



*Wild, Natural & Sustainable*

## **ASMI Domestic Marketing Committee Meeting**

Friday, November 24, 2017

10:00 AM AKST

Adventure Room, Captain Cook Hotel, Anchorage, AK

*Recording: 171128\_001 (06/06)*

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Chair Thea Thomas.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

*Present:*

Thea Thomas, Julianne Curry, Tom Sunderland, Jamie Marshall, Cassandra Squibb, Bob Barnett, Lilani Estacio, Nicole Kimball, Jessica Hathaway, Ron Jolin, Jennifer Castle

*Absent:*

Peggy Parker, Fritz Johnson

*Domestic Staff/Contractors Present:*

Jeremy Woodrow (ASMI), Victoria Parr (ASMI), Megan Rider (ASMI), Kate Consenstein (Rising Tide), Christine Fanning (Contractor), David Wooley (Contractor), Will Notini (Technomic), Matt Harris (Revelry), Katie Goldberg (Edelman), Tessa Webber (Edelman), Tricia Sanguinetti (Contractor), Susan Dahl (KP Corporation), Emily Gisler (ASMI), Beth Munnely (Revelry), Jason Snavlin (KP Corporation), Becky Monagle (ASMI), Mark Jones (Contractor), Carol Merry (Contractor), Arianna Elnes (ASMI), Susan Marks (ASMI)

*Public Present:*

Doug Griffin (SWAMC), Tom Enlow (UniSea), Dan Sullivan (UniSea), Pat Shanahan (GAPP), Jason Smith (Undercurrent News), Christa Hoover (Copper River Marketing), Mark Callahan, Richard Riggs (Silver Bay Seafoods), Mike Cusack (American Seafoods), Sandy Souter (Alaska General Seafoods), John Daly (Peter Pan Seafoods), Aaron Jolin (Kodiak Harvester), Kinsey Justa (Copper River RSDA), Nelly Hand (Salmon Harvester), Tyson Fick (ABSC), Keith Singleton (Alaskan Leader), Abe Williams (BBRSDA), Allen Kimball (Trident), Adelheid Herrmann, Shannon Stevens (Alaska Air Cargo), Matt Alward (Alward Fisheries LLC), Carina Nichols (Harvester), Sinclair Wilt (Westward Seafoods/Alyeska Seafoods), Mark Fina (US Seafoods)

### 3. STATEMENT OF MISSION

The Domestic Committee is responsible for directing both the Communications and Domestic programs, as well as making recommendations to the Board. ASMI's mission is to increase the value of Alaska Seafood. Thea reminded the group that they should be fiscally cognizant given current budget climate.

### 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Moved by Julianne, seconded by Ron.** Thea proposed putting all program reports together before the Technomics agenda item and move Communications after Domestic Program.

*\* After the lunch break Bruce Schactler and Food Aid was added after Budget.*

**Motion passed with agenda changes.**

### 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Moved by Julianne, Bob seconded.** Jeremy proposed adding Arianna Elnes as being present to the previous meeting's minutes.

**Motion passed with minutes changes.**

### 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

### 7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Alexa Tonkovich not present.

### 8. DOMESTIC PROGRAM

Mark Jones presented on his retail promotions across the country, highlighting in-store demos.

David Woolley presented progress in the distributor program, focusing on three major broadline distribution promotions from this year.

Matt Harris talked about increasing awareness of the support ASMI can provide to the seafood marketplace as well as foodservice. He covered the scope of the publications that Revelry targets on behalf of Alaska seafood.

Carol Merry highlighted the digital ad that worked best for this fiscal year. With budget cuts, digital advertising and radio ads were prioritized. Carol also gave an overview of the Google Analytics for ASMI websites and how that ties in with digital ad performance.

Tricia Sanguinetti gave an overview of her duties and her involvement with sustainability, foodservice and now retail. She highlighted some of the current industry trends and how she helps design the creative strategy for those. An overall strategy is being worked on separately and in concert with the style guide.

Megan Rider presented about foodservice operator promotions, on behalf of Jann Dickerson, highlighting various promotions. For every \$1 ASMI spends, partners spent a little over \$18.

## **9. FY18 DOMESTIC BUDGET UPDATE**

Becky prefaced her report with a high-level explanation of how Finance helps support the ASMI programs and communicated to committee the present funding landscape. Personnel services – with high turnover, the budget has changed throughout the fiscal year to reflect new positions and different salaries. Communications was one of the programs that historically was absorbed by the International program, which has changed this year to being absorbed wholly by Communications. SENA cost more in FY17 than was anticipated, which will not be the case in the coming year.

The committee would like to be able to evaluate the program costs in more detail, as opposed to the group buckets. Although it was noted that general buckets are most helpful for creating a guideline for the staff to use throughout the year.

