American Brahman Breeders Association

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2025 9:00 am CST
MCM Elegante Hotel
Beaumont, TX

Officers Present:

Mark Forgason, President
David Miller, Vice President
Terry Novak, Secretary/Treasurer

ABBA Staff:

Paul Maulsby, Executive Vice President
Iridiana Ibarra, Office Manager/Recording Secretary
Kylie McIntosh, Director of Youth and Showss

Directors Present:

Kaleb Bendy
Garrett Harvey
Terry Novak
Catherine Neumayr
Steven Hudgins
Michael England
Kathy Bailey
Kelvin Moreno
Jason Smith
David Simmons
William Deaton
Billy Badilla
Cesar Castro
Clay Hudgins
Todd Schindler
Mark Forgason
Martin Soward
Chris Cooley
Hatch Smith
Carolyn Falgout
Corey Ladner
Lance Wedgeworth
Michael West

Past Presidents Present:

Jim Williams
Dr. Craig Fontenot

President Forgason called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM CST.

President Forgason led the group in prayer.

Iridiana Ibarra reported that a quorum had not been established, with 22 directors and 2 past presidents present. Mike West clarified that, according to the ABBA Constitution, a quorum requires 50% of directors present—not 51%. Following this clarification, another board member

arrived, bringing the total to 23 directors and 2 past presidents, thereby meeting the quorum requirement.

President Forgason introduced Ronald Stinson to the Board of Directors as the parliamentarian for the meeting. Mr. Stinson addressed the Board of Directors and emphasized key rules for conducting meetings. He began by quoting his mentor, Henry Robert III, the grandson of the author of *Robert's Rules of Order*, who taught him to always "use common sense" in meetings. Mr. Stinson highlighted that this principle should guide every meeting, ensuring business is accomplished efficiently and respectfully.

He explained that before speaking, every participant must be recognized by the chair. To do so, a participant should raise their hand, hold it up, and say, "Mr. President," at which point the chair will acknowledge them. Mr. Stinson also stressed that only one person should speak at a time, as simultaneous talking creates confusion and prevents clarity.

Respect and professionalism were emphasized as key components of the meeting. Participants were reminded to avoid personal attacks, interruptions, or disrespectful language. Discussions should remain focused on the agenda, with no meandering or deviation from the topic at hand. Once a point is made, it should not be repeated, and participants should move on to allow others to contribute.

Regarding motions, Mr. Stinson clarified that only board members may propose them. Another board member must second the motion before any debate can occur. The board will generally hear both pros and cons of the motion before moving to a vote. If there is no need for debate, the motion will proceed to a vote after a discussion.

Non-board members are permitted to speak during discussions but do not have the right to vote. Mr. Stinson also reminded the board that discussions and decisions should be kept confidential when necessary, especially when dealing with sensitive topics, and that participants should always act in the best interest of the organization.

Finally, he cautioned that failure to comply with these rules may result in a participant being asked to leave the meeting, though he emphasized that this should be avoided at all costs. Mr. Stinson concluded by stating that these rules are straightforward and essential for productive meetings and asked if anyone had any questions or concerns.

President Forgason asked if everyone had the opportunity to review the minutes from the previous Board of Directors meeting, and he called for a motion to accept the minutes from the September 13, 2024 meeting as printed.

Hatch Smith moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Mike West, the motion passed, and the minutes from the September 13, 2024, meeting were approved.

Terry Novak addressed the Board of Directors and informed them that Paul Maulsby, the Executive Vice President, would be presenting the balance sheet, income statement, and the proposed budget for 2025.

The discussion began with a review of the balance sheet. The focus was placed on the current assets, particularly noting that in 2023, there was a significant amount of $218,527,000 collected for the 100-year anniversary. Removing this from the 2023 total, there was a 7.4% increase in assets from 2023 to 2024. Moving on to investments, efforts were highlighted to ensure these remain solid and strategically managed. The ABBA's Chilton accounts saw an increase of 3.9%, reaching $415,429, while the Merrill Lynch accounts increased by 22.21%, from $305,000 to $373,000. Despite a 2.3% decrease in the bank accounts from 2023 to 2024, the overall balance sheet remained fairly stable.

Next, the discussion addressed fixed assets, which saw a notable change from a negative $126,048 in 2023 to a positive $58,856 in 2024. This change was attributed to the sale of two vehicles previously used by ABBA staff, with staff now using their personal vehicles and being reimbursed for mileage.

When reviewing liabilities and equity, a strong push was made to clean up the liabilities with the help of a CPA, resulting in positive progress. Overall liabilities and equity saw a .09% increase, aligning with the overall financial health of the organization.

