

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD TELECONFERENCE BOARD MEETING

October 2, 2018

MINUTES

Welcome and Roll call – Meeting was called to order at 11:01 a.m. Eastern by Chairperson, Jim Rockis. Board members in attendance: Rex Korson, Della Deal, Jim Rockis, Mark Steelhammer, Beth Walterscheidt, Jim Heater, Jim Corliss, Chris Maciborski, Roger Beyer. Unavailable: Paul Battaglia, Jim Corliss, Bentley Curry and Betty Malone.

USDA Representative in attendance: Vickie Carpenter.

Staff in attendance: Marsha Gray and Jenny Tomaszewski.

Guest in attendance: Frans Kok

Meeting Minutes - It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the August 31, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

New Business – No new business to report.

Committee Reports:

Promotion Committee - Rex Korson reported they are moving forward with the details of the campaign that was previously approved by the board. Contracts with both agencies have been approved by USDA and signed. Target market will be “millennial families”.

Concept Farm:

- New video content 5 “millennial families” making their tree Christmas tree selection. Two family’s warm weather climate and two cold weather climate.
- Utilizing grower videos from last year.
- The grower resource site allows growers to purchase merchandise, access logo and designs.
- Updating the posting done on the social media sites. Working through the campaign to get messages ready and out in a timely fashion.

Fleishman Hillard:

- Working on the campaign launch/press release.
- Satellite media tour - looking for a millennial aged grower to try and connect with our target audience.
- “Millennial families”/ “millennial moms” is the 2018 campaign focus.
- User generated content, sweepstakes - wider audience with some of our other partnerships.
- Partnering with *Red Tricycle* an online media resource who specializes in experiences in millennial families - 20 million subscribers – very valuable partnership. CTPB will be featured on their home page on two separate weekends. November 19th with the first launch.

Capitol Christmas Tree Project: Marsha Gray reported that the Capitol Christmas Tree will be coming from Oregon. They were looking for 70 trees that will be placed throughout Washington. Had a hard time getting donations from growers. Shared on social media as well.

Finance Report: Marsha Gray reported.

- New book keeper; Beth Kohn, who is local to Marsha. Beth will be working on tidying up the year end.
- The audit will begin within approximately 30 days.
- Banking access has been changed and updated.
- Previously 10% of all assessments had to be saved in an escrow account. The escrow account will now be closed out.

Research:

Della Deal, research committee chair, has been reaching out to Christmas tree growers across the country, looking for research ideas.

Request for proposal has been distributed and proposals are due by November 15, 2018.

Della Deal reported on current or previous research projects:

- **CoFirGE Project:** cooperative project on new species with six different Universities.
- **Hemlock Scale:** University of Florida and North Carolina State – will wrap this study up within the next few weeks. This project should finish under budget.
- **Management of Slugs:** Oregon State
- **Two Coning Projects:** Michigan State University and North Carolina State
- **Drone Application:** North Carolina State
- **Leader Length Project:** Oregon State
- **Seed Larvae:** Washington State
- **Fire Education Project:** Jim Rockis reported Ellis Schmitt would like to eventually step-down. Dick Moore will be taking over for Ellis when the time comes. Looking for someone with an engineering background.

Ms. Deal requested CTPB to set aside more funding for research.

It was MOVED and SECONDED to reserve 50% of the escrow fund for research projects, as requested from the research committee and approved by the board.

Board discussed value of research projects and having reserved funds available for critical needs.

MOTION APPROVED.

Industry Relations:

Marsha Gray reported that she and Rex Korson attended the Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association meeting. Jim Rockis attended a grower meeting in New Jersey and Rex Korson attended a grower meeting in New Hampshire and Vermont. Q & A sessions were an important part of those presentations and were well received.

Based on feedback from the Northwest a detailed article highlighting the research projects funded by CTPB will be distributed to industry publications.

Marsha Gray and Jim Rockis attended the USDA Showcase in Washington DC in September.

Governance:

USDA has requested several changes to the policy book to comply with USDA guidelines. Marsha Gray and Vickie Carpenter are working on revisions. A copy will be emailed out to board and given several weeks for review.

Executive Director Update:

Marsha Gray introduced Jenny Tomaszewski, our new administrative assistant. Jim Rockis welcomed Jenny.

Letters were sent to individuals who previously had paid assessments, but didn't pay for 2017.

USDA:

Vickie Carpenter, USDA representative, reported that she will be going to Michigan at the end of October to conduct the CTPB management review.

Announcements/Comments:

Jim Rockis opened the floor for comments.

Frans Kok asked about consumer purchasing habits. Marsha Gray briefly reviewed research that is done pre and post campaign.

Mr. Kok requested the financial statements from January to October. Gray noted audited financials and annual reports are available on the website. USDA will determine if monthly financials can be distributed.

Mr. Kok questioned research efforts on spotted lantern fly and issue was addressed by Della Deal.

Mr. Kok questioned the dissolution of escrow account. Vickie Carpenter will respond in writing with justification.

Next Call – Next call will be scheduled as needed.

Adjourn – It was MOVED and SECONDED to adjourn. Motion approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Walterscheidt
Secretary