

American Romney Breeders Association  
Board of Directors Special Meeting, August 24, 2021

**Call to order.**

- The Special Meeting of the American Romney Breeders Association (ARBA) Board of Directors was called to order by Anne McIntyre-Lahner at 7:31 pm Eastern time. This meeting was held over Zoom and recorded.

**Roll call.**

Present

Anne McIntyre-Lahner—Vice President  
Emma Rogers—District 1  
Amy Miller—District 2  
Penelope Swearingen—District 3  
Sue Kalina—District 4  
Carol Pasheilich—District 5  
Betsy McPherson—District 6  
Charlene Carlisle—At Large  
Melissa Wubben—At Large  
Georgina Anderson—Secretary/Treasurer

Absent

Don Burgess--President  
Rick Trojanoski—At Large

**Introduction of Georgina Anderson, new ARBA Secretary/Treasurer.**

- Georgina can be reached at: [secretary@americanromney.org](mailto:secretary@americanromney.org) or by phone at 859-940-9704.

**Resignation of Don Burgess, ARBA President.**

- Anne received a text message from Don on 8/24/2021 indicating his desire to step aside as President of ARBA. Due to a promotion at work, Don no longer has time to commit to ARBA. Board members expressed appreciation for Don's leadership and efforts with ARBA. Don was due to vacate the role of President in October 2021.
- **Betsy moved to accept Don's resignation, which was seconded by Sue. Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.**
- Anne will continue to complete the duties of President until the ARBA Annual Meeting in October and will formally take the title of President at that time.
- **Action step:**
  - **Anne will inform Don and thank him for his service.**

**Annual Meeting.**

- Annual Membership Meeting
  - Emma has done an excellent job of completing much of the groundwork for the ARBA Annual Meetings in Rhinebeck, New York. The ARBA Annual Meeting will take place at CJ's Italian Ristorante (353 Old Post Road, Rhinebeck, NY / 845-876-7711) at 6:00 pm Eastern on Friday, October 15, 2021. The meal is expected to cost approximately \$25 per person, including taxes and tips. CJ's is currently planning to accommodate our expected group of about 40 people, but the restaurant can handle a larger group if necessary. The meal will include salad, bread, a buffet meal and coffee for all guests.
  - A table will be set up at the meeting for the Silent Auction.
  - In organizing the meeting, consideration should be given to allowing members to join remotely. A hybrid event may be difficult in a restaurant setting.

- Susan Schoenian, Sheep and Goat Specialist at the University of Maryland will be giving a 30 minute presentation at the Annual Meeting that will also be broadcast live via Zoom.
- The Annual Meeting usually includes some sort of educational/fun component. In past years, this has been a scavenger hunt. An idea for this year could be a Trivia Contest or Skill-a-thon – like event. Georgina has organized these and volunteers to help. Trivia Contest could be done over Zoom so people could participate remotely.
- In previous years, new Board Members may have been inducted at the Annual Meeting, though this hasn't happened recently. In recent years, incoming Board Members introduced themselves.
- **Actions Steps:**
  - **Charlene volunteered to collect money from ARBA members attending the meeting and pay the restaurant.**
  - **An accurate count of ARBA members attending must be provided one week before event (10/8/2021 or earlier).**
  - **Charlene will help with the Silent Auction. Charlene may be able to receive donated items for the Silent Auction and transport them to the restaurant.**
  - **Consider options for allowing ARBA members to attend the annual meeting remotely.**
  - **Ensure technology for S. Schoenian's presentation is in place. Computer, webcam, projection screen, etc.**
  - **Charlene and Georgina will create a Trivia game or other engaging activity as part of the meeting and will try to include a remote option.**
  - **Should there be an induction of new Board Members? Or just introductions? Charlene will ask JoAnn what has been done in the past.**
- Room Block at Hyatt Place in Poughkeepsie, NY
  - Rooms are reserved Thursday (10/14/2021) to Sunday (10/17/2021), and ARBA members can reserve rooms from the block for all or part of that time period. When making reservations online, ARBA members should use the code G-ARBA to indicate they are part of the reserved room block.
- Old Board Meeting
  - Scheduled for Friday 10/15/2021 during the window of 9:00 am to 12:00 pm Eastern in Hyatt Place conference room.
- New Board Meeting
  - Scheduled for Saturday 10/16/2021 during the window of 9:00 am to 12:00 pm Eastern in Hyatt Place conference room.
  - **Action Steps:**
    - **Determine times of meeting that will allow west coast BOD members attend as conveniently as possible.**

