

American Guinea Hog Association

Annual Membership Meeting – November 16, 2017

Minutes

OPENING

The Annual Membership Meeting of the American Guinea Hog Association was called to order on November 16, 2017, at 8:06 p.m., Eastern Time,. The meeting was held via teleconference as was hosted by the by Angela Ingraham, Association President.

ATTENDEES

Board Members

Angela Ingraham, President
Jack Rowland, Vice President
Deborah Nieman-Boehle, Region 3 Director
Wendy McDaniel, Region 5 Director and
Donna Hertlein, Board Member at Large

Interim Board Members

Susan Neal, Treasurer
Tori Rozanski, Secretary
Deborah Baker, Region 4 Director
Andrea Rigel, Region 6 Director

Association Members

Alesha Gonzalez
Cathy Payne
Donna Dorminey
Becky Mahoney

WELCOME

The meeting was opened by Angela Ingraham and the members present were welcomed. The attending Board Members briefly introduced themselves.

State of the Association – Treasurer, Susan Neal

A report on year-to-date income and expenses were given.

- There is currently a \$1944.57 deficit; however, this is a 10-month number and may improve as revenue continues to come in through the end of the year.
- The bulk portion (approx.50%) of the Association income stream is coming from Annual Membership Fees.

State of the Association – Treasurer, Susan Neal (continued)

- The largest Association expenses are associated with Advertising, Marketing, and Contractor Fees (Registrar and work on the website). Development and roll-out of the new website generated a large, one-time expense of approximately \$1650.
- The duties and the evolution of payment methods to the Registrar, Ruth Bennett were discussed.
- A question was asked about the status of a 2018 budget and Treasurer's Report. Those reports are being drafted. The President offered to send Ms. Payne the reports that are available from prior years. That offer was declined.

UPDATES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**2017 Accomplishments** – Vice President, Jack Rowland

- Newly-launched website is now live.
- *Registry Tools* page can be used by members to plan future breeding and to researching hog pedigrees. There are a few bugs which still need to be worked out regarding COI's. The Webmaster is working on fixing these issues.
- *Breeders Directory* page will soon offer breeders the ability to display a link to an individual farm website or Facebook page. Breeder listings are linked to the President's receipt of a herd census from each breeder.
- *Herd Census* – mechanics of the were briefly outlined.

Agenda Items regarding the Not-for-Profit Application and the Newsletter were tabled.

Breeders Committee – Vice President, Jack Rowland

- Sumrall Herd – Now approved for acceptance into the registry. A brief history of the herd was shared. The website launch and debugging activities have delayed their addition to the registry database. They should be input sometime in the next 10 days. Cathy Payne, Deborah Baker, and Donna Dorminey were recognized for their efforts in safeguarding these hogs and developing a case for bringing them into the registry.
- Hester Herd - Becky Mahoney has put in an application on behalf of the Hester Herd, which she rescued approximately two years ago. History of this herd was discussed. Despite difficulties in deciphering the hand-written records on these hogs, their inclusion in the registry is promising.
- DNA Project - Began a few years ago and is now picking up momentum. Discussions with the Livestock Conservancy on this topic have been ongoing. The Conservancy has now funded research on creating a DNA test for AGH. DNA is being collected from the current population of registered hogs which have founders as parents and/or grandparents. A key step in this process will involve identifying those genes that are unique to other breeds that are commonly crossbred with AGH (like Kune Kune and Pot Belly) so hogs with those easily hidden genes can be denied entry into the registry.

Website Committee -- President, Angela Ingraham

- “Breeders Listing” portion is being done on a gradual basis as Members send in their hog census information. This is a time-consuming task and information is being sent to the Association Registrar, Ruth Bennett, in batches for input into the registry. Once processed, Members will be able to update and list their farm information on the Association website.
- Deceased hogs that have produced offspring will be listed in the registry with a “-D” after their names. Hogs that never produced offspring and were butchered or are no longer living, will be listed with a “-B” after their names.
- The “News” page of the website will become a “what’s happening” type of page. The articles currently listed on that page (which are quite dated) will moved to another portion of the website.

Promotions/Advertising Committee – Region 3 Director, Deborah Nieman-Boehle

- Mother Earth News Fairs - Two were attended in 2017. The hogs were well received and much interest was generated. Several breeders were contacted (regarding purchasing hogs) by those attending the fairs. Matthew Hunker created a regional breeders listing for distribution at the Pennsylvania Fair. Guinea Hogs were the only hogs represented at the Texas fair. Mother Earth News has scheduled 2018 fairs in Texas (February), North Carolina (April), Pennsylvania (September), Kansas (October), Oregon (date TBA), and Maryland (date TBA).
- Livestock Conservancy Conference is a much smaller event with 150 attendees. Even so, 40-50 people took AGH information materials.
- 2017 advertisements were placed in the Livestock Conservancy newsletter and directory, Hobby Farms, Mother Earth News, and Grit magazines. Those ads drove buyers to the website and breeders directory.

Policies and Procedures – President, Angela Ingraham

- The influx of new Board members has revealed a need to develop and comprehensive list policies and procedures as they relate to the duties and responsibilities of each Board Member. The Board will continue working developing these.
- A breeder code of ethics has been developed and is currently out for review and comment by the general membership. A committee will be formed to oversee enforcement issues.

Advertising – President, Angela Ingraham

- There is a temporary halt on all future advertising until expenditures are reconciled and the 2018 budget has been established.

QUESTIONS FROM THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

Departure of several Board Members has created several vacant positions. Interim Board Members have been appointed by the Board. A question was asked regarding the need for a notice of elections. Since there was only one candidate nominated (by the membership) for each of the vacant positions, there was some question about the necessity of a vote by the membership. The Board will review the bylaws and, if necessary, send electronic ballots out to all Association members.

A question was asked about Board Member term limits and the need for re-election of all Board members. This issue will be reviewed by the Board.

There was a discussion regarding the 2018 Budget and raising the membership fees to \$30 per year. There was no objection to a \$10 increase in annual membership fees.

There was discussion regarding a possible increase of the Association's \$200 lifetime membership fees. The Board will consider this issue.

It was noted that the recent changes in registration fees were designed to make it financially beneficial for breeders to take additional time evaluating their stock before registering their best piglets.

A suggestion was made that the Association take some steps to help members make contacts within the culinary community to increase sales. Suggestions were made, and various ideas/possibilities were explored. It was decided that some marketing brochures would be developed and made available to the membership.

Methods of tracking advertising efficacy were discussed. There is considerable difficulty in accurately tracking these statistics. The Board will continue to explore possible options.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m. by Angela Ingraham, Association President.

Minutes submitted by: Tori Rozanski, Interim Secretary

Approved by: AGHA Board on December 14, 2017