

IOWA PLOWING ASSOCIATION, INC.



MINUTES – BOARD MEETING

The directors of the Iowa Plowing Association, Inc. met January 20, 2017, at Smokin "Gs" restaurant in Marshalltown. Directors present were Ray Ellsberry, Mike Fitz, Keith Gillmore, Kevin Holl, David Postlethwait, Ray Willhoite and Brad Williams. Dick Pedersen, secretary/treasurer, Karen Quinlan and Kathy Willhoite also attended.

The group assembled at 11:30AM for great B.B.Q. and fellowship. At 12:40, Mike Fitz called the business meeting to order. Holl moved that we not read minutes because all had received a printed copy. Postlethwait seconded the motion – carried. Treasurer, Pedersen, presented a very favorable treasurer's report. Our bank balance on 12-31-16 was \$4,850.73. 2017 expenses were \$35 for liability insurance, \$50 memorials to Iowa River Hospice in memory of each of Mike's parents, \$125 to USAPO as entry fees for our competitors in the 2017 national matches, \$131.99 newsletter printing. Bank balance on 12=31=2017 was \$6,209.64. IPA paid \$217 for trophies for 2017 state contests but, Spoker Farms, Inc. reimbursed us that amount of money. Spoker Farms, a corporation owned by the sons of Jack and Darlene Law, has paid for trophies since the passing of Jack. Pedersen reminded the directors that without the generosity of some of our members, many of them directors, we would never even be able to think of our balance increasing as it does. One of our largest expenses is printing the newsletter which is sent to 60 persons and that number includes many who do not contribute to our cause regularly but have been part of us for many years and sometimes send a check or show up at a meeting or plowing match. We will continue sending meeting notices and newsletters because we hope everyone knows they are welcome to be part of IPA.

Old business was next on Mike's agenda. It was felt that our state contests were very successful thanks to Kevin and Deb Holl and their family. It rained on Friday

night which was okay. On Saturday morning, Michael Holl used a gasoline powered blower to blow all the water off tractors and other equipment that had been parked in the field overnight. This we had never experienced before. Kevin and Michael, assisted by Mike and Ben Fitz always have everything ready to go when competitors and officials show up. In addition, Kevin and Deb hosted a delightful dinner on Friday evening for all who wished to partake. Michael had smoked and prepared the scrumptious meats. The Holls always seem to do it right and we all appreciate them for that.

National contests in Pennsylvania went very well. We had five competitors who represented our state in fine fashion. The Saturday contests were rained out, but all-in-all a good time was had by all.

New business was about what and where are we going in 2018 and beyond. The first thing we need to do is to come up with a time and place to have Iowa state contests in 2018. Kevin has taken care of the past two years and right now does not have a good spot we can plow. Dave Nelson, our Belmond go to person needs to be contacted. We have let him relax for a couple years and maybe he misses us enough to invite us back. Mike will either contact himself or ask Gene Elphic to do so. Postlethwait responded to an inquiry as to whether or not Cedar Falls folks could be interested. Dave thought that they had gone through a substantial revamping of their property and their show and that they could not help us the last time he talked to them. When Blackford Farms was mentioned, he had the same comments, basically. The Blackford family now has younger folks running the show and probably do not think of plowing matches as being part of the big picture. All directors are encouraged to give some thought to what we might do.

2018 national matches will be held in South Dakota on land owned by the same farmer as last time we were there. Dates are not known at this time. Plus not time has been set for a USAPO board meeting where this date might be announced. It is known that the 2019 nationals will be held in Northern Minnesota immediately following the 2019 world matches. Iowa is scheduled to host national matches in 2020 which means it is not too early to begin planning for that. We do know that USAPO gets paid \$4,500 if they(USAPO) provide trophies and \$4,000 if the host provides trophies.