Following the balance sheet review, attention shifted to the statement of income and expenses. Registrations, while anticipated to be a challenging area, showed a decline from $339,707 in 2023 to $298,587 in 2023. Efforts to increase registrations and transfers were discussed, including strategic initiatives aimed at boosting these figures. Notably, DNA parentage verification and SNP profiles saw a significant 25% increase, driven by the five-year DNA plan that continues to gain traction across the breed.

Postage costs also stood out, with a 92.31% increase in postage paid by members, rising from $4,000 in 2023 to $7,000 in 2024. This increase was attributed to a growing volume of shipments due to expanded merchandise sales and increased mail-outs.

Membership income showed an encouraging 12.8% increase, largely driven by the Brahman Bucks program for F1 memberships, which has positively impacted both the commercial and purebred sectors. The growth of the Brahman Bucks initiative was praised for its contribution to the organization's financial health. Merchandise sales also saw a substantial increase due to the 100-year anniversary and World Congress events, contributing a notable $92,449 to revenue.

Sales income experienced a remarkable rise, from $652,000 in 2023 to $1.5 million in 2024, largely due to successful sales at the National Show and World Brahman Congress. Total income for 2024 reached approximately $3 million, marking a 48% increase from the previous year.

On the expense side, salaries decreased from $320,000 in 2023 to $200,000 in 2024, mainly due to vacancies within the staff, such as the absence of the Executive Director position. However, the staff is now fully functional, with one additional position being added, which is seen as a positive development. Contract labor for tasks such as show points and ad designs was also highlighted.

Postage and freight costs continued to rise, as expected, with a 48.45% increase. Professional fees and legal expenses were discussed, with a special mention of Frank Carroll, who has

provided invaluable advice. The hope is to reduce legal costs in the future, though it's acknowledged that legal matters are a necessary part of any organization.

In terms of office expenses, there was an increase due to needed updates in equipment and technology to support the staff's efforts. This was seen as a one-time increase to ensure the office is properly equipped for efficient operations. Additionally, Shopify, which facilitates merchandise sales, accounted for some of the increased costs, along with related credit card fees.

QuickBooks also saw an increase and Shopify, streamlining the processing of orders and handling credit card transactions. When reviewing the net operating income, excluding investment gains, the final bottom line showed a reduction from $427,682 in 2023 to $86,000 in 2024, primarily due to the income generated by the 100-year anniversary.

The floor was opened for questions, and Terry Novak was invited to add any additional comments. The highlights of the financials were shared, with a focus on improving registrations, maintaining solid investments, and continuing the growth seen in membership and merchandise sales.

Terry Novak had Paul Maulsby present the 2025 proposed budget. Starting with a review of a work session held at the office where the financial committee gathered. During this session, a three-year budget forecast was reviewed, taking into account various challenges such as the anticipated decrease in registrations, and areas where growth is necessary, such as Brahman Bucks and other strategic initiatives. The budget is always a bit challenging because it is a proposal, based on predictions and historical data, with the understanding that unique events like the 100-year anniversary and the World Brahman Congress will not recur in the near future. Those special events had a significant impact on past budgets, and these numbers have been adjusted accordingly in the 2025 proposal.

When reviewing the budget, particular attention was given to salaries and staffing. While the budget shows a projected deficit, strategic moves have been made to reduce this gap, such as optimizing staffing. The budget also includes projections for total registrations, transfers, and related fees, with some minor adjustments. The numbers reflect a steady pace, particularly for F1 certificates and other essential services.

For membership income, a conservative estimate of $232,000 has been set, ensuring stability while being cautious in projections. The same approach was applied to sales, including bull development, international sales, and shows, all of which have remained fairly constant over the years. The total operating income is projected at $1,025,350. ABBA merchandise sales are expected to bring in $50,000, a conservative estimate given recent growth, with aggressive efforts in place to exceed that number.

Income from ABBA Ranch signs has remained stable, contributing an additional $7,500 to the total operating income. The net income projection is $1,082,850.

Moving on to expenses, the budget reflects costs for salaries, benefits, and standard administrative functions for a full staff. A new hire is expected to join the team in April, focusing on breed development, herd improvement, and research, which is factored into the budget. There

are also expected increases in industry dues, Shopify fees, and costs associated with registry services, such as Digital Beef and genetic evaluation.

Funds have been allocated to committees, though it was noted that not all of the budgeted committee resources were fully utilized in the past year. It was emphasized that committees should take full advantage of these resources, as they are designated to help drive the growth of the breed.

The new website is expected to launch by the end of March, and there is excitement around the project. Other budgeted items include marketing for the ABBA national sale, show expenses, and youth activities, all of which have remained consistent in recent years. Youth activities, including scholarships and support for queens and princesses, have a budget of $6,000.

Total expenses for the year are projected at $1,167,517 million, resulting in a projected net income loss of $84,000. However, it is important to remember that ABBA has strong investments and healthy bank account balances, which provide a cushion for the organization. Additionally, salary adjustments have been made, such as a cost-saving move involving Kylie McIntosh, who now heads both youth and show activities. A portion of her salary will be covered by the AJBA, which saves the organization $6,000.

