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VCTGA Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 3, 2011; 7-9:00 pm
Holiday Inn Board Room

Call to Order by President Virginia Carroll with the following in attendance: Steve Satterfield, Charlie Conner, Robert O’Keeffe, Greg Lemmer, Jocelyn Lampert, Tommy Naylor, Dave Thomas, Sue Bostic, John Carroll, Danny Neel, Kyle Peer and Jeff Miller.

Approval of Minutes of previous board meeting (e-mailed) – it was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2011 board meeting conference call, as emailed to the board, seconded and passed.

Financial Report (e-mailed): An annual review of the VCTGA finances was conducted by Robert O’Keeffe and Steve Satterfield with Jeff Miller prior to this board meeting and they reported that everything was in order.

Jeff reviewed the 2010 year-end financial reports, which had been previously emailed to the board, and noted that when the VCTGA CPA, Bill Cole, started preparing the 2010 VCTGA 990 tax return, that with the new IRS regulations for 501©6 corporations, the VCTGA did not have to file an actual 990 tax return. The VCTGA only needed to file a report online, which Jeff Miller has done. The upper threshold for filing a 990 is based on gross income and the upper limit has been increased. There were increased costs in 2010 due to the purchase of 25,000 tree tags with minimum sales in 2010.

Jeff reviewed the 2011 year-to-date financial reports through June 30, 2011. He noted that the initial time for setting up the new format for the News Journal was higher than normal, but the cost of the second issue was down considerably. The ad revenue was also down due to not having a Winter issue, but most of the regular advertisers indicated that they would continue their ads later.

Marketing Grant Updates – Jeff reported that some grant funds had been spent on the work by Tom Kegley Communications on the new logo and the new brochures and there will be more grant expenses in August. Expenses are in line with the grant budget and he will start filing for reimbursements from VDACS for the grant this month. He distributed copies on the new Buy/Sell Brochure and the “Experience a Real Tree” marketing brochure and had the new display banner setup. All the graphics are owned by the VCTGA and members will be encouraged to use these graphics in their marketing programs which will help tie in local marketing

"Helping Virginia Farming" program, by Jeff Ishee, was reviewed by Virginia Carroll. The program consist of opening and closing ad spots on his program, a spot during the program and he will use the VCTGA as a resource for information, interviews and links on his website. The investment for two years would be \$2,000 and would come out of the current marketing grant. A motion was made to approve, seconded and passed.

National Report – John Carroll, VCTGA National Director, reported that the National Christmas Tree Association’s annual meeting would be next week in Ohio. Drake & Company, the NCTA management company, has been sold to another company, but they will keep the same staff. The tree check off program is moving along towards final approval by USDA. The Trees For Troops program, sponsored by FedEx, will be happening again this year with tree pick up sites the same as last year. Sherrie Taylor, Severt’s Tree Farm, has been nominated to replace John Carroll and will be voted on by NCTA members at the VCTGA annual meeting on Friday.

Annual Meeting- Last minute updates – Steve Satterfield reported that everything was set for the meeting for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday and that the pre-registration for the meeting was up a little from last year, but there were fewer exhibitors. Robert O’Keeffe moved that the VCTGA donate \$100 to the Hahn Horticulture Gardens for the Thursday evening tour, seconded and passed.

Scholarship – Robert O’Keeffe reported that the 2011 scholarship and been awarded to JB Snelson, a graduate student at Virginia Tech and he would be helping conduct the tours at the Hahn garden on Thursday evening and would also be at the BBQ dinner. He recommended that this year’s scholarship auction to be in memory of Fred Wagoner who passed away last week and had been a supplier, friend and mentor to many in the Christmas tree industry. A motion was made to approve this, seconded and passed.

New/Other Business

Annual Meeting 2012 & 2013- Date & Location - There was a discussion of the possibility of a winter meeting as part of the marketing grant bringing buyers and sellers together. John Carroll will help coordinate the 2012 annual meeting and will check with the Best Western Hotel in Waynesboro for August 22-25, 2012.

Website revisions for 2011-2012 will be started with funding from the marketing grant to make it more user-friendly and provide additional information for buyers and sellers.

Newsletter - The new VCTGA News Journal will continue to evolve and members were requested to provide input on content and layout.

Nominating Report

President - Virginia Carroll

Vice President - Greg Lemmer

2 Year Director - Donna O’Halloran (new)
Jocelyn Lampert (returning)
Dave Thomas (returning)

1 Year Director - Charlie Conner (returning)
Robert O’Keeffe (returning)
Vacant

National Director - Sherrie Taylor (who will be voted on by the National Christmas Tree Association/VCTGA members at the membership meeting on Friday)

Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Jeff Miller, Secretary/Treasurer VCTGA