American Brahman Breeders Association

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

December 8, 2025, 4:30 PM CST
ABBA Headquarters
Bryan, TX

President David Miller called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM CST. Iridiana Ibarra called roll 10 present; a quorum was established.

Present
David Miller
Catherine Neumayr
Carolyn Falgout
Mark Forgason
Amy Wilder
Gary Buchholz
Steve Hudgins
Pasquale Swaner
Hatch Smith
David Domscch

Staff
Paul Maulsby
Iridiana Ibarra

Guests
Dakota Smith
Billy Badilla
Charli Vernon
Tyler Vernon
Craig Fontenot
Sallye Fontenot

Hatch Smith motioned to approve the minutes from the September 25, 2025, meeting, and the motion was seconded by Gary Buchholz. The motion carried.

Paul Maulsby provided an office update. He first addressed the ongoing disruption within the registry system following the acquisition of Digital Beef by 701X. Mr. Maulsby explained that the departure of Jim Bulger, Digital Beef's primary IT contact and key system developer, has created uncertainty regarding future system functionality, responsiveness, and customer support. Mr. Maulsby further noted that the new ownership group has shifted priorities toward integrating EID tag sales with registry services, resulting in slowed development timelines and an estimated delay of 12 to 16 months on system enhancements. While current registration and transfer operations remain functional, the lack of IT support and delayed feature updates have impacted member expectations, including delays in show point updates. Several breed associations,

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including four major cattle breeds, are coordinating efforts to present a unified position to the new owners regarding shared concerns. Ms. Ibarra added that registry transitions historically present risks such as incomplete rule implementation and reporting delays, reinforcing the importance of extensive beta testing prior to any major system changes.

The office then outlined the association's genetic testing and EPD data strategy, emphasizing the importance of enhancing genetic evaluations to position the association as a leader within the beef industry. Mr. Maulsby noted that the association is actively encouraging broader adoption of high-density genomic testing, specifically 50k and 100k SNP tests, to improve data depth and EPD accuracy. Challenges remain due to the lack of data sharing among laboratories such as Zoetis, Neogen, and newer market entrants, resulting in incomplete datasets. Mr. Maulsby and Ms. Ibarra stated that collaborations with laboratories and third-party data consolidators, including Heilichal, are underway, with strategic decisions anticipated in 2026. Mr. Maulsby highlighted Dr. Allen's involvement as critical to member education efforts, with webinars planned to begin with committee members and later expand to the full membership.

Ms. Ibarra then presented an overview of the proposed 2026 budget, which was developed with a focus on modest income growth, strict expense control, and financial stabilization amid ongoing legal costs. Registration income is projected to increase from $273,000 to $280,000, and transfer income from $165,000 to $170,000. DNA testing income was adjusted downward from $221,000 to $201,000 to reflect anticipated changes in testing volume. Merchandise and special event revenues are projected to remain flat, with approximately $25,000 anticipated from the sire directory and $7,500 from international show sponsorships. Ms. Ibarra further explained that the budget includes a planned increase to F1 membership fees, with new member join fees rising from $50 to $100 and renewal fees increasing from $20 to $50 beginning in 2027.

Significant expense reductions were incorporated into the budget, including a reduction in board meeting costs from $40,000 to $15,000, postage expenses from $35,000 to $20,000, and printing expenses from $9,500 to $2,500. These reductions reflect the association's transition to paperless operations effective January 1. Ms. Ibarra confirmed that staff salaries remain flat at $342,500, and travel expenses were reduced to $15,000 to maintain tight cost controls. Legal expenses continue to be a substantial burden, with $76,000 in outstanding legal fees carried into the 2026 budget and an additional $20,000 projected for routine legal services. Ms. Ibarra reported that accounting fees increased from approximately $22,000 to $40,000 due to the transition to a local Texas firm, with ongoing contract negotiations to clarify the fee structure. A contingency fund equal to five percent of projected income, totaling $50,606, was included to address unforeseen expenses. Ms. Ibarra stated that the committee approved the proposed 2026 budget to allow for timely implementation and to establish a financial framework for the coming year.

The discussion also addressed membership engagement and voting structure. Mr. Maulsby noted concerns regarding the current requirement tying voting rights to active registrations, with some members expressing that income and engagement have declined since the policy's implementation. Suggestions were raised to explore decoupling registration requirements from membership and voting eligibility to attract a broader base of paying members, particularly new or smaller breeders. Ms. Ibarra indicated that data analysis was requested to quantify lost

DRAFT

membership revenue and assess potential gains from alternative membership models. While no immediate policy changes were approved, Mr. Maulsby emphasized the need to balance election integrity with inclusivity, financial sustainability, and the creation of a more welcoming organizational culture.

Mr. Maulsby also provided an update on ongoing legal proceedings involving alleged violations of association rules and federal regulations. Certified letters were sent to involved parties 22 days in advance, allowing the standard 20-day response period for rebuttal or evidence submission. Mr. Maulsby described discussions regarding hearing procedures, including time allotments and the role of Frank Carroll as moderator to ensure constitutional compliance and due process. It was noted that hearings may proceed even in the absence of respondents, based on the evidence submitted. The potential for appeals was acknowledged. Both presenters reaffirmed the association's commitment to confidentiality and professionalism throughout the process.

The office concluded with a report on committee funding and fundraising initiatives. Ms. Ibarra stated that although no formal committee funding is allocated in the 2026 budget, committees collectively raised approximately $36,000 in 2025 through independent fundraising efforts. The International Committee was recognized for its success in generating revenue through events and merchandise while promoting the association. Mr. Maulsby noted that plans to produce the international sale catalog in-house are expected to reduce external design costs by approximately $16,000. These initiatives were acknowledged as vital to the association's financial health and long-term sustainability, particularly in light of budget constraints and increasing legal expenses. Continued support for committee-led fundraising and cost-saving initiatives was affirmed as a key organizational priority.

Hatch Smith made a motion to approve the 2026 ABBA and AJBA Proposed Budgets, seconded by Pasquale Swaner, motion carried.

After no new business, Hatch Smith moves to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Pasquale Swaner, meeting adjourned.

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