While the budget presents a challenge, it is seen as a very achievable goal. Efforts are being made to ensure the association continues to operate effectively, meet financial targets, and provide the necessary resources to support the board and its initiatives.

The floor was opened for questions, and the discussion was concluded with an invitation for any closing remarks from Terry Novak or President Forgason.

Kelvin Moreno moved to approve the 2025 proposed budget as presented, seconded by Carolyn Falgout. The motion carried.

Terry Novak moved on to the next item. Back in September of last year, the board approved the relocation of CPA services back to Texas. Since then, the team has been actively searching for a local CPA to oversee the organization's accounting.

At that time, Terry Novak asked Paul Maulsby to provide an update. He shared that they have narrowed the search down to two local firms in College Station—one being considered to serve as the new CPA, and the other to conduct an audit of the organization's financials. Mr. Maulsby proceeded to introduce the firms and provide additional details about each.

Paul Maulsby stated that during his initial meeting with the board, he shared why he believed he was well-suited for the role and expressed his enthusiasm for taking it on. While some may have wondered about his motivations, he emphasized how honored he has been to represent the board and take on meaningful tasks. One of the first major responsibilities he was given involved evaluating and securing new CPA services.

After conducting thorough research and collecting bids from multiple firms, the team identified two companies based in the Bryan-College Station area. The firm selected to serve as the new CPA is Thompson, Derrig & Craig, a group with extensive experience working with agricultural

entities. Mr. Maulsby expressed confidence in their capabilities, noting that they will manage bookkeeping, tax filings, and other financial responsibilities. He also mentioned the hope that representatives from the firm would attend future meetings to provide financial updates directly to the board.

In addition to hiring a new CPA, the board will also move forward with a financial audit—not due to any concerns, but as a best practice to ensure transparency and establish a clear financial baseline. The audit will be conducted by Seidel & Schroeder.

He closed by expressing his excitement and confidence in both firms, stating that he believes they are well-equipped to serve the organization's needs.

Jim Williams asked Terry Novak, in the past, he had expressed the inability to access the information he needed as Secretary/Treasurer, and whether he felt that had changed. Mr. Novak responded that while there had been challenges in the past, improvements have been made and they are moving in the right direction. He expressed appreciation for Paul Maulsby's support and noted that progress is being made, particularly in collaboration with the new CPA and auditor. He emphasized that while there is always room for improvement, he now feels confident that they are on the right track. Terry Novak concluded by thanking the board for their continued support.

President Forgason addressed the Board of Directors and began his report by stating that he would keep it brief. He first provided an update on recent discussions regarding a herd book audit. After extensive conversations, he noted that there are still too many unanswered questions surrounding the process. As a result, he has asked Paul Maulsby to further research the matter and return with recommendations, answers, and any additional insights from others who can help the board fully understand the process and its implications for ABBA.

Turning to a positive development, President Forgason expressed his enthusiasm in announcing the appointment of Paul Maulsby as the new Executive Vice President. He praised Mr. Maulsby's competence and capability, highlighting that he has already hit the ground running. He also commended the outstanding staff that Mr. Maulsby, along with Iridiana Ibarra, have assembled, noting how well they work together as a cohesive team. He described their collaboration as both encouraging and exciting, and urged the board to give them their full support moving forward.

Before transitioning into committee reports, President Forgason took a moment to sincerely thank all the committee chairs and their respective members who served at his request. He acknowledged their dedication and the quality of their work, offering his gratitude on behalf of himself and the American Brahman Breeders Association.

Catherine Neumayr, Chair of the Communications Committee, addressed the Board of Directors. She reported that the Communications Committee met via teleconference on February 3rd, with strong attendance and engagement. The meeting included five committee members, ABBA staff, and 15 guests, making it both productive and encouraging as the committee builds momentum heading into 2025.

Key updates from the meeting included a progress report on the ABBA trademark renewals, which continue to be a priority and are currently in progress. Another major topic was the

upcoming launch of the new ABBA website, which had originally been slated for early March. However, based on Paul Maulby's update, the launch date has now been moved to late March. Mr. Maulsby is overseeing this project, and the new website is expected to significantly improve transparency, accessibility, and overall user experience. It will feature a number of important updates for ABBA members, and even the current site is already being regularly updated with content that had previously not been included.

Mrs. Neumayr also introduced Chloe Grimm, ABBA's new communications staff member, and shared that Ms. Grimm provided an excellent overview of her role and responsibilities during the meeting.

Additionally, the committee discussed opportunities to enhance the Digital Beef platform, as well as strategies to strengthen communication with international members, ensuring ABBA remains responsive to the needs of breeders both domestically and globally.

