**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE**

**VALAIS BLACKNOSE SOCIETY**

**Monday 11th March 2024 (Virtual meeting) 7pm**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present**: Raymond Irvine (Chairman),Jamie Wood (Vice Chairman), Polly Glyde, Kate Little, Tom Blackwood, Steve Dace, Jackie O’Shea, Carla Bunter, Emma Collinson, Jenny Campbell, Mel Christie, Phil Garrod, Andy Ryder, Heather Pritchard.

**Minute No. 2024/03**

**38. Apologies:** None.

**39. Welcome to New Council Members:** Raymond Irvine welcomed everyone and introduced them by name. Explained the intention of the role of a Council Member. Assistance at events and respect to fellow members.

**40. Confidentiality of Council Meetings:** All forms have been returned by the new Council Members.

**41. Minutes from Meeting on 26th February 2024:** Three amendments were noted to be made: 1) Phil Garrod was added to the list of attendees; 2) Andy Ryders’ surname to be added; 3) Jamie will not be judging the All Ireland Show. Raymond Irvine will be judging the All Ireland Show (15 June) and Jamie Wood is not available to Judge Southern Ireland Show (July). The minutes were then agreed.

Proposed by Phil Garrod and seconded by Polly Glyde.

**42. Matters Arising**

1. **Grading Event – Feedback:**  
   3 Society judges attended, namely Heather, Julian and Gerallt, and all benefitted a lot from the Swissevent. The Swiss Graders were happy with the performance of the Society members and all of them received their certificates after 2 days. All 3 names will be added to the official Society Grader’s list. Going forward, each of the new Graders will be assigned to one of the grading events throughout 2024 alongside 2 of the existing graders.
2. **Blacknose Beauties questionnaire:** Jamie has started to compile the points for the questionnaire but has found it difficult to condense down as a lot of information received. If there is a possibility of changing the Blacknose Beauties format going forward, is the questionnaire relevant to be actioned at this point. All agreed the questionnaire is to be targeted for the 2025 event but will commence later this year.
3. **Upgraded microchips – costs:**

Mel still progressing. Looking to link to the breed programme and possibly do something along the same lines at the Texels and Suffolks. When anything is DNA tested we currently use the cheapest form of DNA testing for a parentage test.

1. **Data being hidden on Grassroots system:** Kate has spoken to Libby at Grassroots and she is looking into this matter. As long as it is just accessed by your V flock number then she should be able to release the data. Libby to report back on this issue.
2. **Caisley eartag DNA results:** Steve reported Neogen are waiting to get 96 samples together so they can all be processed at once. Should get results by end of this week. 20 orders are on hold and some members have been waiting over 2 weeks for tags and are now desperate as lambs are on the ground. It was confirmed the tags are working.

**43. Secretarial Support:** Jenny is due to return from Maternity on 1st July and in the interim period both Kate Little and Polly Glyde have been covering the secretarial work between them, both were thanked for their sterling work. Pedigree Livestock Services have been approached to continue with the secretarial work until the Society Secretary returns. Kate has sent the laptop and society mobile phone along with bank statements to the PLS office. A zoom meeting has taken place between Kate, Polly, Andy and Heather to discuss a handover of work.

**44. Breed Programme and**

**45. Letter from Defra re ET Policy** – both points discussed together.

As per email received from Defra regarding the banning of ET work by the Society which will have serious implications of the Society losing it’s Zootech status which could result in serious financial losses for some members. A response to Defra is required by 22nd March. This will require some information/education to the membership about why it is important and why we need to retain this status. Mel offered to do an article about Zootech. Andy R to report back once he has spoken to Defra and on which direction the Society is to be advised.

Possible way forward is to place a higher fee on ET registrations. Kate to seek legal advice from the Society’s lawyers.

Mel still working on Breed Programme document. To be reviewed after discussions with Defra about ET Policy.

**46. Grading and S&S Events for 2025:**

This point to be taken forward to the next meeting for discussion. A Graders’ Meeting to be organised before any points are discussed with all Council Members.

**47. Update on 2024 Society Events:**

Sub Groups to be set up for the four events – Northern Ireland, Southern and Welsh (at Monmouth), BB24 (Carlisle), and Lanark. The Society to look after Grading at all four events. The BB24 and Monmouth S&Ss will be organised by the Society whilst the Northern Ireland and Lanark S&S will be run independently by the NI and Scottish Regional Clubs.

