

MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2021

LOUISIANA STRAWBERRY MARKETING BOARD MEETING
TELECONFERENCE/ZOOM: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85771702613>
TELEPHONE – DIAL: 636-651-3185, 877-810-9415 (US TOLL FREE)
CONFERENCE CODE: 714696

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman William Fletcher called the meeting to order at 5:33 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 Ms. Riecke.

MEMBERS PRESENT

COMMISSIONER MIKE STRAIN
WILLIAM FLETCHER
DR. CHARLIE HUTCHISON
MARK LIUZZA
SHELLEY MATHERNE
HEATHER ROBERTSON
JEFF WRIGHT

MEMBERS ABSENT

TREY HARRIS
KEVIN LIUZZA
ERIC MORROW

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIRMAN

William Fletcher opened the floor for nominations for chairman.

Heather Robertson nominated and Shelley Matherne seconded William Fletcher for chairman.

A motion was made by Commissioner Strain and seconded by Heather Robertson to close the nominations for chairman. With no further nominations coming forward, the motion carried, and William Fletcher was elected chairman with a unanimous vote.

William Fletcher opened the floor for nominations for vice-chairman.

William Fletcher nominated and Heather Robertson seconded Kevin Liuzza for vice-chairman.

A motion was made by Commissioner Strain and seconded by Shelley Matherne to close the nominations for vice-chairman. The motion carried, and Kevin Liuzza was elected vice-chairman with a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Shelley Matherne and seconded by Mark Liuzza to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2021, meeting. The motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ms. Riecke read the fiscal year 2021 and July through August 2021 financial reports, copies of which were emailed to each member.

A motion was made by Mark Liuzza and seconded by Heather Robertson to approve the fiscal year 2021 and July through August 2021 financial reports. The motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF OUTSTANDING LATE FEE - CAPITOL CITY PRODUCE

Ms. Riecke explained that Capitol City Produce wrote a letter to the Board requesting the waiver of an assessment late fee. Ms. Riecke read the letter which explained the reason that the assessment was paid late.

A motion was made by Commissioner Strain and seconded by Shelley Matherne to waive the assessment late fee for Capitol City Produce for the October-December 2020 quarter in the amount of \$168.94. The motion carried.

FY 2022 PROPOSED BUDGET

Ms. Riecke presented the fiscal year 2022 proposed budget with the estimated income of \$30,000.00 in strawberry assessments; \$23,500.00 in grant income from the Specialty Crop Block Grant; and \$15,000.00 in grant income from the Certified Louisiana Program Promotional Grant for a total of \$68,500.00. She reviewed budget category expenses including \$28,800.00 for advertising; \$700.00 for legislative egg breakfasts table/chair rental (if events take place); \$500.00 for Louisiana FFA Association - State Proficiency Award; \$23,500.00 for Specialty Crop Block Grant expenses; and \$15,000.00 for Certified Louisiana Program Promotional Grant expenses for a total of \$68,500.00.

A motion was made by Heather Robertson and seconded by Shelley Matherne to approve the fiscal year 2022 proposed budget. The motion carried.

GARRISON ADVERTISING REPORT

Gerald Garrison and Breanna Smith of Garrison Advertising presented the advertising report with a power point presentation. Mr. Garrison reviewed the 2021 guiding strategy and budget breakdown for the campaign that included radio (budget - \$4,030.00, YTD spent - \$4,029.85); billboards (budget - \$22,000.00, YTD spent - \$21,316.41); and agency account support services (budget - \$2,770.00, YTD spent - \$2,410.00) for a total of \$28,800.00 budgeted and \$27,642.52 spent. He discussed the four-week statewide radio campaign and billboards, explaining that bonus time was afforded to the Board due to additional time of exposure since some billboards remained up past the purchased date.

Mr. Garrison discussed the 2021 LAFA Certified grant spending that included TV commercials on cable television (budget - \$5,000.00, YTD spent - \$5,000.00); digital ads (budget - \$5,000.00, YTD spent - \$4,438.46); and promotional items (budget - \$5,000.00, YTD spent - \$4,933.46) for a total of \$15,000.00 budgeted and \$14,933.46 spent. He detailed how the digital online ads are targeted to certain shoppers at targeted times. Ms. Riecke showed promotional items that were purchased. Mr. Garrison played the TV commercial that ran on cable stations in nine targeted areas and showed the digital ads that resulted in increased click-through activity on the Board's website.

