**MINUTES**

**LOUISIANA CRAWFISH PROMOTION & RESEARCH BOARD**

**October 12th, 2016**

**USGS NATIONAL WETLANDS RESEARCH CENTER**

**700 CAJUNDOME BLVD.**

**LAFAYETTE, LA**

**Call to Order:**

Jody Meche called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

**Roll Call:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT** **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Wylie Jewell Wayne Romig

Chandra Scarber Greg Benhard

Greg Faulk Ralph Babin

Jody Meche Bill Pizzolato

Robert Buller

Kip Lastraps

David Savoy

**Declaration of a Quorum:**

Jody Meche declared the presence of a quorum with 7 members present and 4 members absent.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the August 3rd, 2016 Board meeting were read.

**MOTION BY**: David Savoy and seconded by Chandra Scarber to approve the minutes from the August 3rd, 2016 Board meeting. Motion Carried.

**Collections & Financial Report:**

Jody Meche called on Ron Harrell to present the collections and financial reports. He reported to the Board the current condition of accounts.

**MOTION BY:** Robert Buller seconded by David Savoy to accept the financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

**Promotion & Research:**

Stephen Dufreche with the University of Lafayette told the Board that the proposal for Phase III of the project is not yet completed. He will attend the next meeting with the Phase III proposal.

Next, Dr. Greg Lutz with the LSU AgCenter presented to the Board the results of the Bull Tongue research project. The Bull Tongue project evaluated bull tongue separately and in combination with other vegetation as a low-cost, low-maintenance forage alternative for single-crop crawfish production. Over the entire season, the total value of crawfish harvested per trap was $63.93 for bull tongue ponds vs. $34.58 for rice ponds. Identical number of traps per acre and identical bait were used. Dr. Lutz also reported on the Natural Predator Fish as a Management Tool for Eradication of White River Crawfish in Commercial Ponds research project. The species for use as a crawfish predator is the Choupique or Bowfin. In order to use this species for control of nuisance crawfish population fingerlings must be available. Adult choupique were collected from two natural habitats by personnel from LDWF and transported to the Aquaculture Research Station. Various ponds were stocked with bowfin and artificial nesting material was placed in all ponds to further encourage spawning. Adult bowfin are still present in some ponds but have disappeared in the smaller ponds. Plans are to leave them where they are and see if they will spawn next Spring 2017. If so, the research station plans on stocking them into the crawfish ponds.

Next Dr. Lutz informed the Board of the red swamp crawfish issue. There is a petition going around to add red swamp crawfish to the injurious wildlife species list. The Center of Invasive Species Prevention (a member organization of the National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species) submitted a petition to FWS to list 43 additional species as Injurious Wildlife. This petition included the red swamp crawfish. If such a listing were to occur, it would have a detrimental effect on the Louisiana Crawfish Industry. Such an action would severely impact the growth of the crawfish industry in Louisiana and the livelihoods of those involved with this industry. Louisiana Farm Bureau is going to submit a letter to the Louisiana Congressional Delegation for their support in having the FSW not listing the red swamp crawfish as Injurious Wildlife.

Jessica Lange presented to the Board information regarding the 2017 billboard campaign. The board would like to keep a presence in Tennessee, Texas and Florida. The board decided to budget not to exceed $100,000.00 for the 2017 billboard campaign.

**MOTION BY:** Jody Meche seconded by Robert Buller to approve a budget not to exceed $100,000.00 for the 2017 billboard campaign. Motion Carried.

Dee Scallan presented to the Board all of the “Thank You” letters from the parishes that received the books. The distribution of the Moby book has reached all parishes except for Jefferson, East Baton Rouge and St. Tammany.

Dee has written a new Moby book that teaches children about calories. The total cost of this project combined with the distribution of the Moby book to Jefferson, EBR and St. Tammany would be $29,900.00. This cost would cover the color, formatting, graphic artist, proofing, editing, illustrations and the cost of being put online. Teachers and children would be able to download this book online.

**MOTION BY:** Greg Faulk seconded by Wylie Jewell to approve $29,900.00 in support of the costs associated with Dee Scallan’s new Moby book and distribution of books to the remaining three parishes. Motion Carried.

Next, Holly Clegg presented to the Board her recent promotions for Louisiana crawfish. Recipes and videos have been added to her healthy cooking blog, YouTube channel, Twitter, crawfish.org, Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest. All crawfish posts link to the Board website. Holly’s crawfish videos will also now be on the Department of Agriculture and Forestry’s website.

**MOTION BY:** David Savoy seconded by Chandra Scarber to go into executive session and discuss contract renewals. Motion Carried.

**MOTION BY:** Bill Pizzolato seconded by Chandra Scarber to exit executive session. Motion Carried.

The Board asked Holly to attend the next meeting and bring a new proposal at a lower amount.

**MOTION BY:** Greg Faulk seconded by Robert Buller to wait until the next Board meeting to decide on a proposal from Holly Clegg. Motion Carried.

**MOTION BY:** David Savoy seconded by Wylie Jewell to renew Jessica Lange’s contract for the amount of $10,000.00. Motion Carried.

**Board Business:**

An election for Chairman of the Board took place. Jody Meche was nominated he declined. David Savoy was nominated he accepted. David Savoy was elected to serve as Chairman of the Louisiana Crawfish Promotion and Research Board. Jody Meche will remain Vice-Chairman and Robert Buller will remain Secretary-Treasurer.

**No public comment**

**Next Board Meeting Date:**

The date for the next Board meeting will be Wednesday, January 11th, 2017 at 1:00 P.M. at the USGS National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette.

**MOTION BY:** Kip Lastraps and seconded by Wylie Jewell to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.