



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®

Board of Directors Teleconference
Wednesday, October 25, 2017
8:30 a.m. AKDT

Call in information for participants:
Call in number: 800-315-6338
Alternate Call in number: +1-913-904-9376
Access Code: 05684

Draft Agenda

I. Call to Order

Chair calls the meeting to order at 8:34am

a. Roll Call:

Present: Chair Jack Schultheis, Vice Chair Allen Kimball, Mark Palmer, Fritz Johnson, Richard Riggs, Tomi Marsh, Rep. Stutes, Sen. Micciche

Absent: Tom Enlow, Comm. Hladick, Sen. Stevens, Sen. Hoffman.

Staff Present: Alexa Tonkovich, Sara Truitt, Jeff Regnart

Committee Members present: Mark Fina

Public attendance: None

b. **Approve Agenda:** Schultheis asks for a motion to approve agenda. Riggs moves to approve agenda, Kimball seconds

c. **Approve minutes from the May 8th and 9th 2017 meetings:** Chair Schultheis asks for a motion to approve the minutes from the two aforesaid meetings. Riggs notes that in the minutes there is no second motion noted with regards to the decision to close the Seattle office. Tonkovich states that the recording will be reviewed and the minutes will be updated with the board member who made the second motion. Chair asks for motion to accept minutes with corrected information pending. Johnson moves to approve. Palmer seconds.

d. **Chair Remarks:** Chair Schultheis welcomes everyone. Thanks Allen Kimball and Tomi Marsh for their help while he was absent. Appreciates the effort they put in. Chair Schultheis stated his wish to hold the meeting due to a busy summer coupled with duty to the state and industry. Wants there to be a successful all hands meeting in coming months. Chair Schultheis then

invites remarks from Tonkovich.

- e. **Executive Director Remarks:** 2018 MAP award has been awarded to ASMI. Total bucket of Map funding is 1.8% lower. Most saw a decrease. ASMI funding is \$4,212,420.00. This is a drop of .08%. ASMI's decrease is less than the overall decrease for the overall MAP program. The feedback from Foreign Agriculture Service is that ASMI has many things to be proud of and ASMI is doing a good job of telling its story. This is the last year that the 2014 farm bill is authorized. Needing a reauthorization of the bill is a priority. Tonkovich states she has reached out to the Alaska delegation expressing support for the Farm Bill as that would be a huge support. ASMI is already preparing for the Boston seafood show. ASMI is toying with idea of opening sponsoring up for the reception which ASMI hosts. Inquiries have come in from other non-seafood companies interested in sponsoring, companies like Grunduns. Invites board members to provide feedback if sponsorship opportunities should be opened up to non-primary-processors.

Palmer expresses concern for the effect increased sponsored tables will have on seating for guests. Expansion of sponsorship tables will reduce seating available to customer base/guests.

Chair Schultheis notes the reception area is very tightly packed. Expresses desire to see customers allowed better seating rather than allowing sponsors to take up seating. Asks about altering set up of tables and chairs to improve layout; it's so packed you can hardly walk. Alexa: Notes it may be possible to change sponsorship contracts, notes a larger space might not be feasible but could look into other solutions to address tight space. Tonkovich then reports All Hands dates and location for board, reception on Tuesday evening. Offers to take questions and calls at office.

II. Public Comment: Chair Schultheis asks for public comment. There is no public comment.

III. Strategic Plan – Overview: Chair Schultheis invites Tonkovich to provide an overview. Tonkovich states that the current Strategic Plan was last reviewed in 2013. The board has been asked by domestic committee to revisit the strategic plan. ASMI directors have met and reviewed the plan. They have a list of recommended edits. In the board packet is a document of edits. Alexa offers to walk members through edits, notes major edits listed at the end, and notes the ASMI directors feel it would be helpful for the board to go through edits, recognizing that a teleconference is not the best forum but welcomes further follow up for members now or at a later time. Would like the board to approve plan for 2018.

Chair Schultheis states he feels this plan is important for ASMI, and proposes a work session scheduled for January. Invites other board members to contribute to discussion.

Chair suggests we table it until BOD can have a work session so that everyone can weigh in on it. Would like to have other directors weigh in on the plan before it is approved.

Palmer: stated that he has questions about the edits in general. Expressed concern about addition of the word "public."

Tonkovich notes that the directors are attempting to reflect current practices and to acknowledge the broad reach of ASMI.

Palmer: Additional question: page 2, remarks on social responsibility, under threats and challenges there is also “social welfare benchmarking standards”. Recalls that when ASMI went for GSSI cert, we added in some aspects of social responsibility. He knows that MSC added “Social responsibility” to their goals. Are we now also adding this in? If that is something that RFM committee or staff feel strongly about, then that should be some time that we spend time on. Can you comment?

Tonkovich explains that RFM does not cover social responsibility. International Program receives many questions from customers related to social responsibility. ASMI recognizes hesitancy to dive into social responsibility. There will need to be a response from ASMI.

Palmer: Expresses concern over ASMI’s mission as a marketing institution and possible mission drift into social responsibility, which may be better suited to industry.

Marsh: Expresses possibility of consumer outreach and education, and ASMI’s role as a backdrop to the conversation.

Kimball: Expresses support for a work session in January. Interested to see how the board can provide direction to staff and committees.

Marsh and Johnson also express support for the work session.

Tonkovich: Offers to set up a work session to take place after all hands.

Chair Schultheis: asks for any further comment. No further comments provided.

IV: RFM Committee Update – Chair Schultheis invites Jeff Regnart to provide report. Regnart notes that both he and Fina will provide input on the report.