In closing, Mrs. Neumayr expressed her appreciation to all those who participated in the meeting and discussions. With the high level of engagement and numerous exciting initiatives on the horizon, she stated that 2025 is shaping up to be a strong year for ABBA communications.

At that time, the Parliamentarian, Mr. Stinson, clarified that if there are no action items associated with the reports, formal approval by the Board is not required.

Paul Maulsby presented the Research and Breed Improvement Committee report in place of Committee Chair Milton Charanza, who was unable to attend the meeting. He explained that he and Mr. Charanza were both at the office and participated in a teleconference with the rest of the committee.

Mr. Maulsby began by emphaszing the importance of the Research and Breed Improvement Committee's role, noting that while all committees play a significant part, this particular segment is especially vital to the future of the breed.

The committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the previous meeting and discussed key topics, including DNA requirements in alignment with the ongoing five-year DNA plan. They also talked about the importance of EPDs and genetic evaluation.

Mr. Maulsby shared that he has been working closely with Allison Hajny from the DNA department to upload ultrasound scan data. He expects all of this data to be fully integrated into Digital Beef by the end of the following week, just ahead of the Houston event. He also noted ongoing collaboration with Digital Beef to improve efficiency and system functionality, with continued efforts in that area.

Mr. Charanza provided updates on the association's research initiatives. The funds previously allocated for research—established under Dr. Paschal—were directed to Dr. Claire Gill at Texas A&M University. Mr. Maulsby has been in contact with Dr. Gill and is working to ensure those funds are properly disbursed so her research can continue. The committee also discussed the broader need to secure additional funding for research initiatives across the country.

The importance of collecting complete performance data—including birth weights, weaning weights, and other key metrics—was emphasized, as well as efforts to streamline the DNA testing process. The committee also discussed F1 calves and the value of collecting performance data on those animals.

Additionally, the committee reviewed nominations for the Performance Breeder of the Year, following an e-blast that was sent out with a nomination form. Mr. Maulsby expressed appreciation for the strong response, noting that over 15–20 nominations were submitted. The committee reviewed the submissions and selected ST Genetics of Navasota, Texas as the recipient of this year's award.

Finally, Milton Charanza and Rodney Roberson had also discussed nominating Dr. Mark Thallman as the ABBA Friend of the Year, a nomination that has since been confirmed.

Paul Maulsby concluded by summarizing the committee's work and thanking the Board for their support.

Val Walters provided the Show Committee report on behalf of Chair Pasquale Swaner, who was unable to attend the meeting. He reported that the committee held two meetings—one in December and another in January. The primary focus of these meetings was to discuss and select judges for both the National and International Shows for 2025 and 2026. The committee used judge rankings and engaged in detailed discussion about each candidate's qualifications and experience.

Three judges were initially contacted regarding their availability. The first declined to judge both shows. The second judge confirmed availability for the 2026 International Show in Houston. The third judge was unavailable due to prior commitments with the AJBA. The committee reconvened to explore alternative options for the National Show and ultimately confirmed a judge for that event as well. The selected judges are: P.J. Budler – 2026 International Brahman Show, in Houston, TX. Dakota Smith for the 2025 National Brahman Show.

In addition to judge selection, the committee reviewed and approved applications from new shows requesting ABBA point show status. The Mississippi Brahman Association is working to reestablish itself and requested approval for both a fall and a spring show to serve as fundraisers. The committee approved both.

The Heartland Brahman Association also requested approval for a new August Kickoff Show in Florida, designed to accommodate exhibitors who are unable to travel to College Station for the traditional kickoff event. This show was also approved, with a tentative date set for early August—around the 10th—pending final confirmation.

Mr. Walters concluded the report by noting that a motion was needed to formally approve the committee's actions and decisions.

Craig Fontenot moved to approve the Show Committee report, with a second by Jim Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

Hatch Smith presented the Youth Committee report to the Board of Directors. He noted that the committee held a meeting on February 3rd, which was well attended.

The primary focus of the meeting was an update on the upcoming **All American** event. Kylie McIntosh and Zach Mosley provided detailed updates, noting that preparations are coming together well. Hatch mentioned that Kylie McIntosh would provide further updates regarding judge selections and other event details.

He then addressed a point of clarification regarding sponsorship efforts. While the juniors have taken a very enthusiastic and commendable approach to soliciting sponsorships—sending out approximately $210,000 worth of requests—he emphasized that this amount was neither budgeted nor anticipated. He made it clear that while any sponsorship funds received are appreciated, there should be no assumption that this figure represents the actual sponsorship budget for the event.

Mr. Smith also shared that he and Paul Maulsby have had preliminary discussions about creating an additional youth-focused initiative later in the year, specifically centered around commercial cattle and F1s. Though still in the early stages, the idea would involve an educational event, show, or sale aimed at promoting the commercial and F1 sector. He noted there were no action items resulting from the discussion, but expressed enthusiasm about the potential of expanding youth programming in this direction.

