015 and not in 2016, as well as growers who paid significantly less in 2016 than in 2015. Staff will be following up personally.

USDA Start Up Fee Payment Schedule – Tim O’Connor reported that he has presented the revised payment schedule to Heather Pichelman and has not had a reply. Vickie Carpenter will follow up.

USDA – Vickie Carpenter reminded the board the staff/contractor reviews are required and coming due soon. She also reminded board of the 14-day board meeting notice requirement. Carpenter also reminded the board that if they are interested in updating the fiscal year, that can be accomplished with an administrative memo and does not require rule-making.

Announcements – There were no additional announcements from the board.

Next Call/Meeting -

May 16, 2017 – Conference Call

August 17, 2017 – In-person meeting – Green Bay, Wisconsin

Adjourn

It was MOVED and SECONDED to adjourn the meeting. MOTION APPROVED.

Respectfully Submitted

Beth Walterscheidt,

Secretary