



WASHINGTON BLUEBERRY COMMISSION

Serving the Blueberry Industry of Washington

WASHINGTON BLUEBERRY COMMISSION

Teleconference

June 16, 2016

Chair Brian Sakuma called the meeting to order at 11.05 AM

Introduction

Commissioners present: Bryan Sakuma, Andy Enfield, Leif Olsen, Rebecca Weber, Todd Van Mersbergen, and Brenton Roy

Administrative staff present: Alan Schreiber and Lori L. Anderson.

Guests- Pete Delauney, Lisa DeVetter.

Roll call of board members and introduction of guests.

Approval of previous minutes

Brian asked for approval of the meeting minutes.

Brenton moved to approve previous minutes on April 21, 2016. Todd seconded the motion. Motion to approve previous meeting minutes passed unanimously.

USBHC Washington Terms. Bryan is termed out, Rob is not, and Bryan can become the alternate. Which one of the present commissioners would like to become an USBHC member? Rob is willing to being the Washington delegate if no one else is interested. The meetings take place two times a year and committee meetings are mainly by teleconference. Alan asks if any of the board members besides Rob are interested. Brenton stated that he is not interested. Alan explained that all expenses incurred are taken care of by USBHC. The commissioners asked Alan what he would like to see happen. Alan would like to see Rob as the delegate to the USBHC and Bryan as the alternative delegate.

Andy nominates Rob Dhaliwal as the delegate and Bryan Sakuma as the alternate delegate to the USBHC.

Todd Van Mersbergen moved to approve the nomination, Leif Olsen seconded the motion. Motion to approve the nominations passed unanimously.

Financial

Treasurer's Report

Alan provided a Treasurers report and went over the research funds, how much has been spent and what is left in the 2015 and 2016 budgets. Other funds spent include advertising, travel expenses, administrative services and attorney general fees. A total of \$157,246 has been spent out of the budget at this time. Alan would like a budget adjustment for the 2016 research project. The commission decided not to fund the Bernadine Strik project, so Alan would like to reduce the research budget in the amount of \$7,540.00. NABC dues increased from \$1,000 to \$2000.00 this year. The WBC should put remaining funds in a contingency fund to increase the amount to \$15,150.00.

Alan asks for an approval on this proposal.

Chair Bryan Sakuma asked for approval of the Financials.

Andy made the motion to approve the financials as presented. Todd seconded the motion. Motion to approve treasurers report passed unanimously.

Old Business

Alan would like to get some guidance on whom to get to work on the export of blueberries to India. SCBG for export analyses is wrapping up, with South Korea getting ready to be done.

The Specialty Crop Block Grant with California, regarding exporting to the eastern countries and blueberry access will be on the agenda. Our marketer will be there, the Blueberry Commission is co funding his place there along with the California Blueberry Commission. We have provided Vietnam and China with a pest list, so now we have to sit back and wait. There has been progress with China to increase exports within and with berries coming from Washington State. Also the Philippians have expressed an interest in our blueberries

MRLs

A MRL workshop is being held in San Francisco in July, the Blueberry Commission is sending Andy Enfield. Alan will be getting the MRL report, and forward it on to Andy.

Local Promotion

Pete Delauney joined the meeting at 11:45 am.

Pete did a quick overview on the fresh blueberry promotions going on for the 2016 Super blues.

- 1) Sampling of fresh berries done by Classic Catering, Blueberry and Salmon at Gasworks Park. This is called Seafair Family fourth; the event is on the 1st of July, 200 pounds of fresh berries will need to be delivered.
- 2) Three day event starting on July 15th thru the 17th, 300 pounds of blueberries will be delivered; this event is called The Bite of Seattle.
- 3) Breakfast with the blues starts on August 4, 200 pounds of Blueberries will be needed for this event.
- 4) Seafair Salmon Bake in the park will be August 6th and 7th. 400 pounds of Blueberries will be served at this event.

In addition they are creating a video on how to develop on their salmon and slaw menu linking this with Utube and all the other events that are related to blueberries. Annual blueberry production release will be going out to food bloggers, etc. This is the time of year when fresh blueberries are available.

There have been 15,000 visitors to the website last year, we are hopeful the numbers will be more this year, with an emphasis on family friendly you-pick farms.

Research

WSCPR has funded five projects for the WBC this year, with little money, so they can use that money towards another WBC proposal. Alan suggested that the Aphid Virus proposal would be a good one. Alan just found out that WBC received the USDA, Dave Bryla, SCBG for Pulse Irrigation, in conjunction with the Red Raspberry Commission. We received a grant proposal in eastern Washington for organic fertilizer. Does anyone know who is submitting proposals? Lisa states that there may be a few small proposals but nothing large at this time. Alan tells the Blueberry Commissioners that Whatcom County is trying to set up a county research facility. They would like to do research on potato, forage, berry and other projects, but since the building is already in Skagit County why do they need another research facility? Some support is given for this, so WSU is thinking about a satellite store. Alan asked if this would be a completion and Lisa stated no. Brenton and Bryan are both in agreement that the Commission will not fund this project for the time being, but we could fund research in the future.

Food Safety

Not a lot of activity is going on at this time. Food safety is an important issue. The WBC needs to take proactive role in encouraging growers to be third party certified and needs to target smaller growers to raise their level of awareness and education about food safety.

Administrative Report

There is a blueberry stop on the WSCPR tour this year. All handler and grower assessment letters have been sent out.

We are working on the Small Fruit Conference: we need a key note speaker, so does anyone have any ideas or topics?

Production,

Brenton and Leif both feel that blueberry production will be up this year, but it may be too early to say about the overall harvest. Bryan thinks the cooler weather will have an impact and Andy believes production will be down. Todd feels his production will be the same, mainly because of mature plantings only. Alan is keeping to his original estimate of 118 million pounds. Brenton thinks this is a good guess, so stick with it, being a 13% increase over last year. Bryan thought that Whatcom County would not increase production due to hail damage. Andy says that he did not get much damage from the hail. Bryan agrees with Alans estimate of 70 % processed, 30% fresh, these numbers can change if necessary

Chair Bryan asked for an adjournment

Andy made the motion to approve the administrative report. Leif seconded the motion. Motion to approve the administrative report passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:15pm