

REAL CHRISTMAS TREE BOARD

BOARD MEETING

June 29, 2023

Via Video Conference

Welcome and Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 11:02 a.m. Eastern Time by Chairman, Derek Ahl.

Board Members in Attendance: Chuck Berry, Bob Schaefer, Roger Beyer, Renee Beutell, Derek Ahl, Mike Jones, Mike Cocco, Larry Downey, Jane Neubauer, Mark Schmidlin, and Gary Westlake

Board Members Not in Attendance: Charles Fowler

USDA Representative(s) in Attendance: George Webster

Staff in Attendance: Marsha Gray and Jenny Tomaszewski

Agenda:

Bob Schaefer requested the addition of a Finance Committee budget update.

It was **MOVED** by Bob Schaefer and **SECONDED** by Mark Schmidlin to approve the agenda as presented. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Finance Committee Budget Update: Bob Schaefer reported.

- Schaefer shared a yearend financial estimate showing an estimated net loss of approximately \$116,500 versus a budgeted loss of \$29,800. Derek Ahl requested that all committee chairs use care and discretion in spending. The Finance Committee and the Board will discuss this further at the in-person meeting in August.
- George Webster asked the Board if the decrease in trees and assessments was due to weather conditions or if there were other factors. Marsha Gray shared that this was analyzed about eight weeks ago and determined that the top 10 reporting farms in 2021 reported 580,000 fewer trees in 2022. The Great Lakes and Oregon have been dealing with more repeated drought years that likely impacted harvest numbers.

Presentation and Approval of Campaign Proposal: Jane Neubauer and Marsha Gray reported.

- On June 7th, Chuck Berry, Marsha Gray, and Neubauer met with the FleishmanHillard team to review their proposal for the 2023 campaign year. They presented three focus areas: media authority, consumer motivation, and retailer amplification.

Chairman, Derek Ahl, called the Board into Executive Session at 11:15 a.m. Eastern Time.

Chairman, Derek Ahl, adjourned the Executive Session at 12:14 p.m. Eastern Time. During the closed session, the Board approved the 2023 promotion campaign.

It was **MOVED** by Roger Beyer and **SECONDED** by Chuck Berry to approve the 2023 promotion campaign with FleishmanHillard for \$920,000, as presented by the Promotion Committee. **MOTION APPROVED.**

For the Good of the Order/Announcements:

- Bob Schaefer requested that staff distribute the budget presented for the promotion campaign.

Meeting Schedule:

- Summer In-person Meeting** - The RCTB will meet on Thursday, August 3rd, in Cambridge, Minnesota, in conjunction with the Minnesota Christmas Tree Association meeting on August 4-5 (NCTA Tree and Wreath Contest). Meeting scheduled 8 am – 12 Noon with lunch following. Board dinner on Wednesday and dinner with the NCTA board on Thursday.

Adjourn:

It was **MOVED** by Gary Westlake and **SECONDED** by Renee Beutell to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION APPROVED.** Chairman Derek Ahl adjourned the meeting at 12:19 p.m. Eastern Time.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chuck Berry
Secretary