Hatch Smith concluded by turning the floor over to Kylie McIntosh for further updates on the All American.

Kylie McIntosh addressed the Board of Directors and began by sharing updates on the All American. She reported that the junior members have voted on the judges, and invitations were sent out. Three judges have confirmed their participation: Blake Nelson, Brett Moriarty, and Jack Ward. The committee is still awaiting confirmation from a judge for the Showmanship division.

Ms. McIntosh also provided an update on awards planning, noting that preparations are already underway and that the youth involved have been doing an outstanding job managing those responsibilities.

In regard to sponsorships, she shared that all sponsorship levels have been finalized. These details will be uploaded to the ABBA website, with a target date of March 1st for publication.

Additionally, hotel room blocks for the event have been posted on the website. One final hotel—the Wyndham—is still pending, but will be added once confirmed.

She concluded her report by thanking the Board and reaffirming that planning efforts are progressing smoothly.

Carolyn Falgout presented the International Committee report to the Board of Directors. She began by noting that the committee held a teleconference meeting with nine committee members and 18 guests participated. While she expressed a personal preference for in-person meetings to better engage with participants and hear their perspectives, she acknowledged the value of the virtual format in allowing broader participation.

One of the committee's ongoing focuses is the allocation of support from USLGE for sending ABBA judges to international shows. Paul Maulsby and Iridiana Ibarra attended the USLGE Annual Membership meeting, and Mrs. Falgout mentioned that the committee is awaiting an official update on the 2025 allocation.

Carolyn Falgout explained that the International Committee regularly sends judges abroad to officiate shows, and in appreciation, presents belt buckles. Currently, the cost of belt buckles totals $3,200, and the committee has $2,500 in available funds. To help cover expenses, the committee holds an annual knife fundraiser, and there are still 40 sets of knives available for purchase. Once all knives are sold, the committee expects to generate an additional $1,800, leaving the group in a solid financial position.

A highlight of recent activity was the successful international show in Honduras, which had been in planning for over a year. Paul Maulsby attended the event and received a warm welcome from attendees. The show was very well attended from different breeders in the region as well as from Nicaragua and El Salvador. The Honduran community was highly appreciative of ABBA's presence. Mrs. Falgout emphasized the importance of reciprocating international support, noting that many foreign breeders travel to Houston each year to engage with the ABBA community, and encouraged ABBA members to make an effort to attend international events in return.

The committee also selected its 2025 International Friend of the Year, honoring Nando and Sylvia Hauck from Germany for their continued support and contributions to the international Brahman community.

Finally, Carolyn Falgout announced an exciting development: after a year of planning, a trip to the Philippines is officially set for March. She described it as a "once-in-a-lifetime trip," with opportunities to see impressive cattle and learn about the country's growing F1 breeding program. She encouraged all board members and breeders to consider participating.

A question was raised regarding whether information about upcoming international trips would be shared with the membership. Paul Maulsby responded that he has developed **four newsletters**, including one specifically focused on international affairs, in which he plans to include details about these upcoming trips.

Mike West presented the Marketing Committee report on behalf of Committee Chair Brand Jones, who was unable to attend due to inclement weather.

He reported that the Marketing Committee meeting was held on February 12th at 6:30 p.m.. Attendees included Brand Jones, Michael England, Clay Hudgins, Jason Smith, Garrett Harvey, Paul Maulsby, and himself.

The primary focus of the meeting was the Brahman Bucks Program. The first item discussed was whether to continue the program, and the response from the committee was overwhelmingly in favor of continuing it. Michael England made a motion to move forward with the program, which passed unanimously.

The committee then reviewed the proposed budget for the program with Paul Maulsby, who shared that eight sales had been budgeted for Brahman Bucks participation—some for the spring and others for the fall. Mike West proposed that all eight sales be approved and conducted immediately rather than spreading them throughout the year. The motion was seconded by Michael England and approved by the committee.

Paul Maulsby also shared his vision for expanding and improving the Brahman Bucks program, including increasing ABBA's presence at participating sales and exploring opportunities for sponsorships and additional ABBA funding to support the initiative moving forward. The committee expressed strong support for his ideas.

The eight approved sales for the 2025 Brahman Bucks Program are as follows: Texas Sales: South Texas Cattle Marketing – March 1, Jordan Cattle Auction – April 5, Johnson Cattle Marketing, Heart of Texas Sale – April 5, Johnson Cattle Marketing – May 17. Other Regional Sales: Southern Classic, Lucedale, Mississippi – April 12, Carolina Brahman Breeders Association Sale – June 7, and Louisiana Brahman Association Sale – March 22.

