

## CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

### Board Meeting

January 28, 2021

Via Video Conference

**Welcome and Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. Eastern time by Chairman, Roger Beyer.

**Board Members in Attendance:** Mark Schmidlin, Derek Ahl, Gary Westlake, Charles Fowler, Bill Brawley, Roger Beyer, Jane Neubauer, Renee Campbell, Chuck Berry, Bob Schaefer, Mike Cocco, and Larry Downey

**USDA Representative(s) in Attendance:** Sue Coleman and George Webster

**Staff in Attendance:** Marsha Gray, Cyndi Knudson, and Jenny Tomaszewski

**Guest(s) in Attendance:** John Armato, Paul Battaglia, Barry Campbell, Liz Conant, Chuck Contompasis, Frans Kok, Griffin Stenger, and Charles Toombs

#### Agenda:

Roger Beyer requested the addition of "Committee Appointments" under New Business.

It was **MOVED** by Charles Fowler and **SECONDED** by Bob Schaefer to approve the Agenda as corrected.

**MOTION APPROVED.**

#### Meeting Minutes:

It was **MOVED** by Bill Brawley and **SECONDED** by Charles Fowler to approve the January 7, 2021 Board meeting minutes as presented. **MOTION APPROVED.**

#### Committee Reports

**Finance** – Bob Schaefer reported

- A brief overview of the December 2020 financial statements was provided. Schaefer pointed out a few items within the report:
  - Pinnacle Confidential Account is a zero-balance account that is used to reimburse growers if an overpayment is received. Marsha Gray is the only signer on this account, and it is reviewed in the annual audit process.
- Marsha Gray explained that Education Expense Account (59000) it is used for educating the public about real Christmas trees. The funds are currently spent on two different projects, the Voice of the Industry and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) conference.

It was **MOVED** by Gary Westlake and **SECONDED** by Chuck Berry to approve the financials as provided.

**Motion Approved**

#### Promotion:

Bill Brawley welcomed and introduced the two agencies for the 2020 Campaign:

- Presentation from Fleishman Hillard: John Armato and Liz Conant provided a detailed PowerPoint overview of their agency's work for the 2020 campaign season.
- Presentation from Concept Farm: Chuck Contompasis and Griffin Stenger provided a detailed PowerPoint overview of their agency's work on the 2020 campaign season.

Board recessed for a short break at 1:08 p.m. and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

- Open Q&A session with the Board, Fleishman Hillard, and Concept Farm regarding the 2020 campaign results.
- A presentation from Charles Toombs, Marketing Professor with Oregon State University, provided a PowerPoint overview of his students' marketing recommendations and market test in the 2020 season. Presentation was followed by Board Q & A.

- Marsha Gray referenced the written report provided by the National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) for the 2020 Voice of the Industry. Roger Beyer shared that this will be a topic that will be discussed at a later meeting.

#### **Management Staff Update** – Marsha Gray reported

- Assessment Collection – A brief overview of the assessment collection report was provided.
- Gray shared that this year a second assessment mailing will be sent as a reminder to those who have not paid yet. This mailing is set to be mailed on Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>.

#### **New Business**

Committee Appointments - Roger Beyer appointed the following individuals for Vice-Chair positions.

- Compliance Committee – Renee Campbell
- Industry Relations Committee – Mike Cocco
- Promotions Committee – Jane Neubauer
- Research Committee – Larry Downey

It was **MOVED** by Charles Fowler and **SECONDED** by Chuck Berry to approve the appointments for Vice-Chair as they were presented. **MOTION APPROVED.**

#### **USDA** – Sue Coleman Reported

- President Biden has nominated Thomas Vilsack as the 32nd<sup>t</sup> Secretary of Agriculture. While they wait for approval from the Senate, Kevin Shea is the Acting Secretary.
- Mae Wu has been appointed as the Deputy Undersecretary of Marketing and Regulatory Programs.
- Director Heather Pichelman remains working on a detailed assignment assisting with the transition of the new administration. Patty Petrella remains as the Acting Director.
- AMS is merging the Promotion and Economic Division with the Marketing Order and Agreement Division. The administration is still working on the new structure, which will be led by Heather Pichelman.
- PED announced the creation of the Pecan Promotion and Research Board.
- Effective February 1<sup>st</sup> USDA has announced a program assignment shift. George Webster will replace Vickie Carpenter as Sue Coleman's backup.
- Coleman shared that upper management has cleared to send an informational letter about the CTPB and the requirements that are stated in the Act and Order regarding assessment payments. USDA plans to send this letter to those who voted in the last referendum.

#### **For the Good of the Order**

- Frans Kok voiced his objections regarding the mailing of the USDA letter.
- Paul Battaglia shared several evaluations have come back stating that the CTPB is on target for their marketing campaign.
- Roger Beyer thanked Battaglia for his service on the Board.

#### **Meeting Schedule**

- Future meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month (February 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, August 5(in-person), September 16) at 11:00 a.m. Eastern time.
- In-person Meeting – Jefferson NC, August 5 (NCCTA Summer Meeting August 6-7)

#### **Adjourn:**

It was **MOVED** by Bob Schaefer and **SECONDED** by Renee Campbell to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Roger Beyer adjourned the meeting at 2:38 p.m. Eastern time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Westlake  
Secretary