Pedersen reported on the 2019 world matches scheduled, right now, for August 30 and 31 at the Lake of the Woods in far Northern Minnesota. Henry Gruber has spent gobs of time and energy on this project since last October when Ohio opted to no longer try to do the job. Henry has the managing board, or whatever they call themselves, of the LOW quite excited about this endeavor. However, Henry is looking for some guidance and direction from Anna Marie, executive secretary of the World Plowing Organization. Henry asked her, she is from Ireland, to come and meet with LOW in October or November which was impossible for her due to her need to finish preparations for the World in Kenya the end of November. She did inquire of me, when in Kenya, what she would see if she came to Northern Minnesota in January, I told her there would be 3-4 feet of snow on the ground and 3-4 feet of ice on the lakes. She finally told Henry a meeting could be scheduled for four days starting February 13. So, Anna Marie and her mother, Anna May will travel from Ireland. Anna May has been a WPO board member for 40 years. Jim Sache, WPO board member from Canada and I will attend. John Gaard, USAPO president and Austin Magnuson will also attend. Anna Marie, Anna May, Jim and I will all fly into Minneapolis and fly to Bemidji where Henry will pick us up and drive us two and one half hours – to Baudette in LOW. I have told Anna Marie she does not have to concern herself with the land we wish to plow because our plowmen know much more about U.S. soil and how it will plow in all kinds of conditions. I think she needs to convey to the LOW group exactly what they must provide for all competitors and their teams, accommodations for two to four weeks, meals and lodging availability for a couple hundred visitors from 31 foreign countries, sight-seeing tours and entertainment for all those guests for ten days, and a large banquet facility or ball room for the gala which is the grand finale. There is probably more, but she will not miss anything. Also, she and the host organization will sign a contract outlining, in detail, the exact responsibilities of the host organization and WPO. Henry did send her a copy of such a contract he had prepared, with legal assistance. He sent me a copy and Anna Marie and I discussed it on the phone and agreed that was no good. Henry and I discussed the material Anna Marie and I had sent him and he insisted he had had none of that. I assured him he needed to look in his files again because I knew what I had sent him and I told him what Anna Marie had sent and that WPO would expect him to find the items. A couple days later he informed me that we were right and he had found what he had told us he did not have. As of now, it seems as though Henry has relaxed a bit and is ready to resume negotiations. Let us hope so.

John Gaard is going to propose to the USAPO board that USAPO members sell raffle tickets - printed by LOW-for \$50 each in an attempt to raise \$60,000 to \$75,000 to help with financing the contests. \$10,000 of the proceeds would be given as prizes via a drawing at the National Banquet in LOW at conclusion of the national matches. After prizes awarded LOW and USAPO volunteers would split the funds. LOW for contest expenses and USAPO for housing and meals at the 2019 event for volunteers. This will have to be presented to the USAPO in a formal proposal from John, I assume. He has already heard from Minnesota plowmen that they might go for \$20 or \$25, but \$50 is probably a bit steep for their conservative life style. I assume we will hear more on this soon.

Pedersen reported on 2017 world contests held in Kenya, Africa. All things considered it was a very good trip. It was, however, somewhat nerve racking, particularly when everyone was alerted to the stealing that runs rampant at all times including during church services. We have a church service one night during all world matches and this year we were told as we entered the church to be watchful for pick pocketing. We were told by security people that we should not stray away from our hotel without being accompanied by one or two additional persons. So, we did not get to look around or go shopping which was no big deal. It appeared as if there were few places to shop. We did visit a couple malls as a group, but there were few retail stores in the malls – mostly service type businesses and no people. The accommodations were satisfactory – better than some of the other countries we have been in. Food was really good. Could not drink tap water or have ice in our drinks. Our group, the USA people and Canadians together spent a couple days on a safari and that was quite special. Our plowmen had three backpacks stolen and never recovered. Unfortunately, two Canadians had their passports in their packs. They were told it could take up to four weeks to get replacements and they would stay until replacements could be gotten. Fortunately a visitor from Canada knew his way around and took it upon himself to work with the Kenyan officials and the officials in Canada and replacement documents arrived after the matches were over but before the safari ended. All were greatly relieved. Joel Wagner's pack was stolen but he did not have his passport in it. My team used an enclosed truck trailer to do our work and we use three or four computers and a couple copiers which require us to use a generator. We borrowed one from the Irish plowmen and it was a big one. It also got stolen one night when two security persons were to be watching.

Obviously the security people are responsible for much of the stealing. The Irish plowman who owned the generator went to the security office and demanded to see where they stored items that are turned in that are left or lost at large gatherings. Security let him look in a building they used for this and he found his generator.

The American plowmen – that is how they refer to our guys – did a really cool thing. Keverneland company did not have equipment and parts available as they always do because of cost and stealing or whatever. So, Gene Gruber and the American team loaded a pickup truck with tractor and plow parts, tools, grinders, welders and anything else competitors might need during a contest. The truck was one their “driver” carted them around in the entire time. They parked this loaded truck at one end of the plowing site each day and made all these things, plus their assistance available the competitors, if needed. Our team received much recognition at our meetings for this wonderful endeavor. The “Americans” got much praise and thanks. They helped many competitors during the contests

Obviously the highlight of the entire trip was when it was announced at our final gala that Gene Gruber had won the conventional competition. The standing loud ovation he received was the loudest and longest Pedersen had ever witnessed in nearly twenty years of world matches. Most people know that he has worked long and hard to fine tune his skills in an attempt to be the best of the best. He beat the second place plowman from Ireland and a several times winner by over 60 points, the biggest spread ever, as far as I can learn. He was so happy, so humble and such a deserving winner.

Final task for this meeting was to decide when and where our annual meeting will be. It will be March 17 at Smokin “Gs” in Marshalltown at 11:30AM.

On motion of Ray Willhoite and second of Ray Elsberry the meeting adjourned at 2:45PM and it was a very good meeting.

Dick Pedersen
Secretary