At each event, the ABBA Brahman Bucks booth will be set up, and prize premiums will be awarded to the top three placing Brahman-influenced cattle: 1st Place – $300, 2nd Place – $200, 3rd Place – $100

Mike concluded by reiterating the committee's excitement about the program's continued growth and ABBA's expanding presence at regional sales across the country.

Mike West moved to approve the Marketing Committee report and the eight designated sales for the Brahman Bucks Program. The motion was seconded by Michael England and carried unanimously.

Paul Maulsby presented the Membership Committee report on behalf of Committee Chair Amy Wilder, who was unable to attend the meeting. He noted that the committee held a well-attended teleconference meeting, led by Amy Wilder, and commended her for doing an outstanding job in her role as chair.

There were no formal action items voted on during the meeting, aside from the approval of the new membership list, which was submitted to the Executive Committee as per standard procedure. Mr. Maulsby emphasized that, moving forward, the office is working to implement a more structured and consistent schedule for membership approvals, aiming for a timely, monthly review process. He reminded the Board that all new memberships must be formally approved.

The meeting primarily focused on open discussion regarding several key topics related to membership. These included voting procedures and concerns raised about how voting eligibility and outcomes are determined. The committee also reviewed membership trends, which have shown a decline, particularly among international members. Challenges such as DNA registration requirements were noted as contributing factors.

There was considerable discussion around the implementation of the DNA plan and its impact on international members. Mr. Maulsby highlighted the complexities of reciprocity agreements

between ABBA and international associations—some of which register cattle through their own systems while others register directly with ABBA. He noted that every country operates differently, making the process complex and sensitive.

The committee also reviewed and clarified the voting rights of designated representatives, as well as judge nomination requirements within the International Committee. Additional clarification was provided regarding multiple ownership scenarios and how those affect membership status and voting rights.

Paul Maulsby concluded by reiterating the committee's commitment to enhancing clarity, consistency, and inclusivity within the membership process and continuing efforts to grow and support both domestic and international segments of the ABBA membership.

Hatch Smith moved to approve the Membership Committee report, including the membership list. The motion was seconded by Kelvin Moreno and carried unanimously.

Kelvin Moreno presented the World Brahman Congress Committee report to the Board of Directors. He began by directing attention to the Profit & Loss Statement prepared by Iridiana Ibarra, located on page 33 of the board meeting packets.

Mr. Moreno provided an overview of the 2024 World Brahman Congress, noting that the last time the event was hosted in the United States was in 2008. This year's Congress was held in conjunction with the 2024 National Brahman Show, and he was pleased to report that expenses came in under budget across nearly all line items. A side-by-side comparison of the budgeted vs. actual expenditures was included in the provided report for reference.

He emphasized that the ABBA's original contribution to the Congress budget was approved as a three-year commitment totaling $300,000, but only one draw of $100,000 was needed to successfully carry out the event. Despite using only a third of the allocated funds, the Congress still generated a net profit of $24,000.

The event saw participation from 17 different countries, and although the international groups were smaller in number than anticipated, feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Mr. Moreno noted that significant efforts were made in marketing and promotion, and those who attended expressed appreciation for the experience and the overall success of the event.

He concluded by mentioning that during the closing banquet, the World Brahman Congress banner was officially passed to Mexico, which will host the next Congress in 2026.

Kelvin Moreno thanked the board and offered to answer any questions.

President Forgason presented the Executive Committee report to the Board of Directors. He began by stating that the Executive Committee meeting was called to order with a roll call and the approval of the previous meeting minutes.

The committee then moved into a discussion regarding the initiation of herd book audit research. Paul Maulsby was assigned to lead the investigation into the potential audit, which is estimated

to cost between $12,000 to $20,000. The discussion included considerations such as DNA verification, data integrity, and broader concerns related to potential legal exposure.

Additional discussion focused on the challenges of DNA verification, particularly issues surrounding overage cattle, which led to a proposal to consider establishing a new herd book to help improve accuracy and consistency.

Reports from various standing committees were presented and approved, and nominations for awards were announced. Notably, Dr. Mark Thallman was named ABBA Friend of the Year.

The committee also reviewed the judge selection process, expressing concern with the current ranking system and how it may affect the quality and fairness of selections. International-related concerns were raised as well, especially regarding how ABBA's DNA verification policies are impacting international sales and member relationships.

Further discussion included the DNA plan for 2025, along with the review of election results.

The final action items assigned from the meeting were for Paul Maulsby and Iridiana Ibarra to continue investigating audit options and to contact newly elected individuals for onboarding and follow-up.

President Forgason concluded by requesting a motion to approve these assignments and the report as presented.

Michael England moved to approve the Executive Committee report, along with authorizing Paul Maulsby and Iridiana Ibarra to continue investigating audit options. The motion was seconded by Jason Smith and carried unanimously.

