

LOUISIANA LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION BOARD MEETING

January 11, 2019

10:00 AM

**Veterans Memorial Auditorium
5825 Florida Boulevard, 1st Floor
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806
Proceedings**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM.

PLEDGE

Calvin LeBouef led the pledge of allegiance.

PRAYER

Sheriff Torres led in prayer.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by John Walther

Members present:

Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM, Sheriff Bud Torres, James LeLeux, Calvin LeBouef, Henry Capdebosque, Honorable Todd Newsom and Charles Garrett

Members absent:

Vic Blanchard, Sheriff Stephen Prator and James Arceneaux

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Strain asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Honorable Todd Newsom made a motion to approve minutes and it was seconded by Henry Capdebosque. No comments, additions or deletions. Motion passed unanimously.

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REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMISSION

John Walther gave an overview of the activities from last year (2018) and introduced his staff. He mentioned the two brand retirees and their years of service.

John Walther spoke on 2019 being the renewal year for brands. By law brands renew every 5 years. Renewal forms will mail out in March, to everyone that has a current registered brand, and will go to September 1st. Brands that are not renewed by the end of the year will become available for someone else to take over.

John Walther mentioned that a booth was set up at the 2018 Louisiana Farm Bureau convention and that it brought awareness to the brand renewal period.

Commissioner Strain introduced the new General Council, Amy McInnis. Amy spoke on her past work experience.

Scott Perry spoke on the SSLREA (Southern States Livestock and Rural Enforcement Agent) conference that was held in October 2018 in Mt. Dora, Florida. The inspectors that attended receive law enforcement related training in regard to agriculture related crimes. They also receive continuing education hours that count towards their POST in service every year. The inspectors will also attend the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association Conference that will be held in West Monroe and the NCBA Conference that will be held in New Orleans.

John Walther spoke on the Louisiana Steer Validation Program. He said there was a call for a more uniform system, something that could be verified and something more reliable.

Commissioner Strain spoke on the livestock shows, the selling of animals and that the money goes to the kids.

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OLD BUSINESS

Scott Perry spoke on the brand inspectors being post certified commissioned law enforcement officers and that they are commissioned by the state police. They work with local law enforcement, county agents and livestock markets. Because of working with the local agencies there was a significant increase in the amount of complaints and cases from 2017 and 2018. The inspectors have access to databases and information available to them through Animal Health Services as well as the sale barns they are in at every auction.

Scott Perry gave statistics on the cases and brand registrations from January 1, 2018 to November 1, 2018.

Scott Perry talked about the amount of investigations that had been done for the Board of Animal Health. They are regulatory type investigations where it not only involves cattle but horses and things that are of a disease related nature. Calls that come in to the State Veterinarians Office that require additional investigations will be referred to them. They conduct those investigations and bring them before the Board of Animal Health. There were 5 cases in 2018 and all 5 cases were found a good valid investigation resulting in fines and enforcement action by the department.

Commissioner Strain commented that some of the cases that are under the Board Animal Health and Food Safety are rather complex, multi-level and multi-jurisdictional.

NEW BUSINESS

John Walther gave an overview of the USAHERDS implementation. The next step in the program will be online payments. Brand registrations will be able to be done online.

Commissioner Strain commented that having it in live time the information is instant. The rapid transfer of information is helping in our enforcement capacity.

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John Walther spoke on HB 393 from Representative Terry Brown. Commissioner Strain and Representative Brown worked together to develop the upgrades in the law for Livestock Dealers.

John Walther said this instrument also made some clean up changes in the section that applies to the Brand Commission. The law also added that the Livestock Brand Commission has the authority to enforce the rules and regulations pertaining to the Louisiana Board of Animal Health pursuant to Chapter 16, Title 3.

Scott Perry mentioned the press releases that were published this year through the public information director's office here at LDAF. He spoke on the case where there was an arrest of 4 individuals that is going to be recommended to the board for a decision today for the Crime stopper award. He commented that there has been an increased influx in the amount of teenagers and juveniles involved in a lot of the cases. It is very imperative to work with the local law enforcement.

Jessie Bellard gave an overview of the case that will go before the commission for the Crime Stopper award. The case involved cattle killed on the levee in St. Landry Parish.

MOTION

Commissioner Strain asked for a motion to approve the Crime Stopper award. After some discussion on the amount of the award, Chuck Garrett made the motion to approve \$500 and Henry Capdebosque seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Strain introduced Laura Lindsey, the departments Public Information Officer, and said that she will get the press release out very quickly on the award.

John Walther commented on a current press release for another Crime Stopper case that involves a heifer that was butchered.

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Commissioner Strain spoke on the distribution of the press releases.

Sheriff Torres asked if the Brand Commission had a Facebook page. John Walther spoke that the whole department has a Facebook page. Sheriff Torres asked how it was going.

Laura Lindsey gave commission members an overview of Facebook page activity.

Sheriff Torres spoke on their Facebook page and how they get a better response on Facebook in solving crimes than they do anywhere else.

Chuck Garrett asked the Commissioner about the cattle theft case where the cattle were hauled to a local auction barn.

Commissioner Strain asked if it was on the case in St. Landry Parish where an arrest was made. He then asked Scott Perry to comment.

Scott Perry gave the members an overview of the case that was worked by Jessie Bellard. He commented that the records at the sale barn were instrumental.

District Attorney Newsom gave kudos to Scott and Jessie for working hard on that case.

Commissioner Strain asked for any questions on cases or press releases.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Strain wanted to add to the public comment that he was glad that there was an advertisement for a position.

Commission Strain talked about the upcoming Legislative Session and gave an overview of the budget.

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Sheriff Torres commented on the increase in crime. He said as technology increases the criminals are getting smarter. He said he believes that the relationship between the Sheriff's and the Brand Commission is critical.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Commissioner Strain asked for a motion to adjourn. Henry Capdebosque made a motion to adjourn; it was seconded Charles Garrett. Motion passed with no objections.