

Board of Directors Meeting Summary – June 8, 2009

ABP Budget and Committee Spending:

With the passing of Bill 43, the Board began addressing the impact of this legislation on ABP funding and budgets. The Executive proposed that ABP begin budgeting on the basis of putting revenue from the current year in an operating fund that would cover the expenses in the following year, beginning with the 2010/2011 year when the check-off will become refundable. This way, ABP will always be spending money that it has already and will not be at risk of spending money that could be lost to refunds. The Board approved this concept and reviewed ways to bring the operating fund for the 2010/2011 year up to the target level of \$5 million. The Board had previously put \$3 million into an operating fund for the 2010/2011 year. After careful consideration, the directors proposed reducing the current budget by \$1 million and reducing the allocation of 2008/2009 funds to the Trade Advocacy Reserve Fund by \$1 million. When this money is added to the operating fund, it would give ABP an operating budget of \$5 million for the 2010/2011 fiscal year. The changes were conditionally approved and a motion was carried to send the budgeting concept and the budget amendments to the general assembly for final approval.

Bill 43 Review and Strategy:

With the passing of Bill 43 we now have to refund check-off to producers who ask for it. There are a number of aspects of this that ABP will need to look at. One option will be to speak with other commissions that have a refundable check-off to see how they handle this situation.

There was some indication that the government might listen to arguments for keeping a non-refundable National Check-off but to do that they would have to amend the Act itself and it likely will be difficult to get agreement on this action. A campaign will need to be developed to inform producers why they should leave their check-off with ABP. It is important for the Board to come forward with an ABP strategy for actions that will help the industry and determine how we are going to communicate our strategy with delegates and producers. There are issues on which we need to work with the government, but we have to continue representing the producers in this province and taking their views forward to the government.

ABP Plan Regulation Revisions:

Waller took the directors through the proposed changes to the Plan Regulations. Our current plan was written in 1996 and it cannot be changed easily. The new Legislative Counsel has taken the position that many of the elements in the plan regulation can be removed and put into by-laws which the delegates can adjust at general meetings. This will give ABP more flexibility in changing our structure and operations. The first step is to make sure that the plan and the by-laws reflect what was decided at the 2008 AGM. The next step is to see if the delegates want to make some changes to the plan regulation or keep the decisions as they were made last year. Waller distributed a handout to the directors showing proposed changes to the Plan Regulation that will be discussed at the General Assembly on Tuesday. A motion was carried to adopt the amendments in principle and present them to the general assembly the next day. It is important to understand that even the elements that are put into by-laws can be changed only with the approval of the delegate body at a general meeting.

Livestock Patrons' Claims Review Tribunal:

Arnold Hanson made a presentation regarding the amount of money that has accumulated in the tribunal fund. There have been concerns that the fund has become too large, but the potential for claims with the new LICA likely means that the amount in the fund is not excessive. A motion was carried that the contribution to the Livestock Patrons' Claims fund should remain at \$0.05/head marketed.

OH&S Consultations:

The Alberta government is exploring the issue of occupational health and safety on farms and ranches in Alberta. They are looking for recommendations on policy, programs and legislation for the Ministers of Agriculture & Rural Development and Employment & Immigration. Stroh Consulting has been engaged to help with the stakeholder consultation and will begin by interviewing individuals suggested by organizations such as ABP. After the interviews are completed, ABP and other organizations will be asked to answer question on this issues and comment on options for policy, programs, and legislation.

Animal Health Act – Age Verification:

There is a question about whether the Animal Health Act allows the sharing of age verification information with people along the supply chain. The government believes that the Act allows age verification information flow with the animal, but Waller is not convinced that this is legal. There is continued concern in the industry that the value added to the animal by age verification information will be realized by the feeder or processor, not by the cow/calf producer who bears the cost of providing the age verification information.

Letter of Resignation from Frank Murphy:

The Board accepted the letter of resignation of Frank Murphy as a director of ABP.