

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD BOARD MEETING

September 20, 2016

MINUTES

Welcome and Roll call – Meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm Eastern by Chairperson, Betty Malone. Board members in attendance: Mark Arkills, Mark Steelhammer, Paul Battaglia, Rex Korson, Beth Walterscheidt, Della Deal, Jim Heater, and Betty Malone. Unavailable; Jim Rockis, Chris Maciborski and Bentley Curry. 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 July 21-22, 2016 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

New Business

- a) University Overhead Research Funding Policy – Board directed Governance Committee to draft a policy for future board consideration and approval stating that CTPA does not pay overhead on research funds granted to universities or university faculty.
- b) Christmas Spirit Foundation Assessment Refund Request on Trees for Troops Imported Trees – It was MOVED and SECONDED to refund assessments paid on trees imported and donated to the Trees for Troops program. MOTION APPROVED.
- c) Voice of the Industry Update – Marsha Gray reported that she is working on a plan for NCTA to continue the role of the voice of the industry during the holiday season. The plan would likely include securing a spokesperson to handle many of the media requests, supported by a group of industry experts that could be called upon as needed. Once the plan is finalized, priced and approved by NCTA, it will be presented to CTPB for funding consideration.

Committee Reports

Finance– Tim O'Connor and Paul Battaglia reviewed the current financial position of the CTPB at the close of its first fiscal period on July 31, 2016. Paul confirmed that the finances are in good order and the actual versus budgeted figures are quite strong.

Fiscal Year 15-16 Audit Process – Tim O'Connor reported the Finance Committee has received proposals from six CPA firms with experience auditing other checkoff programs. The committee will select an auditor and conduct the audit as authorized by the Order.

Allied Industries – Tim O'Connor reported that we have received \$1,600 in allied industry support payments to date. That represents four companies.

Promotion – Jim Heater reported that the Promotion committee has a conference call scheduled for September 23 to review and approve the campaign logo and other materials.

Research – No report

Industry Relations – Betty Malone reported that another e-newsletter was recently sent to more than 3,000 growers for whom we have email addresses. We will continue to send electronic updates once campaign materials become available and discussed one physical mailing.

Update from Industry Meetings – A number of board members and staff reported on providing updates at state and regional meetings throughout the summer. Most reported much interest in the program by growers and a desire for campaign logo and materials. Still some growers who do not support the program.

August 17-19 2017 Industry Meetings in Green Bay, WI – Promotion Board is scheduled to meet in August in coordination with the Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association meeting. NCTA is planning to host their board meeting and National Christmas Tree contest during event and the Christmas Spirit Foundation will be meeting there as well. Marsha Gray and Ann O'Connor met with Wisconsin leaders to begin the planning process.

Governance – The Governance Committee will be proposing changes to the CTPB Policies on compliance audits in the future. Currently the policies state compliance audits are required; while audits are not required, there is authority in the Order for conducting them. An appropriate policy revision will be presented to the board.

Staff Updates

Collections Update – Marsha Gray reported that we just surpassed \$1.8 million in collections for the 2015 harvest year.

Compliance Audits – Discussion was held on a plan for conducting compliance audits with no decision being reached. Further discussion will follow.

USDA FOIA Update – USDA sent Minutes of CTPB's meetings in response to a FOIA request.

Announcements - Next conference call will be held Tuesday, October 18 – 11 am Eastern, 10 am Central, 9 am Mountain and 8 am Pacific.

Adjourn

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

Respectfully Submitted

Beth Walterscheidt
Secretary