Mr. Garrison discussed educational outreach events that were conducted. He played the Jazzy video developed by LDAF staff of one of the summer camp events that was covered on social media. Mr. Garrison also shared photos of the Bunny Bash drive through-event and Strawberry Day in the Park.

ADVERTISING CONTRACT

Ms. Riecke explained that the current advertising agency contract ends December 31, 2021, and the Board needs to determine if they want to enter into a new contract with Garrison Advertising or seek other options. Heather Robertson stated that Mr. Garrison had represented the Board well and that she would recommend continuing with Garrison Advertising.

A motion was made by Shelley Matherne and seconded by Mark Liuzza to enter into a contract with Garrison Advertising for consulting services to administer the Board's advertising, promotion and public relations program beginning January 1, 2022, for a period of three years and an amount not to exceed \$70,000.00 per year with the option to renew for two additional years. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Heather Robertson and seconded by Shelley Matherne to authorize Director Rebecca Riecke to approve the details of the contract with Garrison Advertising on behalf of the Board. The motion carried.

FY 21-22 CERTIFIED LA PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL GRANT

Ms. Riecke informed the Board that they could apply to receive \$15,000.00 in grant funding from the Certified LA program this year. She explained different options available of

qualified expenditures under the program guidelines. Ms. Riecke reviewed what had been done last year including cable television advertising, digital display ads, t-shirts and giveaway items and the amounts that were expended on each activity. Mr. Garrison discussed a magazine ad opportunity that was presented to him and the prices of different size ads. Mrs. Robertson expressed that she liked the idea of placing the magazine ad and said that she has seen many people reading the magazine and knows it is available all over. Mr. Garrison said if they wish to purchase an ad, finalization of details would take place in January. Ms. Riecke asked for an estimate of what an ad would cost. Mr. Garrison said prices would vary, but, on average, \$2,000.00 for a full page and then down depending on size. Board members discussed how they would like to utilize the grant funds. Mrs. Robertson suggested \$5,000.00 for digital display ads, \$4,500.00 for cable television advertising, \$4,500.00 for promotional items and \$1,000.00 for a magazine ad. Mr. Garrison said he would work with the magazine to get the largest size ad possible for the \$1,000.00. budget.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and seconded by Mark Liuzza to approve the director to apply for FY 2021-2022 Certified Louisiana Program Promotional Grant funding for the following: cable television ads - \$4,500.00; digital display ads - \$5,000.00; promotional giveaway items - \$4,500.00; and a magazine ad - \$1,000.00. The motion carried.

2021 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT

Ms. Riecke informed the Board that their application to conduct the “Louisiana Strawberry Industry Consumer Awareness Program” project was selected to receive 2021 Specialty Crop Block Grant funding in the amount of \$70,480.00. She explained that the project activities would work to increase the competitiveness of Louisiana strawberry growers and increase sales through peak season promotion and awareness activities that included digital audio, streaming television and digital interstitial ads. Ms. Riecke stated that a contract would need to be entered into with the Department to receive the funding.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and seconded by Mark Liuzza to enter into a contract with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry for the Board to receive a 2021 Specialty Crop Block Grant award in the amount of \$70,480.00. The motion carried.

A motion made by Shelley Matherne and seconded by Mark Liuzza to authorize Director Rebecca Riecke to approve the contract with LDAF and sign it on behalf of the Board. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Riecke reminded board members to complete sexual harassment and ethics training by the end of the year. She requested that board members forward the signed sheets to her office once sexual harassment training is completed. Ms. Riecke informed the Board that the Certified Louisiana logo was changed from the original, and they should make sure to use the new updated logo when printing new packaging materials.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Wright informed the Board that the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival Board is hosting a Farmer Appreciation Banquet on October 21. He stated that the social time is 6:00 p.m. with the dinner to follow at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Wright encouraged them to attend and spread the word to other farmers. Additionally, he invited Commissioner Strain to speak if he did not have a conflict.

ADJOURNMENT

No further comments were made. A motion was made by Commissioner Strain and seconded by Shelley Matherne to adjourn. The motion carried.