

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD BOARD MEETING

January 17, 2017

MINUTES

Welcome and Roll call – Meeting was called to order at 11:05 am Eastern by Chairperson, Betty Malone. Board members in attendance: Mark Arkills, Rex Korson, Della Deal, Jim Heater, Charles Fowler, Chris Maciborski, Jim Rockis, Mark Steelhammer, Paul Battaglia, Beth Walterscheidt, Bentley Curry and Betty Malone. USDA Representative in attendance: Vickie Carpenter. Staff in attendance: Tim O'Connor and Marsha Gray. Betty Malone welcomed new board member, Charles Fowler of North Carolina and reviewed his bio with the board.

Additional Agenda Items – No items were added to the agenda.

Meeting Minutes – It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the October 18, 2016 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

New Business

- a) Nominating Committee - Betty Malone announced that the election of new officers will take place at the end of the CTPB board meeting in February. She appointed a nominating committee of Beth Walterscheidt and Mark Steelhammer. Beth Walterscheidt reported that Betty Malone will step down as chair and that Jim Heater is not interested in serving as chair. The slate of nominees presented by the nominating committee is:

Paul Battaglia – Treasurer
Beth Walterscheidt – Secretary
Rex Korson – Vice Chairperson
Jim Rockis – Chairperson

Other nominations can also be made from the floor at the time of the election.

Committee Reports

Finance– Paul Battaglia reported on the successful assessment collection of more than \$1.8 million for the 2015 harvest. He reviewed the current financial statements with the board and reported that we have secured an auditor.

Promotion – Jim Heater opened discussion on the campaign compilation video that was distributed to board members earlier in the morning. This is a work in progress and changes will be made based on board feedback. The video is intended as a tool to share at upcoming industry meetings to share campaign outcomes. Board provided feedback. Jim announced that Concept Farm will be at the February meeting to provide a detailed report on the campaign and outcomes.

Research – Jim Rockis reported that he has been in discussion with the Christmas tree researcher group and that they are working to identify a specific area of work for the CTPB. Jim discussed the possibilities of more research on the different firs. CTPB is also planning to team with NCTA again with the trade show booth at the National Fire Prevention Association conference in Boston this summer. Jim Rockis

will be meeting with a professor that runs a consumer behavior lab that was recommended by Gary Chastagner of Washington State University.

Industry Relations – Betty Malone reported that Tim and Marsha are participating in at least 15 state or regional Christmas tree meetings over the next two months, most via Skype. The presentation includes the campaign compilation video and a question and answer session. Board discussed the importance of engaging growers and understood the difficulty that growers had accessing the materials. Betty also commented that the budget will be adjusted to reflect the Voice of the Industry contract with NCTA and the bumper sticker mailing.

Unfinished Business/Staff Updates

Collections Update – Marsha Gray reported that assessment payments are coming in briskly. To date, more than \$230,000 has been deposited.

Compliance Audits– Marsha Gray reported on the follow up of non-responders in the database. CTPB contracted with Voice Logic out of Toronto to call just over 2,000 non-responding entries in the database as identified by staff. Voice Logic executed a calling campaign and was able to identify more than 1,000 names that were not in the Christmas tree industry (ie: bad number, deceased, etc) and those are being removed from the database. They also identified 511 entities that answered and indicated that they are in the Christmas tree industry. Staff has developed a mailing that will be sent to those individuals via Priority Mail so that they can be tracked.

USDA Start up Fee Schedule – Tim O’Connor reported that USDA proposed a repayment schedule of the billed \$166,000 start up fees that would be made in six installments. CTPB recommended just 2 payments – the first in Spring of 2017 and the second in June of 2018. USDA also indicated that there may be an opportunity to revisit the \$30,000 reduction in the start up fee for the work done by USDA during the months when the order was stayed by the Federal Government.

Voice of the Industry – Tim O’Connor reported that the Voice of the Industry project was successful. Hugh Whaley was contracted to serve in this role and did an excellent job. Hugh has a long history with agricultural communications. Board will receive the printed report at the February meeting.

Board Appointments – Betty Malone congratulated Jim Rockis, Rex Korson and Mark Steelhammer on their re-appointment to the board.

USDA – Vickie Carpenter commented on her excitement in seeing the campaign come to fruition. She welcomed new board member, Charles Fowler and congratulated Jim Rockis, Rex Korson and Mark Steelhammer on their reappointments.

Announcements – Betty Malone thanked the board members willing to be considered for officer positions. She reminded board members to notify staff of their hotel needs for the face to face meeting in Phoenix. The meeting will take place on February 23-24.

Adjourn

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

Respectfully Submitted

Beth Walterscheid,
Secretary