Fina: Discussed current progress of the RFM committee which has been focused on the QMS procedures that are used for the RFM governance program. Effort to stay away from changes in content and particularly paid attention to the GSSI requirements so that we are consistent by what we have approved from GSSI. Fina anticipates having it finalized for All Hands. By that time the committee will have approved the revisions and ask the board to approve as well. The goal of making those documents more accessible has been achieved. The RFM committee is also developing a new logo, which will likely not be ready by All Hands.

Regnart: Committee looked hard at cutting costs while not falling out of alignment with accreditation or GSSI. Will obtain feedback from OMR’s and put together a packet for the board possible at January work session.

Fina: Reports on strategic plan revisions for RFM program. Notes it was last revised in 2014. Focus on solidifying strategy of RFM program in markets as well as fisheries that may benefit from certification program.

Regnart: Subgroup of Committee working on update for All Hands regarding strategic plan.

Marsh: compliments the work of the RFM committee

Chair Schultheis: Also feels RFM is making progress and asks about response from industry

Fina: Industry does feel that progress is being made on this. Idea of workshops to understand what industry is looking for from the RFM program.

Chair Schultheis notes importance of industry support of the process.

Kimball: The board should review documents and be familiar enough so that we can be prepared to vote and provide direction. Asks what are the next steps that the board needs to provide?

Fina: At all hands we will have an outline of where we're headed, it would be important for the BOD to look at that and provide feedback on that and their approach to transitioning. We need to decide which areas of the program need improvement as the program develops towards broader markets. Will look to the board to approve or provide feedback on prioritization.

Kimball: Asks if the Commissioner has responded as to how the state views RFM?

Tonkovich: Commissioner and she spoke with Department of Law and ASMI's trademark attorney. At this time they couldn't give an answer as to whether this would be an asset to the state without a full legal review of the program which would be costly and timely. That step has not been taken at this time due to concerns for time and cost.

Marsh: States she's also spoken to Hladick several times, notes sensitivity should be considered in an election year.

Fina: Would like to see more work done with the subgroup before going towards a legal review.

Kimball: Completely agrees with Marks comment. Feels BOD needs to read and review the info and ID where we're headed from that standpoint. Need to understand what the package looks like. So that we can have RFM be usable and accepted by our customers and the market. We need to prioritize our time so as to make steps and progress. At all hands if we can have that discussion and read through the documents then hopefully we can move this along and make solid progress.

Chair Schultheis: Thanks all for their comments. Asks if there is any further discussion on RFM. Hearing none, thanks speakers and moves on to Alexa's staffing update.

V. Staffing Update: Tonkovich identifies a significant number of staffing changes as a result of pending office closure. Domestic program especially has had lots of change. Compliments Victoria and contractors to have made amazing progress. Notes new hire of Emily Gisler and Sarah Cannard as Domestic Marketing Coordinators. Notes Megan Rider's transition to Domestic Marketing Manager

provides continuity to the new staff team. Victoria Parr will be transitioning to Juneau around end of 2017. ASMI has two positions open: one domestic and one international. Notes three positions in Seattle, anticipating keeping those staff onboard until next spring. Tonkovich is in the process of leasing new space to expand JNU office. Generally new staff all around. Plans to spend time on time training and team building with the new staff. Appreciates the patience of the board, industry. Commends Victoria Parr, Lisa Martinson, and Domestic Contractors for keeping the program running during the transition. As well as Communications, International and Sustainability for stepping in as needed to help out. Expresses being impressed with work done during the transition period. Looks forward to the board being able to meet the new staff at All Hands.

Marsh: Commends Alexa, looks forward to meeting rest of the new hires. Impressed by the staff she has met so far.

Chair Schultheis asks if there are any further comments regarding staffing. No comments made

VI: Executive Session: The board did not go into executive session during this meeting.

VII: Reconvene Open Session: The board did not go into executive session during this meeting. Open session continued uninterrupted.

VIII: All Hands Agenda Items: Tonkovich notes she is working on the agenda and welcomes topics to discuss from the board members. Notes she will not include strategic plan at this time. She does look to include RFM. Spend time with board to discuss budget. Welcomes comment and feedback from BOD for agenda items to be added.

Riggs: Notes a motion from the last meeting to further discuss Seattle Office closing. Tonkovich offers to include that topic on the January work session. Board members agree.

Chair Schultheis asks about plans to publicize the meetings

Tonkovich reviews current plan: Information sent to committee/BOD/legislature/federal delegation/industry groups/office of int'l trade/Gov's office. Sends out in weekly and monthly report: 4,000 or more readers, last year we sent out a standalone notice to that group and we will do the same this year. We also have an invitation postcard at PME.

Chair Schultheis asks which staff person is in charge of All Hands.

Alexa: Sara who is taking our minutes, has replaced Deb, she is the main point of contact. She is the lead organizer. She is the Executive Assistant and Board Liaison.

- a. Board Proxy for All Hands

Chair: asks for comment

Palmer: Asks if the board would approve a proxy as he regrettably must miss All Hands. Palmer puts forth Tom Sunderland as a proxy. He will also review the RFM packet and agenda prior to his attendance. Asks the boards permission to approve proxy.

Chair Schultheis notes he is unsure if there is any precedent for a proxy or if there is anything in our Bylaws.

Palmer responds there is not.

Tonkovich explains that the Bylaws do not prohibit nor provide guidance regarding a proxy. One way to look at it would be if the proxy participates but does not vote. Happy to do more research.

Marsh: asks if we should clear it with Commissioner Hladick

Palmer: Happy to pull his request if this is not something than can be approved.

Alexa: Offers to consult with Boards and Commissions to obtain an answer.

Chair Schultheis asks for further questions for the good of the order. No discussion or comment.

V. Adjourn: Chair Schultheis asks if there is a motion to adjourn.

Riggs makes motion. Sen. Micciche seconds.

Meeting is adjourned at 9:50am.