



BOARD MINUTES

7 April 2019

Present: Greg Dike, Erin Harlacher, Grant Pound, Ruth Higdon, Brad Peterson, Tim Hardy

Presenting Visitors: Peter Hackett

Visitors: Cutright family, Robert Stuplich, Caryn DeRochie

Greg Dike called the meeting to order at 7:04.

The **February Board minutes were approved** (Harlacher, Higdon, 4-0)

Ruth Higdon reported that the association has \$9987.40 in assets and about \$1550 in outstanding bills. The association recently received an anonymous gift of \$2500, which was passed along to the association by way of Jamie Sorum.

Action Item: Greg Dike will write a thank you letter to the donor, and send it Jamie Sorum, who will see that it is delivered.

Ruth Higdon reported that there are now 416 yaks registered or in the registration pipeline. Registration is slowed because owner registration information is entered automatically into the database, even if there are errors. Currently, neither registrar can edit the database to correct these errors.

Action Item: Robert Cissell will make corrections necessary for the registrars to edit the database.

Ruth Higdon discussed further issues with the registration process. Apparently, a software error was preventing the uploading photos into the database. In other cases, registrations are prevented from advancing through the system unless an unavailable photo is uploaded. These sorts of errors make the registration process very inefficient and cause frustrations on the part of the registrars and other users of the system.

Ruth Higdon reported that six or seven USYAKS memberships have lapsed and that the database is not automatically soliciting renewals.

Action Item: Greg Dike will write a letter to the lapsed members and send it to Grant Pound. Grant Pound will forward the letter to the people with lapsed memberships.

Action Item: Robert Cissell will modify the database so that members will automatically receive a renewal notice before their membership expires.

Rick Tunney has finished his work on the yak hotline. It has not yet had any users.

Brad Peterson reported that the member profile information is ready for the website.

Greg Dike asked the Yakspo Committee (currently: Pound, Higdon, Hardy) to consider the association's physical lay out during Yakspo 2020.



Peter Hackett reported on the International Plant and Animal Genome Conference attended by Hackett and Hardy. He also reported on the last meeting of the Science sub-Committee. He reported that USYAKS registered Molly currently has the world's most complete mammalian genome assembly. The publication of this research is being submitted to one of the major genetics publications by lead author Dr. Ed Rice. This significant research will give USYAKS international scientific exposure. Hackett further reported on the efforts to import new germplasm, and on the efforts to unravel the conflicting information regarding mitochondrial DNA.

Action Item: Hardy and Hackett are to meet and outline a plan for the germplasm project.

Hackett discussed the prospect of hosting an international conference for yak scientists and breeders during 2021. Some of the leading Chinese scientists have expressed an interest in attending the conference. Hackett and Tunney have been exploring funding sources.

Hardy reported on the ongoing discussions with GeneSeek and related parties regarding creation of GeneSeek genetic test 2.0. It is hoped that increasing the number of tri-allelic SNPs will improve the accuracy of introgression measurement. Increasing the number of normal SNPs will give more precise measures of Coefficient of Inbreeding and will be more robust in determination of parentage.

Erin Harlacher reported on her conversations with Annaliza Seagal, owner of Lava Lakes Ranch. Lava Lakes Ranch houses approximately eighty yaks. These yaks have been isolated for about 10 years. Some, apparently fewer than a dozen, of the yaks are white in color. Seagal has been considering butchering some of the ranch's yaks and contacted Harlacher to see if USYAKS had any interest in the yaks or chose to offer any input.

The Board discussed the possible scientific merit of genetically testing some of the Lava Lakes herd, and discussed possible advantages to the association by having a large herd on the west coast that is a member of USYAKS.

Action Item: Hardy will communicate with geneticists to attempt to determine the scientific merit of sampling all or some of the Lava Lakes herd. Higdon and Dike will explore options in developing a long term relationship with Lava Lakes Ranch.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30.