



## AMERICAN PECAN PROMOTION BOARD

### MEETING MINUTES

October 23, 2023

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Adams, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. CT on October 23, 2023. Mr. Adams gave an invocation and called on Mr. Arnold to lead the meeting participants in a Pledge of Allegiance.

#### A. ROLL CALL

Mr. Quiros called the roll. The following members were in attendance:

Mike Adams  
Deborah Walden-Ralls  
Paul Quiros  
Phillip Arnold  
Trent Mason  
Larry Salopek  
Brittan Bagley  
Brycen Salopek  
Steve Zaffarano  
Molly Willis  
Phillip Arnold  
Sally Arn  
Larry Don Womack  
Guillermo Humphrey  
John Hutchens

The following guests were in attendance:

Anne Warden – APPB Staff  
Alexis Ard – APPB Staff  
Kristi Mosquera – APC Staff  
Lesley O’Neal – APPB Staff  
Emma Garner – APPB Staff  
Alex Caryl – USDA Staff

Marlene Betts – USDA Staff  
Arsenio Gonzalez  
Alison McMillon  
Bill Davis  
Catherine Clark  
Dan Zedan  
Justin Jones  
Marianne Brown  
Samantha McLeod  
Brent Brinkley

**B. ESTABLISH QUORUM**

A quorum was confirmed at 12:05 p.m.

**C. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Mr. Adams asked for comments regarding the Minutes from July 25, 2023, Board Meeting. Upon a motion made by Ms. Willis, the Board approved by vote to approve the July 25, 2023, Board Meeting.

**II. SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBERS**

Alex Caryl (USDA) swore in new members of the APPB, including Phillip Arnold, Brycen Salopek, Larry Salopek, Deborah Walden-Ralls, Steve Zaffrano, Romulo Garza and Larry Don Womack.

**III. CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Mr. Adams welcomed the new Board members and thanked the Board's staff for their hard working during the Board's transition in leadership. Mr. Adams recognized former Board member John Lee Turner Jr., who passed away in September.

Mr. Quiros made a motion to enter into the record the following statement, seconded by Ms. Walden-Ralls. The Board approved the motion.

On this day, October 23, 2023, the American Pecan Promotion Board does hereby resolve to honor the memory of John Lee Turner, Jr. of Miller County, Arkansas not only as a member of the first Board of APPB but also as a pioneer in the pecan industry. Mr. Turner's distinguished record of service in the pecan industry spans half a century. He went beyond being a farmer; he was an educator, an innovator, a philosopher, and, quite literally, a peacemaker – with the central theme of all these roles being 'the pecan.'

Mr. Adams recognized the contributions of former Board chair, Mr. David Salopek.

Mr. Quiros made a motion to enter into the record the following statement, seconded by Mr. Arnold. The Board approve the motion.

On this day, October 23, 2023, the American Pecan Promotion Board does hereby resolve to commend and affirm the stellar leadership of David Salopek as the inaugural Chairman of the Board. Under his steady governance and wise counsel, APPB was not only able to commence operations but, more importantly, able to establish a foundation and direction

for future success. Mr. Salopek was uniquely qualified for this position as evidenced by his history in the pecan industry, his proven character, and the high regard his peers hold toward him. The unselfish nature in which he conducted himself in all Board affairs was simply a characteristic of who he is. Board members of the APPB sincerely thank David Salopek for his service.

#### **IV. CEO REPORT**

Ms. Warden presented a report on her 30-60-90 day plans as CEO, a framework for an annual plan and recommendations for delivering plan to board and industry.

Ms. Warden led the Board in a discussion of their comments on the 30-60-90 day plan. Mr. Adams recognized and thanked APPB and APC members in Georgia, Texas and New Mexico for organizing visits for Ms. Warden, and also commended Ms. Warden on being available and accessible to the industry.

#### **V. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Adams called an Executive Session of the board to elect new officers. The Board and USDA met in Executive Session and General Session reconvened at 1:08 p.m.

#### **VI. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW OFFICERS**

USDA announced the new Board Officers to include:

Chair – Deborah Walden-Ralls

Vice Chair – Trent Mason

Secretary – Paul Quiros

Treasurer – Larry Don Womack

#### **VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **A. FINANCIAL COMMITTEE**

Ms. Garner reported that Customs & Border Patrol will begin assessment collection at the border on November 4, 2023, and that the new portal for e-compliance is complete.

Ms. Walden-Ralls reiterated the importance of all growers and importers being in compliance with the Order. Ms. Walden-Ralls called on Mr. Quiros to review the Order's rules regarding collections of assessments (1223.52(a)) and authorization to hire other organizations to collect assessments on the Board's behalf (1223.52(g)). Mr. Quiros reviewed these issues, and the Board, USDA and guests all discussed these issues. Mr. Quiros made a motion to (a) send out requests for proposal to organizations that can assist the Board in their collection of assessments and then hire an organization to begin this process; and (b) in order to properly lead the Pecan Industry, to begin assessment audits with Pecan Industry Leaders including past and present members of the Board (importers, producers (and First Handlers)) and the American Pecan Council (growers and their handlers)). The motion was seconded by Ms. Walden-Ralls and was further discussed by the participants and approved by a vote of the Board.

##### **B. RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

Messrs. Arnold and Mason called on Mr. Quiros to report to the Board on the research library's efforts and plans to hire a dietician to review all the nutrition literature for

potential messaging and claims.

**C. MARKETING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Adams reminded the Board of previous approval of marketing vendors, including Weber Shandwick, Digital Magnet and Plexis. Ms. Warden provided updates on how marketing programs were working.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Walden-Ralls requested Board members contact her with requests for committee membership.

Ms. Betts addressed a revision of the referendum date to begin April 15, 2023. Participants discussed referendum voting eligibility.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Walden-Ralls requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Mason moved to adjourn. The Board approved the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Paul A. Quiros, Secretary

Approved after review of the Board and USDA:

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Deborah Walden-Ralls, Chairperson