

# CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD BOARD MEETING

July 18, 2017

## MINUTES

**Welcome and Roll call** – Meeting was called to order at 11:04 am Eastern time by Chairperson, Jim Rockis. Board members in attendance: Mark Arkills, Jim Heater, Rex Korson, Della Deal, Chris Maciborski, Jim Rockis, Mark Steelhammer, Beth Walterscheidt, Charles Fowler and Betty Malone. Unavailable: Bentley Curry and Paul Battaglia. USDA Representative in attendance: Vickie Carpenter. Staff in attendance: Tim O'Connor and Marsha Gray.

**Additional Agenda Items** – Chairperson, Jim Rockis added two items to new business; opening prayer and management company review process.

**Meeting Minutes** – It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the June 20, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

### New Business

- a. **Opening Prayer at In-person meeting** – Jim Rockis asked if any board members had a concern with having an opening prayer at the beginning of the in-person meeting in Wisconsin. With no objections, Rockis requested that the opening prayer be added to meeting format and reminded board that the prayer would be expected to be inclusive.
- b. **Management Company Review** – Jim Rockis reported that he had a conversation with Tim O'Connor regarding the performance of the management team. Rockis is happy with management and the work of the team. Only request was to get meeting agendas and materials out earlier for board review. Rockis reported that several board members had requested a more formal review, similar to last year and appointed Beth Walterscheidt to lead that review effort. All board members will have the opportunity to provide feedback and it will be presented at the next board meeting. Rockis asked Tim O'Connor to provide feedback to the board on how they could better assist staff. O'Connor thanked the board for the opportunity to serve on this project and looked forward to the future. He commented on the large amount of work for a small budget program and emphasized the need for board members to keep a strong, narrow focus and not get distracted by too many projects. Board can be helpful by communicating this focus on priorities to the industry.
- c. **Management Contract for Approval – FY 17/18** – Tim O'Connor briefly reviewed the contract presented. It is the same contract as is currently in force with revisions to update it for fiscal year 2017/2018. It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the management contract as presented. MOTION APPROVED.
- d. **Ballot Results** – Tim O'Connor reported the results of the balloting that concluded on July 15 for board seats that are up for appointment at the end of the year.
  - **Importer** – Only one nominee – Chris Maciborski
  - **Eastern Region** – Eight nominees on the ballot, two seats open, top four in balloting:
    - Jim Corliss, ME
    - Della Deal, NC
    - Charles Fowler, NC

- Nigel Manley, NH
- **Central Region** – Four nominees on the ballot, one seat open, top two in balloting:
  - Beth Walterscheidt, TX
  - George Haramis, OH
- **Western Region** – Four nominees on the ballot, two seats open
  - Roger Beyer, OR
  - Paul Battaglia, CA
  - Dan Logan, OR
  - Scott Enyart, OR

Staff will work with nominees to complete information and prepare packet for USDA submission by August 1. Appointments will be made by the Secretary of Agriculture.

### **Committee Reports**

**Promotion** - Mark Arkills reported that the working group that includes Concept Farm, Fleishmann Hillard, Tim, Marsha and Mark have regular conference calls. Both agencies are moving forward and provide regular updates. Current focus is identifying and selecting growers to feature in the videos. FH staff narrowing tree lighting ceremony opportunities and will identify bloggers to engage once grower video choices are determined. There will be a presentation on the upcoming campaign at the Wisconsin meeting by staff and Mark Arkills.

**Finance** – Tim O’Connor reported that Paul Battaglia was unable to participate in the call but had sent a message of his support of the proposed budget. O’Connor presented the proposed budget recommended by staff and the finance committee and noted a conservative estimate of assessment income. Once budget is approved, it will be sent immediately to USDA for approval. It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the budget as presented. MOTION APPROVED.

**Research** – Della Deal reported that Tim O’Connor is still waiting on several contracts to be approved by a few of the universities for their research projects. Deal reported good response from growers on CTPB funding research. Recommendation to feature descriptions of various research projects in upcoming issues of e-newsletter. Board also recommended sharing how funds are leveraged for each project.

**Industry Relations** – Betty Malone reported that Marsha Gray is actively participating in state meetings this summer, along with several CTPB board members. Sharing a “Six Steps” handout, teaching growers how to get engaged in the campaign, as well as instructions in how to use the Sprout service for posting on Facebook. Marsha Gray created a training video for those who don’t attend meetings. That, along with the handouts, will be on the board website in a few days and announced in the next e-newsletter. Malone requested any feedback on other ways to reach growers. Rex Korson commented that it was a good decision to bring Marsha Gray on for additional time.

**Governance** – Rex Korson had nothing to present from the Governance Committee.

### **Unfinished Business/Staff Updates**

**Collections Report** – Tim O’Connor reported that collections continue, but with only a few assessments payments coming in each week or two. To date, assessments collected for FY 16-17 stands at \$1,817,500.40.

**Voice of the Industry** – Tim O’Connor presented a proposal from NCTA requesting funds for a national spokesperson. Board discussed this at the last meeting, but did not formalize the contract. The contract names Doug Hundley to serve as the Voice of the Industry as selected by the Board, the contract amount with NCTA is \$13,500. It was MOVED and SECONDED to approve the contract. MOTION APPROVED.

**USDA** – Vickie Carpenter had nothing to bring to the board, but indicated that she would have to do some investigation into the request to open board meetings with a prayer.

**Next Call/Meeting -**

August 17, 2017 – In-person meeting – Green Bay, Wisconsin. Board will meet all day on Thursday, August 17 and have a meet and greet with the NCTA board from 5-7pm. Dinner with the NCTA Executive Committee will follow. Tim O’Connor reported that the NCTA Executive Committee has expressed interest in discussing formal support for the referendum and will have that discussion on the agenda for the NCTA board meeting on Tuesday, August 16.

**Adjourn**

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

Respectfully Submitted

Beth Walterscheidt,  
Secretary