**MINUTES**

**LOUISIANA CRAWFISH PROMOTION & RESEARCH BOARD**

**January 23, 2019**

**RICE RESEARCH STATION**

**1373 Caffey Road**

**Rayne, LA 70578**

**Call to Order:**

David Savoy called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

**Roll Call:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT** **MEMBERS ABSENT**

David Savoy Chandra Scarber

Robert Buller Wayne Romig

Ralph Babin Wylie Jewell

Kip Lastraps

Jody Meche

Bill Pizzolato

Greg Faulk

**Declaration of a Quorum:**

A quorum was declared with 7 members present and 3 members absent.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the October 9th, 2018 Board meeting were read.

**MOTION BY**: Jody Meche seconded by Ralph Babin to approve the minutes from the October 9th, 2018 Board meeting. Motion Carried.

**Collections & Financial Report:**

David Savoy called on Ron Harrell to present the collections and financial reports. He reported to the Board the current condition of accounts.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin seconded by Jody Meche to accept the financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

**Promotion & Research:**

Dr. Rogers Leonard discussed two project pre-proposal summaries from the LSU AgCenter.

The first project would be to develop an automated crawfish harvesting system with a GPS.

The second project would be to develop protocol to safely and efficiently ship live crawfish. There is no protocol currently for crawfish and would need to be adapted.

He suggested that an advisory committee for these projects be formed in order to gain input and prioritize the needs of the crawfish industry.

He further stated on the research and development of a cold water bait.

If the Board is interested in any of these projects they will contact the LSU AgCenter.

Next, Donald Dartez and Rodney Hess reported to the Board on the activities of the Board’s website and Facebook page. The Facebook data was reviewed for quarter 3. The impressions number increased and 94 likes were gained. Atlanta, Dallas and Houston have been the top 3 consistent cities to visit the page.

**MOTION BY:** Greg Faulk seconded by Ralph Babin to table the proposals on social media.

Motion Carried.

Donald Dartez discussed converting the current website to WordPress. The site would have to be rebuilt. The cost of this project would be $9,2000.00. This proposal would also include the migration of the Moby Pincher site and Moby Pincher book conversion to a private YouTube channel.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin seconded by Greg Faulk to have David Savoy review the proposal on website migration. This would convert the current site to a WordPress site. The Board agreed to table the decision until the next meeting. Motion Carried.

Dr. Joshua Vaughan gave an update of the automated crawfish peeling machine. Key phases of the work are the development of iterative learning controller using machine vision feedback, detailed analysis of forces during shell splitting/cutting, development of impedance controller for shell splitting/cutting and the refinement of system prototypes and extensive testing. They are continuing to collect data on the Louisiana crawfish population not only for use in both training the vision and control algorithms of the device, but also to help refine the specifications of the design to create a virtual population of crawfish. Information collected includes the average sizes of various body segments, average mass/weight and average tail meat mass.

By creating the virtual population of crawfish the computer is able to generate renderings to train the machine vision system to recognize tail shape, position, orientation and predict the mass of meat it contains. A camera has been selected to take pictures of the cutting process. The design process tools are being completed in order to identify key customer requirements and engineering characteristics and engineering specifications. The goals of the engineering specifications are to deal with yield and quality of peeled meat and food safety.

Chris Fields, Fields Group, next gave a presentation to the Board regarding TV commercial spots for the Louisiana crawfish industry. The commercials will air in Dallas/Fort Worth TX; Jackson, MS; Monroe, LA; San Antonio, TX; Biloxi/Gulfport, MS. These commercials will run during the months of March, April and May.

**MOTION BY:** Greg Faulk seconded by Ralph Babin to approve this project for a maximum amount of $32,000.00. Motion Carried.

Dee Scallan’s promotion report was reviewed. She has been able to cover 19 schools in Louisiana over the last few months. Rapides, Livingston, Jefferson, East Baton Rouge, Natchitoches and Orleans parishes.

Holly Clegg’s October 2018 - January 2019 promotion report was reviewed by the Board. Her promotional efforts continue to reach multiple audiences through various social media channels. Thehealthycookingblog.com, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Azumio, Slender Kitchen, Food Channel and monthly blog posts on the Board’s website. On WBRZ, a special Christmas segment featuring crawfish ran in December. The Advocate newspaper (Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lafayette) featured a link to crawfish remoulade. Consumers that are searching for crawfish recipes are served Holly’s recipes as top options. She continues to post her recipes, videos and blogs on multiple social media platforms such as: YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest to promote Louisiana crawfish and to refer consumers to the Board’s website page. She posted a Facebook Live video in November and December that featured Louisiana crawfish recipes and each video had over 3 million views.

Holly Clegg’s contract is up for renewal for the amount of $27,000.00.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin seconded by Bill Pizzolato to approve Holly Clegg’s contract in the amount of $27,000.00. Motion Carried.

Next, the 2019 billboard campaign was discussed. The billboards will be located in Atlanta, Biloxi, Mobile, Pensacola, Branson, Las Vegas, Dallas, San Antonio, Little Rock and Memphis.

**Board Business:**

The Board next discussed the crawfish season.

**No public comment**

The date for the next Board meeting will be Monday, April 8th, 2019 at 1:00 P.M. at the USGS National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin and seconded by Kip Lastraps to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.