

MINUTES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2015
LOUISIANA STRAWBERRY MARKETING BOARD MEETING
47076 NORTH MORRISON BOULEVARD
HAMMOND, LA

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman William Fletcher called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Strawberry Marketing Board Director Rebecca Riecke called the roll.

DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

The presence of a quorum was declared by Mrs. Riecke.

MEMBERS PRESENT

WILLIAM FLETCHER
KEVIN LIUZZA
MARK LIUZZA
ERIC MORROW
HEATHER ROBERTSON
REBECCA RIECKE (COMMISSIONER MIKE STRAIN DVM'S DESIGNEE)

MEMBERS ABSENT

DR. REGINA BRACY
DONALD LANIER

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Mr. Fletcher stated that a new chairman would need to be elected since Chairman Chris Olah had resigned from the board as of the first of the year.

Mr. Fletcher opened the floor for nominations for chairman.

A motion made by Eric Morrow and second by Heather Robertson to nominate and elect William Fletcher for chairman. With no further nominations coming forward, the motion carried.

Mr. Fletcher opened the floor for nominations for vice-chairman since he was elected chairman and could no longer serve in this position.

A motion made by William Fletcher and second by Heather Robertson to nominate and elect Eric Morrow for vice-chairman. With no further nominations coming forward, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kyle Coats with Louisiana Radio Network (LRN) presented a five-week statewide radio campaign proposal to promote Louisiana strawberries. Mr. Coats explained that this proposal would include 25 thirty second commercial messages with Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM to air statewide on 46 radio stations on Louisiana Radio Network for a total of 1,150 individual radio messages statewide. He informed board members that a bonus would include broadcast interviews with Louisiana's Farm Bureau Agri-News Director, Don Molino, and ten thirty second commercial messages to air on LRN over 46 stations statewide for a total of 460 commercials. Mr. Coats explained that the total number of individual radio messages including the bonus would be 1,610 for a total investment of \$8,000.

Mrs. Riecke informed board members that Jeanne Smith of LPB was not able to attend the meeting, but e-mailed a proposal that was included in board members' packets. Mrs. Riecke explained that the LPB proposal was for the Saturday Cooking Block on LPB which would cost \$490 per week for ten weeks for a total investment of \$4,900. She stated that the proposal included 70 fifteen second messages which would be seven per week surrounding the Saturday Cooking Block, running 11:30 a.m. through 3:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion made by Eric Morrow and second by Mark Liuzza to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2014, meeting. The motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mrs. Riecke read the August through December 2014 financial reports, copies of which were distributed to each member. Mrs. Riecke explained that an expense under miscellaneous operating expenses for Griffin & Company, LLC in the amount of \$350 was for a CPA firm that was hired to compile the board's annual financial statements for fiscal year 2014 and was required by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor due to the board's total revenue increasing from grant funding.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and second by Eric Morrow to approve the August through December 2014 financial reports. The motion carried.

LDAF COOKBOOK

Deana Vickry of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry (LDAF) informed board members of a sponsorship opportunity for LDAF's Louisiana Culinary Delight Cookbook. She explained that the sponsorship would include a sponsorship page, strawberry recipes and the board's logo on the back cover of the cookbook. Ms. Vickry stated that the cookbooks would be given out at special events such as Ag Expo and State Fair. Mrs. Riecke stated that handouts in the board members' packets included a copy of the sponsorship request letter, front and back cover of the cookbook and the sponsorship page for the board. Ms. Vickry stated that several other commodity boards are sponsors for the cookbook and that no specific amount is being requested, but only what the board would be comfortable with giving. Mr. Fletcher asked Mrs.

Riecke for the amount that the board could give with the current budget, and she suggested that giving up to \$500 would be acceptable.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and second by Mark Liuzza to allocate \$500 toward costs of producing the LDAF cookbook. The motion carried.

GARRISON ADVERTISING REPORT AND 2015 PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY

Steve Helmke and Gerald Garrison of Garrison Advertising presented the advertising report which included a PowerPoint presentation and handout. Mr. Helmke reviewed the website traffic analysis results for 2014 in which the number of users and sessions were both up over 40%. He stated that these results indicate the message and placement of the ads are having good impact and showing increased interest in their product.

