**LOUISIANA RICE PROMOTION BOARD**

**Meeting Minutes**

LSU AgCenter, Rice Research Station

Crowley, LA

**Tuesday, October 29, 2013**

**A meeting of the Louisiana Rice Promotion Board** was held on October 29, 2013, at the LSU AgCenter Rice Research Station.

**Officers and Members Present**: Chairman Kevin Berken, Jimmy Hoppe, Christian Richard, Ronald Habetz, Robert Thevis, Jeff Durand, and Ronnie Zaunbrecher

**Members Absent**: Ken Fairchild and Wayne Zaunbrecher

**Others Present**: Nicole Broussard, Scott Privat, Carrie Castille Randy Jemison, Carl Krielow, and L.J. Hymel

1. **Call to order, certification of a quorum, agenda review, approval of Wednesday, June 26, 2013, minutes and opening comments.**

Chairman Berken called the meeting to order at 12:48 p.m. and welcomed members and guests. Roll was called and a quorum certified.

1. **Executive Session**

**MOTION** by Jimmy Hoppe and **Second** by Robert Thevis

**To adjourn the open meeting and go into executive session.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Following the executive session, the board returned to regular order by consensus.

1. **Agenda Review**

Chairman Berken reviewed the agenda, which was accepted as presented by consensus.

1. **Approve June 26, 2013, Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION** by Ronald Habetz; **Second** by Christian Richard

**To accept the minutes of the June 26, 2013, meeting as presented.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

1. **Financial Reports**

Nicole Broussard presented the trial balance and general ledger as of October 28, 2013.  Broussard stated that the current checking account balance is $27,808.69 and accounts receivable from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry for the year ending June 30, 2013, which are being held in escrow, total $17,251.61.

**Audit Review**

Nicole Broussard presented the audit findings noting that no issues were raised and it was a clean audit. The audit was prepared by Mary Sue Stages, a professional accounting corporation.

**MOTION** by Jeff Durand; **Second** by Jimmy Hoppe

**To accept the financial report as presented.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

1. **Update on In-state Promotion Projects**

Randy Jemison gave a brief report on the status of board-approved in-state promotion projects and presented the following budget update.

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| --- |
| **2013-14 In-state Promotions Budget Status as of October 28, 2013** |
| **Event/Activity** | **Budget**  | **Expenditures** | **Variance** |
| AgMagic | $1,000 | -0- | ($1,000) |
| LAFB Cooking Segment | $5,000 | -0- | ($5,000) |
| NRM 5-K Rice Run | $1,200 | $1200 | -0- |
| NRM Radio Campaign | $5,000 | $4,996 | ($4) |
| **Total** | **$12,200** | **$6,196** | **$6,004\*** |
| \*As of 10/28/13 the board has spent $6,004 less than budgeted. |

1. **Act on USA Rice Council Contract**

Board counsel Scott Privat reminded the board that no action was taken on the USA Rice Council (USARC) contract at the June 26, 2013, meeting to allow the board to obtain an opinion from the Louisiana Ethics Commission on whether the board could vote to send funds to an entity on which promotion board members also serve as board members. Privat said the Ethics Commission ruled the board could enter funding contracts with such entities.

Privat noted the board has also asked the Ethics Commission if the chairman could execute a board-approved contract with the USA Rice Producers’ Group (USARPG) on which he serves as board member. Privat stated the commission ruled the chairman could execute the contract.

**MOTION** by Jimmy Hoppe and **Second** by Ronald Habetz

**To approve the USA Rice Council (USARC) contract and to send assessments collected , if any, prior to the October 15, 2013, Louisiana Supreme Court (LSC) ruling that are currently held by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to the USA Rice Council as soon as they become available after the June 30, 2014, fiscal year close.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MOTION** by Jeff Durand and **Second** by Christian Richard

**To send all voluntary rice promotion contributions collected after the October 15, 2013, LSC ruling to the USA Rice Council when such funds are received by the board monthly.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The board instructed Scott Privat to submit the USARC and USARPG contracts to the state agency for contractual review and to coordinate with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to address agency questions.

1. **Other Business**

Chairman Berken suggested that the rice research and promotion boards send a joint letter to Louisiana producers, explaining the LSC ruling, its impact to the industry and urging producers to continue to support rice research and promotion through voluntary contributions.

**MOTION** by Jimmy Hoppe and **Second** by Ronald Habetz

**To authorize the chairman to coordinate with the research board to draft a letter to producers explaining the LSC ruling, its impact to the industry and urging the producers to continue to support rice research and promotion through voluntary contributions and to allocate up to $5,000 to pay for cost in printing and mailing the letter.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Ronnie Zaunbrecher suggested that the letter also be routed to Louisiana rice industry e-mail distribution lists.

1. **Public comment**

Chairman Berken asked if there were any public comments. None were offered.

1. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.