



## BOARD MINUTES

9 February 2020

Present: Carlice Cutright, Caryn DeRochie, Greg Dike, Tim Hardy, Ruth Higdon, Brad Peterson

Absent: Vance Hawk, Grant Pound (Director), Erin Powell

Visitors: Robert Stuplich, Una Taylor, Brenda Winter

After difficulty with Zoom software, the meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm, using FreeConferenceCall.com.

The minutes of the January 19, 2019 Board meeting were unanimously approved. (Cutright, Peterson)

Ruth Higdon reported that the Association has \$3879.25 in the bank, and \$1390.91 in the PayPal account. Some members still have not paid their NWSS bill.

There are 75 members in the Association. More than 60 yaks were present at Rocky Mountain Yakspo.

Several USYAKS NWSS attendees had submitted comments and suggestions following 2020 Rocky Mountain Yakspo. The Board collectively read through the suggestions, and generally arrived at consensus.

It was determined that there should be more preparation for the fiber show. In particular, fiber collection bags should be labelled ahead of time. The on-the-yak fiber collection system should be designed to aid anonymity during judging. Fiber Arts judging should also be anonymous. Some Board members had not received the suggestions that had been made by the fiber judges. Hardy will forward the fiber judge suggestions to the entire Board.

It was agreed that the USYAKS show needed better publicity. Some meeting participants focused on publicity at the show, while the show was going on. Other meeting participants agreed the show needed better publicity, but focused more on pre-show publicity in the form of NWSS based public media, USYAKS based public media, radio, and print media. The Board agreed that pre-show publicity had essentially been non-existent. The Board agreed that there needed to be better publicity while the show was going on. Some ideas included: More USYAKS signage along the main thorough-fare leading to the Stock Yards Arena; Leading yaks on the east side of the railroad tracks near the main buildings, making posters from the masquerade event; Having early discussions with NWSS's Kyle or Erin to get USYAKS events prominently placed in NWSS public media.

There was considerable discussion regarding multiple Board inconsistencies regarding the NWSS schedule of events, deadlines, and rules for the events. Rocky Mountain Yakspo schedules from previous years had remained posted on-line and were understood to be current by some people. During the last week leading up to the show the Board had approved at least two



documents with schedules that were contradictory. The Board was united in the sense that the scheduling errors were an embarrassment to the Association and needed to be resolved well in advance of 2021 NWSS. The Board did not address inconsistencies in announced deadlines, and alter show rules.

There were concerns regarding ribbon awards for the pen event, and the number of ribbons awarded. Prior to NWSS, the USYAKS Board had articulated a vision for the pen event that differed significantly from IYAK's Pen Show. After Rocky Mountain Yakspo there was still confusion, regarding the nature of the pen event, even by some Board members. The pen event's crowning of Grand and Reserve Champion males and females furthered this confusion. The awarding of blue ribbons in this event also makes the distinction between the USYAKS pen event and the IYAK Pen Show confusing. It was clear the Board felt that future pen events needed to have their philosophical underpinnings articulated more clearly. It was also clear that the Board felt that future pen events needed to have an award (and reward) system that is consistent those philosophical underpinnings.

There was some minor discussion regarding the propane grill system used at NWSS to prepare free yak meat samples for visitors. The grill had become non-functional and meat samples were delayed. The problem seems to have been resolved. Brad Peterson has agreed to serve meat samples at the next NWSS.

The Association had approved a judging standard for use at USYAKS events. The Association had also approved a letter to accompany those standards, which was designed to help judges understand how yaks differ from other bovines, and how the judging standards are modified because of those differences. The Board seemed to be in agreement that the CSU judges that judged yak conformation were professional, articulate, and helpful. Although the Board seemed to have no concerns regarding the judging decisions that were made at NWSS, there was discussion concerning ways in which future judging teams could arrive at NWSS with some previous background in judging yaks. One idea mentioned was the possibility of offering a seminar to the CSU judging team, in which USYAKS members would discuss desirable characteristics in yaks that differed from non-mountain dwelling bovines. Brad Peterson indicated that Terri Bowen Lindley would be visiting his ranch this summer and wondered if that event might be a good time to coordinate with CSU.

The many-page packet distributed at NWSS and emailed in advance was too cumbersome to be read, and seems to have been ignored by most recipients. Some information in that packet was of crucial importance at the show, but was buried behind information that was no longer relevant after arrival at the show. One concrete suggestion made was to prepare two packets. One packet to be emailed before the show. That packet should include information about pre-show veterinary requirements, facility maps, etc. The second packet should include the important information needed during the show such as the schedule of events.

To avoid promulgation of inconsistent and contradictory information it was determined that all NWSS information needed to be funneled through one person who had the responsibility to



check for consistency. To avoid placing too much responsibility on that person, it was determined that there would be a number of specific committees with narrowly focused responsibilities. Each of those committees would be headed by one responsible person. The following list was submitted to the Board by one NWSS attendee, it is regarded as a starting point:

- a) Fiber arts
- b) Fiber on the yak (judges and judging standard)
- c) Conformation (judges and judging standards)
- d) Direct dealings with NWSS
- e) Seminars
- f) Communal sales
- g) Pen assignments
- h) Set up nuts and bolts (tables, chairs, tents, PA system, projection screens, etc)
- i) Other areas named by others

Two other areas were named immediately: Pen event, Halter Show.

As a first step, the March Board Meeting will include having Board members choose one or more of the following four committees to serve on:

Fiber and Fiber Arts,

pen event,

anything that takes place on a halter (i.e. halter show, masquerade, obstacle course)

promotion and public media

Ruth Higdon indicated that the Board needs to be mindful of costs for the next NWSS. She pointed to the fiber events as areas that are particularly costly.

Peter Hackett brought the Board up-to-date regarding USYAKS efforts in the Match-A-Yak endeavor. Jessica Petersen, Ted Kalbfleisch, and GeneSeek are all on board with our efforts to create an on-line program by which USYAKS members will be able to see the genetic consequences of hypothetical virtual cow-bull pairings. Proper use of this tool will enable USYAKS members to create and maintain a healthier gene pool by improving coefficients of inbreeding. Our goal is to enable any USYAKS member to choose any USYAKS registered bull and any USYAKS registered female and see the predicted coefficient of inbreeding for a calf that results from the breeding of the two animals.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for the first Sunday in March. Agenda items should be mailed to [Secretary@USYAKS.org](mailto:Secretary@USYAKS.org).

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.