#### **Ongoing Handling of Improperly Registered Rams.**

- Emma has drafted an objective, detailed timeline of events relating to the improper registration of rams by Iron Water Ranch. The timeline begins in 2007 and continues to present. It's a PDF document due to software used but can be edited. (Draft attached to minutes).
- This is a complex issue and the following things need to be considered:
  - conversations relevant to the issue are being converted to a more portable document format.

- It was noted that, in investigating further, only documented communications and actions should be considered, and hearsay should be avoided.
- Directors who have served ARBA for a longer time provided newer Directors with a detailed summary of factors contributing to the current situation.
- There was discussion of formation of a committee to further investigate how the rams were improperly registered, who, if anyone, intentionally and knowingly was dishonest or disregarded proper procedures in registering rams. Discussion included:
  - ...who should be on such a committee. The special committee who helped in recent information-gathering have valuable institutional knowledge but were also treated poorly in the process of gathering said information. They may or may not be willing to participate. It was suggested that a new committee with fresh eyes may be advantages when continuing investigation.
  - ...what would the BOD be hoping to accomplish by forming such an investigative committee. Reasons for further investigation include:
    - Someone on the ARBA BOD (previously) may have been involved in dishonest or inappropriate actions relating to the improperly registered rams, or may have intentionally communicated inaccurate information regarding the improperly registered rams, and if so, the current BOD should be aware.
    - Examining where the current registration procedures failed, so a similar mistake is not repeated in the future.
    - What role, if any, did Associated Registries play in the mis-registration of the animals in question?
    - ...reasons against immediate further investigation include:
      - The possibility that continuing to investigate and prolonging discussion this controversial subject may keep people upset longer than necessary
      - The BOD's inability to enact meaningful response even if people acted with intentional dishonesty.
    - A roll call was used to determine opinions of each Board member to form an investigative committee immediately or to wait until information from Associated Registries was available:
      - Wait to form committee: Betsy, Sue, Carol, Charlene, Amy, Emma, Penny
      - Abstaining: Melissa
- The BOD found consensus of the following at the end of the discussion:
  - Anne should follow up with Associated Registries to obtain relevant information, and, based on that information, the BOD should discuss what actions should be taken next regarding further investigation.
  - Any committee formed in the future should have an odd number of members to avoid an even split in opinions.
  - It was suggested that Carol and Melissa should recuse themselves from any future committee regarding this issue due to their personal involvement with the situation.
- **Action steps:**
  - **Add to the timeline—misregistration of rams came to light when Iron Water Ranch accused Tawanda Farms and Oak Creek Farms of misconduct in writing, though these accusations were found to be without merit.**
  - **Anne will follow up with Associated Registries to find out how the rams came to be registered.**
  - **Georgina will track certified letter sent to Iron Water Ranch to verify delivery status.**
- **The Board identified the following issues as important considerations in future discussions:**

- Drafting a letter to breeders directly impacted by misregistered rams.
- Drafting a letter to all who received communication from Iron Water Ranch with meritless accusations against Tawanda Farm and Oak Creek Farm.
- Consequences from ARBA for meritless accusations against Tawanda Farm and Oak Creek Farm.

**Next Meeting.**

- September 21, 2021, 7:30 pm Eastern time.

**Adjournment.**

- Penny moved to adjourn the meeting. Melissa seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.