

WCO BOD Meeting

D&J Manthe Forage Service, DeForest, Wis.

7-18-24

Roll call: John Osterhaus, Randy Clark, Exec Director - Maria Woldt, Joseph Sanford, Brian Luck, Bruce Dannenberg. **On the phone:** Jeremy Heim, **Guest:** Heidi Johnson, crew members from host

Absent: Isaac Lemmenes, Amanda Krepline, Pat Johnson

President John Osterhaus called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

Agenda approval: Motion was made Jeremy, seconded by Bruce. All were in favor. Agenda approved.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Bruce, Seconded by Jeremy. All were in favor. Minutes approved.

Treasurers Report: Maria gave the treasury report. Went over financials and explained to new members about our income and when and how it comes in. We discussed rising costs and how it affects our budget. Maria added information about our recent investment statement. Q1 was very good for investments. Q2 was good also. Over 10k profit from auctions with Hansen Auction group. **Randy made the motion to approve treasurers report, Bruce seconded. All were in favor. The treasurer's report was approved.**

President's Comments: John started a round table discussion on things that are on custom operator's radar. Common themes were weather. Some areas of the state have near perfect growing conditions, while others are experiencing as high as 75% forage crop loss plus thousands of acres of prevent plant. In some areas of the state, spraying with drones is the only way to spray crops due to flooding and wet fields. This would make an interesting Symposium topic.

Executive Directors Report: Maria went over the membership and sponsorship update. There are 141 WCO members, which is down by a few compared to last year, but still approaching our record high years of 2018/2019/2020. A list of non-renewals was distributed so that board members could contact anyone that they know. Sponsorship payment was also discussed. This year all but one sponsor renewed, and our efforts came together much better than last year. Komro was our outstanding sponsor, and they were contacted multiple times and chose not to renew.

WCO will again host a fundraising auction with Hansen Auction Group late this fall. WCO will receive 1% of the buyer's fee. The group discussed having an auction in December to try to capture people looking to purchase at the end of the year. The last date that we can take consignments is November 26th. Ideally nearly all consignments will be in by the 16th of November. Advertisement fliers will be created around the 5th of November, so items consigned by then will get a larger amount of advertising attention. Auction will then be live on November 26th, and close December 12th at 6:00 PM.

Committee Reports:

Scholarship Committee: Joe gave the report. He discussed the groups decisions on the scholarship winners and their credentials. Again, this year, the program was opened to students pursuing CDL and other career training type programs. There were six applicants. Given that two winners from last year

did not claim their scholarship, or didn't meet the criteria, Joe asked if the board wanted to consider funding the top four candidates so that WCO could honor the granddaughter of the late Robert Hoerth. There was discussion. Randy made a motion to offer one additional \$1,000 WCO scholarship for a total of four candidates. Jeremy seconded. The additional candidate was funded.

Tractor Safety discussion: Heidi Johnson, Agriculture Institute Director, Division of Extension came to talk to the group about the state's tractor safety program. She provided some background on state requirements for certifying youth in tractor safety. Heidi said that with cuts to Extension, there are limited Extension staff who can do these trainings, but the curriculum is provided at no cost to anyone who is certified to teach tractor safety. Vo-ag teachers and tech college instructors are likely sources for trainers. Extension will also add training dates/locations to the state website for tractor safety to help promote and record trainings held.

Additional discussion was had about 12- and 13-year-olds and tractor safety, Wisconsin is the only state that offers certification to youth this young. There is growing concern about the safety of 12- and 13-year-olds operating modern farm machinery in general, and on roads.

Heidi's request is that WCO continue to keep open lines of communication with Extension about any tractor safety events that we support. She also liked the idea of encouraging other agriculture groups to consider supporting tractor safety events in their local areas so that we can increase training opportunities. If there are not enough training opportunities, youth will not seek this credential and will potentially drive without proper training. Michelle Bachund is the new AgrAbility and Youth Tractor Safety Outreach Program Coordinator and manages the state's program and curriculum.

Recruitment/Nomination Committee: There are two spots opening on the WCO board. Amanda Krepline is eligible for a second term and Isaac Lemmenes has reached his two-term limit. There will be an opening for a corporate board member to fill Isaac's spot. Candidates were discussed for both openings. Matt Digman officially retired from the board and was recognized for his ongoing support and dedication to WCO.

Special Projects Committee: Maria went over the final data analysis from Nate Dudenhoffer on our member survey. The value was discussed and the frequency of the survey. The group will continue to do a survey, for consistency of data, every year should be maintained. The board feels that the survey is best in class but could be organized better and made more accessible. The Iowa Custom Rate survey was shown as an example, and the board would like the WCO survey to be organized similarly. Overall, the board wants to get more people to know about the results. Maria will again send the survey out to USCHI to share with their forage members working through Mandi.

Safety/Regulations Committee: Maria gave an overview of the general policy updates and general IoH issues that members had this past spring. A new event idea was discussed. John Osterhaus would like to partner with USCHI on a forage safety day in 2026. There are currently no national options for forage safety training. USCHI has some funding for such an event, and they could help with the planning, staffing and facilitation. The board agreed to do some legwork to help gauge interest in the event. Maria will talk to John Shutske to see if he thinks it's a good idea. The UW Arlington facility was discussed as a venue. Next steps are to form a committee and have a conference call in Aug/Sept.

Education/Conference Committee: Maria discussed the education committee ranking of topics. The committee met virtually to rate topics because it's too hard to get together in person or virtually. Good feedback from sponsors. The board reviewed the committee's pick of topics and gave additional feedback. Maria will start to work on contacting speakers in August.

Old Business: None

New business: None

Adjournment: Randy moved to adjourn. Joe seconded. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting will be held. Dec. 5 at H&S Manufacturing in Marshfield, WI. Maria will contact everyone about getting a block of hotel rooms.

Respectfully submitted by Maria Woldt, on behalf of Randy Clark