For cataloguing purposes, Grassroots set up the catalogue for members to enter their sheep into the appropriate event.

All entries to be invoiced to respective members in advance or they will not feature in the catalogue. If any member is in arrears they would not be able to enter through Grassroots until settlement is made. Polly and Heather to speak to Libby to arrange.

Sponsors and advertisers also to be organised and invoiced.

Sub Group members – Polly to organise Council Members for each area and event. Zoom meeting to be arranged for further discussion.

1. **Perpetual Bell**s– Polly has checked back on costs of the Bells. Each Bell costs £68 along with £7 per sash. If each Bell is perpetual, rough guide would be:

BNB – 28 bells (none were perpetual)

Southern and Welsh Show – 14 bells

Royal Shows 7 bells

County Shows – 7/8 bells

If any Show is not perpetual, it would work out at £100 per Show.

Possible sponsorship could be sourced and/or increase the entry fee to cover some of the costs. Can we approach each area to find sponsorship for the Royal Shows.

Instead of providing a Bell, which is costly for each Royal Show, would it be a financial saving to purchase a Trophy to be perpetual and engraved each year.

Steve to look into the cost and engraving of getting 5 or 6 trophies (the sample style of trophy from the Royal Welsh Show) and asking for a deal on quantity.

Polly to organise order of Bells required for 2024 season.

Sponsorship packages to also be organised and arranged.

Council Members to bring back to next meeting ideas of sponsors to approach.

Also look at reducing the number of Bells presented when there is large classes of say, ram lambs. Instead of presenting X number of bells to each split group winner, the top 2 or 3 from each group to come back to the judging ring and the final placements are made from the elimination rounds.

All costs of events to be monitored going forward for discussion.

Polly to arrange a Zoom meeting to discuss classes, bells and all aspects of each Show.

**48. The Valais Times Magazine:** Nearly everyone has sent their photos over to be included.

Article about Caisley Ear Tags is still to sent over. All copy to be with Polly by Wednesday this week.

A sponsors package to be included if space is available.

Invoicing for adverts to be finalised when available.

Posting of magazine to be done from PLS Office.

Proof reading volunteers required.

**49. Trainee Judge’s paperwork:** Jamie’s paperwork on the follow up training received. Need to chase up Adam’s application from the first training day, the copy was not legible. Mel offered to follow this up.

Polly has asked the trainee judges to let her know when they are doing their shadowing days so she can mark them off when informed. These can then be signed off by the Judges.

**50. Election Debrief:** The rotation of members on the Council was discussed further but no conclusion was achieved. To be discussed at next meeting.

Raymond’s phone battery ran out and Jamie took over as Chair of the meeting.

**51. Society Calendar:** Mel set up TimeTree calendar for the Council prior to the new Council. New Members to be added to the Group. This electronic calendar is a useful tool for communication of events, meeting dates, etc.

**52. Finance:**

**(i) Bank and Paypal accounts** – the bank account is showing £83,200 but there is an outstanding VAT payment to HMRC of £7,700 which will go out as a Direct Debit. Paypal has £650 in the account.

**(ii) Outstanding Invoices** – Membership Subscriptions – more people have paid at the start of 2024 than ever before but there are still about 150-200 outstanding. Possibly need to look at sending their invoice via email when the reminders are delivered rather than waiting for an invoice to arrive. The new Direct Debit format to be notified and set up in plenty of time for 2025 subscriptions.

**(iii) Treasurer Responsibilities** – at present no-one is doing this position, it will be operated through PLS until arrangements have been agreed. Kate can pay invoices until the Council decides what it wishes to do. If the job is to be passed over to PLS, a verification system requires to be put in place so at least 2 Council members authorise the payments. The original process was set up by the former northern society.

**53. Any Other Business:**

Polly advised there is a Council email address for all Council Members to use when conducting any business regarding the Society and not to use their personal email details.

Pin Badges – to be re-ordered. Image on file, Heather to get a quotation.

Kate and Polly have arranged a Zoom Meeting with Jenny Russell (Society Secretary) regarding her return to work.

It has been agreed with the Valais Breeders’ Association that two Swiss graders will attend BB24. It is important that we maintain a good working relationship with the Swiss. In time it would be good to have an article about Grading and the Graders on the website.

Coats to be ordered for the 3 new Graders and a Graders Certificate to be issued, titled UK Affiliated Graders Certificate.

There was no further business and the meeting was brought to a close.

**54. Date of next meeting: Monday 8th April 2024, 7pm**