

## ARBA Board Meeting

The board meeting of the American Romney Breeders Association started with a request from Anne McIntyre Lahner to record the meeting conducted on Zoom. Request was approved. Don Burgess, President, called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, May 26, 2021. Participating in the meeting were Burgess, McIntyre Lahner, Emma Rogers, Penny Swearingen, Charlene Carlisle, Rick Trojanoski, Melissa Wubben, Carol Pasheilich, Chris Posbergh and JoAnn Mast, ARBA secretary.

Don reported he had received letters of resignation from the ARBA board from Patricia Sanville and Zane Van Horsen and an informal resignation from Ken Gossard. He indicated that this meeting was called to provide a platform for reviewing additional information gained during the meeting of May 19, 2021, where the ad hoc committee reported their findings and recommendations regarding the status of registrations carrying moorit designation.

Information presented during this meeting was prepared by the ad hoc committee following a meeting on May 23, 2021. Actions recommended by the ad hoc committee addressed four points: Rescinding registrations of animals carrying the moorit designation; the future registrations of progeny from rams Rosebank 59/03 and 86/03; the acceptance/rejection of registration of a Tawanda Farm ram; and the future participation of Iron Water Ranch in the American Romney Breeders Association.

Discussions on these recommendations were supported by documents from the ad hoc committee and from Chris Posbergh and co-signers. Both documents are attached at the end of these minutes for your review.

Melissa asked for clarity on whether decisions are for currently registered animals, future progeny, current year progeny and only from rams 59/03 and 86/03. Anne questioned whether or not there would be suspended registrations and to what extent. Don asked about the registration of the Tawanda Farm ram and Carol described the process in which they received pedigree information from Iron Water Ranch and were able to submit an application for registry of the ram.

Chris thanked the ad hoc committee and board for reviewing the decisions of the previous board meeting and taking action to reverse the loss of all registrations for moorit identified Romneys. He also indicated that changing PURCHASED to TRANSFERRED in line one of the committee recommendation would be appreciated.

Anne described the work of the ad hoc committee, indicating they met before the letter from Chris and others was distributed. The committee met because more information was made available during the May 19 meeting. In addition, none of the ad hoc committee members were directly impacted by the recommendations of the committee (owners of moorit identified Romneys).

Don thanked the committee for their work and asked for a motion to move forward in making a decision. Anne moved to accept the ad hoc committee recommendation to recall the vote to rescind registrations for all animals impacted by rams 59/03 and 86/03, as presented during the May 19, `2021 board meeting. Charlene seconded, motion passed unanimously, with Melissa and Carol abstaining.

Rick offered that the committee did the work tasked to do. Use the ARBA by laws to determine what action should be taken regarding the registrations, membership, ram identity and future registrations. The committee made their recommendations, but realized they were in the majority for any vote

regarding the report. Penny added that the committee make up should have been a split with board members and non-members, leaving a better vote of the board on how to move forward. This would have added confidence to the decision and reduced the conflicts within the board during the May 19 meeting. Anne indicated it would be tempting to leave all animals in the registry and have no consequences. If a genetic test is available and done it could support the decision of the board as it moves forward. If done, it would need to be voluntary not required of breeders, need to have a level of acceptability for purebred (90% or greater) determined by ARBA, and have protocol for what to do with animals not meeting the purebred percentage.

Penny asked that three criteria be considered regarding the path of genetic testing: Is the animal being tested the right animal; Is there an oversight committee; Who pays for the testing. Rick added that any breeder can have animals tested for purebred status or for moorit status. He added that it should not be the role of ARBA to do testing and pay the bill. He described the process for registry in the Alpaca association and indicated a fee of \$100 or so is needed to register each animal. Probably not a reasonable fee for sheep. JoAnn asked if any sheep have been tested.

Carol suggested that if anything is tested it should be semen from rams 59/03 and 86/03. Emma indicated that may be difficult to obtain. Chris described the collection method for DNA needed, easily done without veterinary assistance, but added that the results of the testing is confidential and released only to the owner. He also indicated that testing within the Romney breed is not widespread.

Don indicated he still has questions regarding how to proceed and suggested the board move carefully and get input from the membership before making decisions of further recommendations. He preferred not to take further action until input could be collected.

Carol asked for clarity and if not moving forward now, please set a time line so that breeders can move forward with registrations, sales and culling.

Rick moved that the letter distributed by Chris Posbergh be included in the minutes since several references had been made to the document during this meeting. Anne seconded and motion carried.

Anne moved and Emma seconded that the report from the ad hoc committee also be added to this set of minutes. Motion passed.

Melissa offered comments from one of the breeders impacted by this concern presented for the board to solve. She stressed the difficulty of the situation on all involved. She supports genetic testing but is unsure how results could be secure. Testing is a tool to keep the gene pool from being diluted, but not an easy solution. ARBA role is difficult because testing cannot be required and results may not be shared. She also questioned how ARBA would communicate these details to the affected breeders.

Anne indicated she has started a list of items to assist in telling the story of the actions taken by the board on May 19 and the request to meet again May 26 to further discuss how to move forward with registering affected sheep. Information leading to the need to meet would be included and references provided to help members determine their thoughts on moving forward.

Anne referred to a document provided by Allison Seyfert that outlined a buyer/seller list to use when marketing sheep, registering sheep and transferring ownership of sheep. These documents are on the

ARBA website. Anne suggested that the breeder makes decisions regarding how to proceed if they have animals of questionable genetics.

Carol requested a decision, and if not a decision, a time line on when a decision would be made.

Don indicated that members of the board that have resigned are quite upset with actions taken and need time to offer input and respond to upcoming decisions the board will be making. Chris added that the letter was offering an explanation of actions taken and the need to provide an avenue for input from the membership, rather than a vote of a limited number of board members. He was alerted to work by ad hoc committee via minutes on website from April 19 meeting.

Melissa indicated sales and decisions are in progress for 2021. Breeders need to know if they are selling sheep with registration papers, if they should keep lambs that may not be eligible for registry, or if the cull pen should be fuller. A plan for how to communicate to breeders is needed.

Don suggested that information should be distributed to the membership within a week. Penny reminded the board of the upcoming sale at Wooster, Ohio and that there was an entry with genetics that could be questioned. Penny offered to contact the breeder to describe the actions being discussed and if pedigree contains numbers from two rams in question, explain the possible impacts. Information from sale catalog shows the entry may be from the ram 3/03 line and not impacted. Carol and Melissa offered information on the recessive level of impact relating to moorits. Don reminded the board that the task is to determine whether sheep are purebred Romneys, not moorit carrying Romneys.

Rick presented a motion to advance the work of the ARBA board to the membership for review and input on how to act on the recommendations of the ad hoc committee responding to the task relating to review of the moorit identified registrations, with input received by June 30. Second by Emma. Carol amended motion to read June 15, Rick second. Amendment and motion approved.

Anne, Melissa and Don will create a letter of explanation and invitation to offer input for distribution to the ARBA membership. This will be done within the week and sent to the board for review prior to mailing and posting. Zoom meeting will be held to conduct this business.

Anne moved for adjournment at 8:20 p.m. EDT, Rick seconded and motion passed.

Submitted by

JoAnn Mast, ARBA secretary