Paul Maulsby presented the Executive Vice President report, beginning with a PowerPoint presentation to provide a visual overview of his remarks. He reflected on his transition into the role, expressing that his career has felt naturally guided toward this position. Though the job has presented challenges, it has also been incredibly rewarding. Mr. Maulsby emphasized his dedication to representing every member of the association—whether they own one cow or 10,000—and highlighted the importance of listening to all voices, even when opinions vary greatly. He shared an anecdote illustrating this diversity, with one member urging the removal of EPDs and another advocating for stronger genetic evaluations. In navigating these opposing views, he stressed the importance of common sense, balance, and unity within the breed.

Mr. Maulsby introduced the current ABBA staff and spoke highly of their strengths and contributions. Iridiana Ibarra, with her historical knowledge and long-time service, has become a trusted partner in daily operations. Allison Hajny, the new DNA and Technical Support Coordinator, was selected after a competitive hiring process. She brings a background in cattle reproduction and genetics, as well as military discipline, and has been working closely with Neogen and Zoetis to streamline DNA processes. Madison Rose, a recent graduate of Texas A&M University, has taken on responsibilities in registrations, transfers, and membership with precision and dedication. He noted that she, like the others, has only been in her role for about six weeks but has already made a strong impact.

Kylie McIntosh, who many members already know, has transitioned into the role of Director of Youth & Shows. Her background includes experience at the Beefmaster Association, and she has served in several interim roles at ABBA. Despite working remotely as contract labor, she remains deeply involved in daily operations and youth program development. Chloe Grimm, the newest addition to the communications team, has significantly enhanced ABBA's outreach. With a background in agricultural communications, digital marketing, and livestock promotions, Ms. Grimm manages the website, social media, newsletters, and event graphics in collaboration with Mr. Maulsby and the Communications Committee.

The final staff position—Director of Commercial Activities, Breed Improvement, and Research—is still in the hiring phase. Mr. Maulsby has been actively seeking a candidate with a strong academic background and outreach skills. He hopes to have this role filled by March.

Paul Maulsby then introduced his vision for ABBA, guided by five foundational themes he refers to as the "Built on Brahman" pillars. He spoke about the importance of purebred breeding as the backbone of the association, and stressed the need for ongoing research and development to ensure the association remains informed and progressive. He emphasized the opportunity to expand Brahman's presence in the commercial cattle industry and noted his recent outreach efforts with leaders from other breed associations, including Hereford, Angus, and Charolais. These conversations aim to position Brahman genetics as a complement to other breeds in crossbreeding strategies and to support the growth of both maternal and bull sales.

He also spoke passionately about youth development, not just through traditional showing programs, but through real-world, educational experiences. Mr. Maulsby discussed ideas such as international youth exchanges, referencing conversations with the Australian Brahman Association about a scholarship-based program that would allow students from both countries to visit and learn from each other. He believes youth programming should focus not only on the show ring but on broader agricultural literacy, leadership, and global awareness. He also reflected on international visits, noting the rising number of young breeders in countries like Honduras and Mexico—many of whom are also students at U.S. universities—and suggested involving them in youth initiatives to provide new perspectives.

He acknowledged that ABBA must represent the collective good, not just individual interests, and called on committee members to think beyond their own programs for the betterment of the breed.

Mr. Maulsby briefly mentioned the association's involvement in the recent USLGE meetings, where grant funding and export development were discussed. He noted that while ABBA has submitted a "wish list" of funding priorities, final allocation amounts remain uncertain due to the upcoming farm bill and changes in federal leadership. He invited Iridiana Ibarra to speak further, as she manages USLGE related efforts.

Iridiana Ibarra provided the Board with an update on USLGE activities and funding efforts. She explained that the application process for USLGE funding requires proposals to be submitted in March of the year prior to the allocation year. This means she is currently preparing submissions for the 2026 funding cycle.

Reflecting on last year's process—which was her first time managing the application—Ms. Ibarra shared that she applied for funding for every eligible country, with a focus on those ABBA travels to more frequently, such as Mexico. For each country, she submitted multiple activity proposals, noting that funding is allocated per activity, not per country. For example, Mexico required three separate reports for different proposed activities. In total, she completed approximately 33 individual reports, resulting in a combined funding request of $115,000.

While it's unlikely ABBA will receive the full amount requested, Ms. Ibarra expressed hope that there would be more funding than previous year. She noted that ABBA has seen funding reductions over the past few years, with $25,000 awarded last year. For the upcoming year, she is optimistic that the allocation could increase to $30,000 or $35,000.

Iridiana Ibarra also emphasized the importance of collaborating more closely with the International Committee to go beyond simply sending judges abroad. She shared her vision of expanding ABBA's international involvement through seminars, educational outreach, and broader engagement efforts. With Paul Maulsby's leadership, she is hopeful that ABBA can enhance its global presence and diversify the types of activities supported through USLGE funding.

