**MINUTES**

**LOUISIANA CRAWFISH PROMOTION & RESEARCH BOARD**

**August 3rd, 2016**

**USGS NATIONAL WETLANDS RESEARCH CENTER**

**700 CAJUNDOME BLVD.**

**LAFAYETTE, LA**

**Call to Order:**

Ralph Babin, Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

**Roll Call:**

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

Ralph Babin Mike Bienvenu

Chandra Scarber Greg Benhard

Greg Faulk Bill Pizzolato

Jody Meche Wayne Romig

Robert Buller Kip Lastraps

Wylie Jewell

David Savoy

**Declaration of a Quorum:**

Ralph Babin declared the presence of a quorum with 7 members present and 5 members absent.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the February 4th, 2016 Board meeting were read.

**MOTION BY**: David Savoy and seconded by Wylie Jewell to approve the minutes from the February 4th, 2016 Board meeting. Motion Carried.

**Collections & Financial Report:**

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

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

**Promotion & Research:**

Stephen Dufreche with the University of Lafayette presented to the Board the status and results of Phase II of the automated processing machine project. UL created a prototype belt-fed system allowed them to keep the tails straight and be cut with a self-adjusting blade mechanism to extract the meat out of the shell. Right now, the prototype requires a manual de-heading of the crawfish and then placed into the machine. The Board ranked the importance of the three directions the project needs to follow: de-heading of the crawfish, crawfish being de-veined and the retention of the backstrap.

They would like to bring in an automation expert from UL and look at further refinement and development of the automation portion of the system to get closer to a commercial prototype. UL will submit a proposal to the Board at the next meeting for consideration of Phase III of the project.

Next, Jessica Lange gave a report on behalf of Holly Clegg regarding her recent projects on behalf of the Board. She has been approached by multiple websites to put her Louisiana crawfish recipes on their sites such as The Food Channel, In Register, Azumio, Visit Baton Rouge, etc. The Louisiana crawfish recipes are always some of the topped ranked recipes. We have been working on the website and Holly now has a whole section with her recipes and all videos. She will also be doing a blog on the site as well.

Holly asked for funding of Louisiana crawfish bookmarks for promotional purposes.

**MOTION BY:** Greg Faulk and seconded by Wylie Jewell for up to $150 not to exceed $250 dollars. Motion Carried.

Next, Donald Dartez gave an update on the Board’s website and Dee Scallan’s Moby Pincher site.

The Board’s website has been converted to a mobile format. This mobile conversion means that the site can be viewable on all phones and tablets. He discussed the new Holly Clegg section that will include recipes, videos, contact information and a blog section. From January 1st – August 31st there have been 41,000 visits to the crawfish.org site and that figure is only visits in the U.S. The people who are visiting are looking at multiple pages on the site. The Board’s site is on the top of the google search list if someone searches “crawfish”.

He next discussed the updates to the Moby Pincher site. This site has also completed mobile conversion. Videos, artwork, and recorded books are currently being added to this site.

The LSU AgCenter asked if the Board would like to continue sponsorship of the AgMagic event.

**MOTION BY:** David Savoy and seconded by Jody Meche to approve the sponsorship of the 2016 LSU Ag Magic for $1,500.00. Motion Carried.

The Board next made a motion to add J.B. Hanks to the agenda.

**MOTION BY:** Jody Meche and seconded by Robert Buller to add J.B. Hanks to the agenda. Motion Carried.

J.B. discussed the possibility of a mechanical harvesting machine. Discussion among the Board took place and the suggestion of creating a small committee to look into this possible research project took place.

The Board agreed to table this discussion until the next Board meeting.

**New Business:**

Ralph Babin announced to the Board that he will be stepping down as the Chairman. At the next Board meeting an election will take place.

Jessica Lange will also look into the billboard campaign for 2017 and discuss the options and costs with the Board at the next meeting.

**No public comment**

**Next Board Meeting Date:**

The date for the next Board meeting will be Wednesday, October 12th, 2016 at 1:00 P.M. at the USGS National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette.

**MOTION BY:** Robert Buller and seconded by David Savoy to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.