

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD BOARD MEETING

May 16, 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, Charles Fowler, Bentley Curry and Betty Malone. 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. It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the April 18, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

New Business

Committee Reports

Promotion - Mark Arkills reported on the work with Concept Farm, Fleishman Hillard, himself and CTPB staff in developing a plan for the 2017 campaign and welcomed Griffin Stenger and Scott Nieman from Concept Farm to the call as well as John Armato and Liz Conant representing Fleishman Hillard. Tim O'Connor reviewed the 2017 campaign plan as developed by the team. Board members asked questions of the representatives of Concept Farm, Fleishman Hillard and staff. There was general agreement among board members that the plan was exciting and addressed their desires for the campaign.

It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the 2017 campaign plan as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

Finance – Paul Battaglia provided a financial update and reported that we have collected a bit more than \$1.8 million thus far in assessments for fiscal year 2016-2017. He noted that board will have to take into consideration the possibility of reduced harvest numbers in 2017 that may impact the 2017-2018 budget.

Research – Della Deal reported that she is working on a template for requesting grant funding from the CTPB in the future. Tim O'Connor reported that getting contract wording that meets both USDA approval and is acceptable to the various universities is a slow process. Two contracts have been approved by USDA and are in the hands of the universities; the coning project with NC State and the coning project with Michigan State.

Industry Relations – Betty Malone reported that the committee had a conference call and discussed a number of items. They feel that the e-newsletter communication is on the right track and want to keep that going. She reported that we have been experiencing open rates between 37-42% which is considered excellent. Our newsletters also have a “click through” rate between 21-37%; also very good.

Our campaign summary video that was linked in the last newsletter has received 384 views. Marsha Gray will be including information on the appearance of CTPB electronic communication to growers during her outreach. Committee members suggested updates for state association board meetings and a Canadian committee member reported strong support by Canadian growers however they do have concerns about a level playing field with US growers.

Governance – Rex Korson reported that USDA has requested that we move up the deadline date for providing our board nominee packets to the department to August 1. Board members received a revised version of the CTPB Board Nomination Procedures with this adjusted schedule prior to the meeting. It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the revised Board Nomination procedures as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

Unfinished Business/Staff Updates

Collections Report – Tim O’Connor reported on the collection process. To date, the collections stand just above \$1.8 million. Staff has spent much time tracking all payments and pursuing non-payers

Compliance Audits – Tim O’Connor reported that staff created a detailed report of growers who paid in 2015 and not in 2016. All of these growers were contacted and we are beginning to receive their payments and reports. Staff will be reviewing growers who have paid significantly less in 2016 than 2015.

USDA Start Up Fee Payment Approval – Tim O’Connor reported that USDA has accepted the proposed start-up fee repayment terms.

Voice of the Industry – Board reviewed a list of five possible candidates for this project. Not all have been contacted, but were names recommended by board or committee members. Lengthy discussion on the role of CTPB and NCTA is this project. Tim O’Connor reported that the NCTA Executive Committee clearly wants to approach this arrangement in the same format as 2016, with NCTA heading the projects, selecting the candidate and requesting CTPB financial support through a cost-recovery contract for the project.. Tim O’Connor and Associates will begin the process of contacting possible candidates to determine their interest, availability and associated fees and bring a proposal for the project from NCTA to CTPB.

Nominations – Tim O’Connor reported that we have received a few nomination forms and reminded current board members whose seats are up for election to have their forms in by the end of May. Need to be certain that there are at least two nominees for each open seat.

USDA – Vickie Carpenter had nothing additional to report.

Licensing Agreement – Marsha Gray presented a plan to have a simple licensing agreement drawn up for suppliers who may want to produce campaign items (banners, bumper stickers, logo merchandise) for resale to industry members. The board directed staff to create a licensing agreement for this purpose for board to approve. A nominal fee of \$100 was recommended to be charged to licensees.

Announcements – Betty Malone recognized Concept Farm for their four advertising industry awards related to last year’s CTPB campaign.

Next Call/Meeting -

June 20, 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