Paul Maulsby continued the discussion, emphasizing the importance of expanding ABBA's international efforts beyond the traditional practice of sending judges. He noted that while there is still strong interest in having ABBA judges participate in international events, there is also a growing demand for educational platforms and outreach initiatives. Mr. Maulsby referenced that Billy Badilla of the Philippines would likely agree there is significant opportunity to enhance ABBA's presence through seminars, workshops, and other forms of hands-on education.

He stated that efforts are currently underway to better organize and structure these initiatives to ensure ABBA can effectively meet international needs and strengthen its global impact

In closing, Paul Maulsby expressed sincere appreciation for the Board's support—both positive and critical—saying that all feedback helps steer the association in the right direction. He reiterated the vast potential he sees for the Brahman breed, both domestically and internationally, and pledged to continue working on behalf of all ABBA members to pursue that potential with integrity and vision.

Mike England raised a question regarding the functionality of the ABBA office phone system. In response, Paul Maulsby acknowledged that this concern reflects one of the most common questions he hears from members, shared by 95% of the membership.

Mr. Maulsby explained that when stepping into a new leadership role—whether managing a ranch or an association—he takes time to assess the full landscape, identifying areas for improvement. The phone system was quickly recognized as one such area. Since then, several updates have been made. The system now includes segmented routing, allowing callers to reach specific staff members directly. Additionally, the office has expanded from one phone line to two, and this past week, Mr. Maulsby and Iridiana Ibarra implemented a third backup routing

system to further ensure that calls are answered or properly redirected—ultimately defaulting to Madison Rose if primary contacts are unavailable.

Mr. Maulsbt emphasized the importance of leaving a voicemail, noting that the phone system is connected to an internal dashboard that allows him to view call activity and receive daily call volume reports, which can sometimes reach 300–400 calls per day. While some calls may be repetitive, voicemails are automatically routed to staff emails, allowing the team to **track and** return calls efficiently. Without a voicemail, however, the team is unaware of the missed call.

He acknowledged that while the system is not yet perfect, it has significantly improved and now enables the staff to reach more members and respond to inquiries more effectively. He also noted that members should now be receiving automated email notifications for various transactions and processes, including payment confirmations and DNA submissions.

In closing, Paul Maulsby encouraged board members and the wider membership to utilize the call queue system, to leave messages when prompted, and to trust that the office is making continued strides in communication and responsiveness.

Clay Hudgins raised a concern regarding the delivery of registration papers to international destinations, particularly Mexico. He noted that over the past few years, there have been ongoing challenges in successfully delivering original registration certificates to international members. As a result, many of these documents never reach their intended recipients.

Mr. Hudgins suggested exploring the possibility of establishing communication with associations in other countries to identify secure delivery points where original registrations could be sent directly from the ABBA office. He explained that during his upcoming trip to Tampico, MX in April, he plans to hand-deliver a stack of registrations, as this has proven more reliable than traditional mailing methods.

He asked whether ABBA could work collaboratively with foreign associations to designate secure mailing locations, allowing international members to pick up their registration papers more efficiently and reliably.

Iridiana Ibarra responded by stating that ABBA can explore options by reaching out to other associations to learn how they handle the delivery of original registration certificates internationally. She explained that ABBA discontinued mailing international registrations a year or two ago due to consistent delivery issues. Despite incurring costs for postage, the documents often failed to reach their destinations and were not returned to the office either. As a result, the practice was halted.

Currently, ABBA holds these documents in-house, and they are made available for pickup during major events, such as the Houston show. Members traveling internationally, including those visiting Mexico, often coordinate with Ms. Ibarra in advance. She prepares the registrations so they can be hand-delivered, a method that has proven to be far more reliable.

She noted that FedEx International is the only guaranteed shipping method, but it comes at a significant cost, typically ranging from $150 to $300 per shipment. Given these challenges,

Iridiana Ibarra agreed that consulting with other associations on best practices would be beneficial and could help identify more effective and cost-efficient solutions going forward.

With no further business to discuss, President Forgason thanked everyone for their attendance and participation. The meeting was then officially adjourned.

The final roll call was taken.

Directors Present:

Kaleb Bendy
Garrett Harvey
Terry Novak
Catherine Neumayr
Steven Hudgins
Michael England
Kathy Bailey
Kelvin Moreno
Jason Smith
David Simmons
William Deaton
Billy Badilla
Cesar Castro
Clay Hudgins
Todd Schindler
Mark Forgason
Martin Soward
Chris Cooley
Hatch Smith
Carolyn Falgout
Corey Ladner
Lance Wedgeworth
Michael West

Past Presidents Present:

Jim Williams
Dr. Craig Fontenot