

**MINUTES**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017  
LOUISIANA STRAWBERRY MARKETING BOARD MEETING  
47076 NORTH MORRISON BOULEVARD  
HAMMOND, LA

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman William Fletcher called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Strawberry Marketing Board Director Rebecca Riecke called the roll.

**DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

The presence of a quorum was declared by Mrs. Riecke.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

DALE CARONA  
EDDIE FAUST  
WILLIAM FLETCHER  
KEVIN LIUZZA  
MARK LIUZZA  
ERIC MORROW  
HEATHER ROBERTSON (JOINED MEETING AFTER ROLL CALL)  
JIMMY SCHLIEGELMEYER  
REBECCA RIECKE (COMMISSIONER MIKE STRAIN DVM'S DESIGNEE)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

DAVID ATKINS  
DR. ALLEN OWINGS

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Eddie Faust inquired about Commissioner Strain's attendance at Strawberry Marketing Board meetings, and Mrs. Riecke explained that he requests she serve as his designee should he not be able to attend due to a prior commitment.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion made by Jimmy Schliegmeyer and second by Eddie Faust to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2016, meeting. The motion carried.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Mrs. Riecke read the September through December 2016 financial reports, copies of which were distributed to each member.

A motion made by Kevin Liuzza and second by Jimmy Schliegelmeier to approve the September through December 2016 financial reports. The motion carried.

### **GARRISON ADVERTISING REPORT AND 2017 PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY**

Steve Helmke of Garrison Advertising presented the advertising report with a handout being provided to each member. He explained that the proposed 2017 promotional strategy would maintain the current ad designs, creating familiarity with Louisiana strawberries as a “brand.” Mr. Helmke stated that the recommended campaign includes five outdoor billboards located at I-12 at North Shore, I-12 at Denham Springs, I-10 at Gonzales, I-10 at Metairie and Cajundome – Lafayette; statewide radio promotion with Louisiana Radio Network which will use Commissioner Strain’s spot from 2015; and feather flags, tablecloths, pens and stickers that have already been purchased which will be used to promote Louisiana strawberries at events such as the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival in April. He reviewed the proposed budgetary breakdown for the 2017 campaign: \$4,030 for radio; \$22,000 for billboards; and \$1,470 for website monitoring, meetings, planning and other hourly support for a total of \$27,500.

A motion made by Heather Robertson and second by Mark Liuzza to approve Garrison Advertising’s market proposal for 2017 as presented. The motion carried.

### **2017 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT SUBMISSION**

Mrs. Riecke informed board members that the 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant opportunity would be coming up soon. She stated that the grant has changed since the last one the Board received because actual sales numbers must be provided for marketing projects now which would make doing promotions very difficult since those figures would be nearly impossible to obtain. Mrs. Riecke said that educational projects that provide a more obtainable measure would be recommended to still reach the consumer.

Mr. Helmke informed the Board of three possible grant projects: brochures or promotional booklets with information regarding the nutrition, preparation and care of strawberries, recipes and a detachable survey to be completed by participants at farmers’ markets; in-store sampling; and a short educational video on strawberries that would be sent to schools with younger children who would be surveyed after watching the video with each student receiving a certificate and strawberry sticker. Mrs. Riecke stated that she would be able to attend events at farmers’ markets and/or stores to collect measurable data and that having chef demonstrations in addition to the brochures is a possibility. She informed the Board that there are still a few months before the grant application must be submitted so more project ideas may be developed.

A motion made by Dale Carona and second by Eric Morrow to approve the Director to apply for 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant funding and submit a proposal regarding educating the public on the nutritional benefits and consumption preparations at farmers’ markets or in-store locations and any other additional proposal ideas developed that could enhance the strawberry industry. The motion carried.

Mr. Fletcher read a resolution which would allow Mrs. Riecke to apply for the 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant on behalf of the Board.

A motion made by Jimmy Schliegmeyer and second by Eddie Faust to pass the resolution authorizing Director Rebecca Riecke to prepare and execute any proposals and contracts necessary to seek funding from the LDAF through the 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant for Louisiana strawberries and for that authority to continue until revocation from the Board. The motion carried.

Mr. Helmke asked board members when the advertising should begin this year, and they recommended that the billboards go up as soon as possible. He informed the Board that most of the billboards should be able to go up in a few weeks, but one or two of them may not be able to go up until a little later due to several billboards being purchased for the NBA All-Star Game in New Orleans. Board members were in favor of staggering the outdoor advertising and getting as many billboards up as soon as they can. Mr. Helmke said that he would coordinate with Kyle Coats of Louisiana Radio Network on the start date for radio advertising which should be early to mid-February.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Riecke reminded board members that required annual ethics training must be completed by the end of the year and may be done online.

She updated the Board on financial assistance that would be available through the Louisiana Agricultural Finance Authority (LAFA) for farmers affected by the floods last year, explaining that details regarding the program are not yet available, but should be soon.

Mrs. Riecke informed board members that she was contacted by a consumer looking for strawberries in Natchitoches and asked if they knew of any available in that area.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

No further comments were made. A motion made by Mark Liuzza and second by Eric Morrow to adjourn. The motion carried.