Mr. Helmke explained the recommended 2015 campaign guiding strategy which would remain the same as last year and target females in South Louisiana willing to pay a premium for strawberries. He recommended a continuation of the current ad designs and television spots that have become familiar in our market.

Mr. Helmke presented the 2015 recommended marketing approach and stated that the media should focus on the close proximity, densely populated southeastern portion of Louisiana to ensure impact of the marketing campaign. He explained that the 2015 recommended campaign budget includes \$21,592 for television with ads on network and cable television across the New Orleans, North Shore, Hammond, Baton Rouge and Lafayette markets that utilize the same ad creative spots as the 2014 campaign; \$22,500 for billboards with four premium billboard locations in New Orleans, Baton Rouge (Denham Springs) and Hammond utilizing Specialty Crop Grant money; \$1,165 for a print ad in the Louisiana Kitchen & Culture magazine; \$2,020 for updating the LSMB website (\$1,270 to update the current website to become compatible with mobile and tablet devices using HTML 5 and \$750 for an additional update to the website to enable it to “scale” based on screen size); \$1,250 for point-of-purchase which includes 500 point-of-sale posters to be distributed to grocers with strawberry deliveries that will be produced with either two-sided tape and/or wire stands; and \$1,473 for website monitoring, meetings, planning and other hourly for a total campaign budget of \$50,000.

Mr. Helmke requested board members’ feedback on the campaign plan and the delivery method of point-of-purchase materials in particular. Board members agreed that producers could give the materials to grocers with strawberry deliveries which then could be distributed to individual stores. Mrs. Riecke stated that the point-of-purchase posters could initially be shipped to the Hammond LDAF for storage, and she could bring the requested number of signs to the producers. Board members were not in favor of ordering the wire stands for the point-of-sale posters which would allow more posters to be purchased.

Mrs. Riecke explained that if the Board advertises with Louisiana Radio Network or LPB, that money would need to be taken from another media type in the proposed campaign budget. Mr. Helmke recommended decreasing funds from the television budget by eliminating the Lafayette market if this is the case instead of trimming down advertising in each market. He stated that eliminating the Lafayette market for television would result in savings of approximately \$4,000.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and second by Eric Morrow to go into executive session at 6:33 p.m. The motion carried. Mr. Fletcher reconvened the meeting into open session at 6:43 p.m.

Board members recommended eliminating print advertising for \$1,165 and taking television out of the Lafayette market to save about \$4,000 which would result in a total savings of \$5,165 that could go toward advertising with Louisiana Radio Network. Mr. Fletcher asked Kyle Coats of Louisiana Radio Network if he could amend his proposal to that amount, and Mr. Coats confirmed that he could.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and second by Mark Liuzza to accept the amended Garrison Advertising proposal with the following components: television for \$17,592; Louisiana Radio Network for \$5,165; billboards for \$22,500; updating LSMB website for \$2,020; point-of-purchase for \$1,250; and website monitoring, meetings, planning and other hourly for \$1,473 for a total budget of \$50,000. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Riecke informed board members that the 2014 Capitol Christmas ornament was the Louisiana strawberry, and she showed them one of the ornaments.

Mrs. Riecke stated that she has made updates to the board's Facebook page and requested that members send her pictures of their farms or at farmers' markets so they can be shared on the Facebook page.

Mrs. Riecke explained that there are four open seats on the board now that Chris Olah has resigned. She said that the open seats are for two strawberry producers; one agricultural chemical dealer, representative or consultant with knowledge of the strawberry industry; and one consumer with knowledge of the strawberry industry. She stated that these members would have to be appointed by the Commissioner and asked board members to let her know of anyone who may be interested in serving. She informed board members that these vacancies would need to be filled by April 1 in order for them to be confirmed during this upcoming legislative session.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Helmke of Garrison Advertising confirmed with the Board that the wire stands were not needed for point-of-purchase materials, and he would order as many posters as possible for the amount budgeted. He asked board members about the timing for advertising. Board members suggested ordering point-of-purchase materials as soon as possible so they can be distributed; having billboards up in March and April; and coordinating with Mrs. Riecke before placing television or radio ads due to unpredictable weather conditions.

ADJOURNMENT

No further comments were made. A motion made by Heather Robertson and second by Eric Morrow to adjourn. The motion carried.