## **10. COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET/CONSUMER PR STRATEGIC PLAN & UPDATE**

Katie Goldberg and Tessa Weber from Edelman PR presented on consumer public relations and gave an overview of their work with Alaska seafood focused on domestic promotions. Discussion ensued about being prepared to tout ASMI's sustainability messaging as well as the research around consumer trust in seafood compared to the food industry as a whole. It was addressed that having a greater supply of new photography to push out to ASMI's audience would be helpful.

Jeremy stressed that the Communications program supports all the other ASMI operational programs. He addressed familiarization trips and the effort to organize them because they are important for guests to be able to experience Alaska seafood industry firsthand so they can act as brand ambassadors. Connecting with the fleet is an on-going effort that Communications addresses through a variety of avenues.

Discussion ensued about the chef partners and how the guests for FAMs are chosen, as well as the inclusion of K-12 and school foodservice industry in the Alaska Seafood Culinary Alliance, which will be revamped in the coming year. The value, though un-trackable, for FAMs is there and the committee discussed other ways to host at a more cost-effective level.

## **11. FOOD AID**

Bruce covered the changing landscape of Food Aid as they delve into product development. He stressed the Domestic Committee should be familiar with the three products currently available. There was group interest in promoting Food Aid efforts from a PR standpoint via Edelman, especially in-state.

## **12. TECHNOMIC MARKET RESEARCH PRESENTATION**

Will gave an overview of Technomic's research covering who the ASMI consumer is now and who the future consumer will be. The strategy is carried out in two phases, the first of which is secondary review and second is primary research.

Will emphasized that grocery store shopping is declining in favor of a diversified set of shopping channels. The path to purchase is rapidly shrinking as trends like online shopping and smart kitchens become more closely integrated.

He noted there is an opportunity for Alaska seafood in the \$10 per pound price point range to compete with other fish that do not have to sustainability or talking points Alaska seafood does, which the research shows is important to younger, future seafood consumers.

The next steps include primary research and a strategic work session to develop the comprehensive strategy. Will further explained that in Phase Two that an online survey will include a psychographic analysis to answer questions left unanswered from Phase One.

### **13. TRANSPORTATION GUEST SPEAKERS**

#### *a. Alaska Air Cargo*

Thea invited Kathy, Shannon Stevens, and Rick from Alaska Air Cargo to present. 2017 challenges included freighter delays, Combi retirements, certification of new freighters, and operational reliability. Looking forward they will have additional capacity (up 20%) starting Feb. 2018.

The group discussed communications between Alaska Air and processors in small communities during openers and other critical times for shipping seafood.

#### *b. Northern Air Cargo*

Thea invited Margo from Alaska Air Cargo to speak. Their services are available for charter work out of Anchorage between rural coastal communities for seafood. Freight outbound is the majority of revenue, so seafood helps fill up cargo space on return flights. The third plane will be dedicated to seafood charters.

Leaking seafood is a returning issue and adds large maintenance cost to aircraft. Flight scheduling group communicated with processors 24 hours and charters will be available virtually around the clock.

### **14. INDUSTRY UPDATE**

#### *a) ASMI Staff Training*

The committee addressed wanting to help assist in getting new ASMI staff up to speed on the industry. The idea consisted primarily of different volunteers from the committee contributing a presentation or time on their aspect of the industry.

Discussion ensued about how to make this happen. Jaime suggested a subcommittee be formed to put the project together. Thea noted the Board could be made aware of this effort and the committee will continue moving forward with the project. The group consensus was to make this a priority and the format can be flexible as long as there is notice of upcoming events to combine efforts.

*b) Committee and Staff Communication*

Following up on Rasmus' note about the need for greater communication between industry and ASMI, Thea noted this should be a priority as well. Victoria noted that perhaps there should be a note at the bottom of marketing update about the events and tradeshow, which Jeremy said exists but could be perhaps strengthened.

Julianne noted that this is a recurring issue and Tom noted that perhaps the issue is that the actual problem isn't known in order to fix it. Tom noted that part of the problem might be that communicating a calendar isn't always possible because there is always something happening, which Jaime expanded that perhaps it should be focused on big-picture events.

From a media perspective, granular details would be appreciated by Jessica. Katie noted that Edelman has these items available months in advance in line with the planning process – although some are private so that should be noted and not made public.

*c) ASMI partnering with industry at events and promotions*

Better communication on upcoming events and promotions lead to a discussion about partnering on such events. The committee believes that in the future of budget reductions that ASMI and industry could benefit and increase efficiencies by partnering on events and promotions. We strongly recommend to staff and industry take advantage of this as much as possible.

