

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD BOARD MEETING

June 20, 2017

MINUTES

Welcome and Roll call – Meeting was called to order at 11:02 am Eastern time by Chairperson, Jim Rockis. Board members in attendance: Mark Arkills, Rex Korson, Della Deal, Chris Maciborski, Jim Rockis, Mark Steelhammer, Beth Walterscheidt, Charles Fowler, Bentley Curry and Betty Malone. Unavailable: Jim Heater and Paul Battaglia. 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 May 16, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

New Business

Committee Reports

Promotion - Mark Arkills reported that the Promotion Committee had a conference call recently and were presented the campaign plan by both staff and representatives of Concept Farm and Fleishmann Hillard. Committee members tested the new Grower Resource Center where growers can download logos, banner designs and more. Committee members have been responding positively to the new site. Concept Farm is busy working with Marsha on industry handouts and messaging as well as prep for grower videos. Fleishmann Hillard is working on tree lighting ceremony options and researching big opportunities.

Finance – Tim O'Connor reported that the May financials were sent to the board. Most assessment collections have been completed and ended with \$1.815 million. This includes some amount of payments for 2015 harvest. Paul and Tim are working on a draft FY 17-18 budget and are nearly complete. The budget needs to be in place by August 1 and will be brought to the full board for approval.

Research – Della Deal reported on the various research projects funded by CTPB. Tim O'Connor reported that there are still some contracts that have not been approved by some of the involved universities. Della commented that the NC board was very pleased to hear that CTPB is funding research.

Industry Relations – Betty Malone reported that Marsha Gray is prepping for the upcoming state meetings where we will make presentations on how to engage in the 2017 campaign. Marsha Gray reviewed with the board the three handouts that she has for the industry; six step overview, explanation of Sprout program and printable piece that wholesale growers can share with their retail customers to get them engaged in the campaign. The board discussed expanding Spout (automatic social posting) contract beyond 500 participants if demand is high. Staff will monitor and discuss adjusting the

campaign budget with Mark Arkills, Promotion Committee Chair, if it appears we will go over the 500 participant level and need additional funding from within the campaign shifted to expand the use of the Sprout service. Gray also mentioned a plan to provide two campaign banners to each state Christmas tree organization to display at high visibility events such as state fairs, tree lighting ceremonies, educational events and association meetings. Cost to print and ship is approximately \$65 per state for two banners. Board asked Marsha to offer the banners and pursue the project if response is good.

Governance – Rex Korson had nothing to present from the Governance Committee.

Unfinished Business/Staff Updates

Collections Report – Tim O’Connor reported that collections are down to a trickle. To date, the collections stand just above \$1.815 million. Board discussed the likelihood of reduced harvest for a number of years to come and the impact on the assessments. Mark Arkills mentioned the possibility of Mexican trees being allowed into the US. If this happens, they will have to pay assessments. Staff will monitor.

Voice of the Industry – Tim O’Connor presented a proposal from NCTA requesting funds for a national spokesperson. O’Connor reported that he contacted the five identified candidates to fill the communications role with NCTA. Of the five, two were interested; Doug Hundley and Hugh Whaley. O’Connor described his conversations with the two candidates and reported that either would be available through a contract with NCTA for \$13,500 which would only reimburse NCTA for the cost of the program as it did in 2016. Board indicated a preference for Doug Hundley to serve in this role. An agreement between NCTA and CTPB will be presented to the board for final approval.

USDA – Vickie Carpenter reported that she has been actively working with staff to approve messaging for the upcoming campaign.

Next Call/Meeting -

July 18, 2017 – Conference Call

August 17, 2017 – In-person meeting – Green Bay, Wisconsin. Marsha Gray reported that she has reserved hotel rooms for all CTPB board members based on their requests.

Adjourn

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

Respectfully Submitted

Beth Walterscheidt,
Secretary