*d) Promoting branded vs. generic seafood products*

This discussion on partnering then brought up the issue of ASMI partnering or promoting a specific brand. This was centered around Wild Alaska Pollock. It was noted by ASMI staff and contractors that often there was only one brand available for the product form needed for a certain event or promotion. The committee thought it would be a good idea to get clarification on the issue from the board. There was also the idea that processors could provide generic packaging for items that are the best product for a specific event or promotion but were only available from one brand. It was further noted that the issue could grow as processors become more vertically integrated and produce more value-added unique items.

*e) Sustainability*

The committee asked if there could be better involvement between the Communications and Sustainability programs, to ensure consistent messaging. In the year to come as some species harvest levels decline, the committee believes it is very important for everyone to have the same messaging about sustainability. The committee asked if we could provide input into the sustainability messaging. The sustainability team agreed to start by circulating the Frequently Asked Questions about sustainability and later to have a web seminar to get input from the committee and industry to make sure we have consistent messaging.

*f) RFM*

Some committee members explained that there was misunderstanding within the industry about RFM. It was noted that there is an RFM toolkit and that the RFM committee is looking at a strategic plan for outreach, it was agreed that this could be very helpful. Separately, industry

committee members noted that having simple direct messaging on RFM for salespeople would be helpful.

*g) Toast to the Coast*

Nicole – it would be great to have ASMI presence Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> given the greater emphasis on seafood. Will be attended by legislators.

**15. COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. *What major challenges do you see the ASMI program you guide facing in the coming years? (short-term and long-term) Please specify by market, species, or general programmatic concern.*
  - a) Major challenges looking forward are the state budget cuts and staff turnover. The concern for funding specifically was for seafood marketing and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game budget.
  - b) The Domestic committee agreed with the species committees that all programs should be looking at ways to achieve efficiencies and become more streamlined. With reduced budgets, spending needs to be strategic and focused on getting the most benefit for the cost. The committee thinks prioritizing strategies with guidance from board will be important in the coming year.
2. *What strengths or opportunities have you identified in the ASMI program you guide?*
  - a) Almost a year ago the Domestic Marketing committee began a project to identify the changing consumer of Alaska seafood in an evolving market. ASMI contracted with Technomic to do research on who is the target audience for Alaska seafood today and in the future. The committee found the presentation of the report very enlightening and recommends that ASMI begin adjusting messaging around the Technomic research. Copies are available of the presentation and the committees recommends this to board members.
  - b) Partnering with industry on events and promotions
  - c) Sustainability continues to be a challenge and an opportunity
  - d) Capitalize on the Alaska Story with the ocean to table approach.
3. *Taking into account comments from the species committees, are there any specific actions you would recommend for the ASMI program you guide? (species committee comments and recommendations will be provided in writing at the conclusion of their respective meetings)*
  - a) We recommend that ASMI continue to focus on Wild Alaska Pollock but to be proactive with salmon looking at the season to come.
  - b) Elevate flatfish as a star species

- c) Develop pink salmon promotions for both H&G and fillet
- d) Continue work to stabilize the canned salmon market.

The committee would like to state that they appreciate the feedback from each species committee.

4. *Are there any specific questions pertaining to your program you would like the ASMI Board to address? Or any specific actions you would like them to consider? If not, write N/A.*

A year ago at this meeting the Domestic committee recommended that the board not form a separate communications committee. The board followed that recommendation. A year has gone by and there are pro and cons to this committee structure. The committee had a lengthy discussion about this issue.

There were two key points that came up on each side of the issue. Several committee members noted how absolutely integral the Consumer Public Relations program is to the Domestic Marketing program. The Consumer PR program is part of the Communications program. It is really important for the Domestic program staff and committee to have direct input about the Consumer PR program. The main drawback to the present committee structure is the lack of processors members and representation on the committee.

With so many new staff members in the Domestic Marketing program, it has been a hindrance not having more processor input and direction on the committee. Some of the other discussion points again fell on both sides of this issue, were that keeping the committees together seemed the best way to increase communication, but that having a large committee sometimes made it difficult to get things done.

Many committee members supported keeping the committees together one additional year, but if they were split, to have a joint meeting between the two committees. In the end the committee did not have a consensus so took it to a vote. A motion was made as follows:

*The ASMI Domestic Committee recommends that we continue as a combined Domestic and Communications committee for an additional year. Both programs have seen significant staff turnover and changes to the programs themselves. We also request additional processors be considered for committee appointments.*

**The motion was passed, but it was not unanimous, 7 in favor, 2 opposed.**

#### **16. OLD BUSINESS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Julianne had cards for previous ASMI staff for all the committee to sign.

#### **17. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING, SPRING 2018**

Discussion around the next meeting came up. Both March 2nd and April 16<sup>th</sup> were proposed as possible dates. The committee discussed waiting until April when the next budget meeting would normally take place. It was noted, however, that weighing in that much later after the annual year may not give enough lead time.

**18. ADJOURN**

**Moved by Lilani, seconded by John. Meeting adjourned at 5:02pm.**