

ARKANSAS CORN AND SORGHUM PROMOTION BOARD SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
Zoom Only

Minutes

January 30, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Members Present via Zoom: Matt Smith, Tommy Young, Jacob Appleberry, Kenny Falwell, Trent Dabbs

Members Absent: Jason Felton, Matt Gammill

Chairman Tommy Young commenced the special called meeting at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed all members and guests. Chair Young opened the meeting with introductions from Board Members, including the Board's newest member, Matt Smith, replacing Jon Carroll.

Administrator Scott Bray then introduced other Arkansas Department of Agriculture staff present on the Zoom call.

Chair Young then began his explanation of why he had called the special meeting, stating that since they as a Board do more travel than most other commodity Boards in the state, that he is proposing as Chairman that the Board enters into an agreement with a travel agency to help the Board facilitate all their travel arrangements.

Chair Young then went on to explain that the AR Corn & Sorghum Promotion Board is a member of several national associations and groups that hold meetings all over the nation. He also stressed the importance of the Board's attendance at these national meetings.

Chair Young then went on to say that another one of these major national meetings, called the Commodity Classic, is approaching in February in Houston, Texas and is what has prompted this discussion to involve a travel agency to help facilitate the Board's travels.

Chair Young then discussed some of the challenges regarding the Board's travel in the past. He further explained that the proposed travel agency would help simplify the traveling process for Board members, ensure proper record keeping, and assist in the event of a legislative audit.

Chair Young said that the travel agency will create an online portal that will help facilitate all the Board member's travel info. He also said that this system will help Board members keep track of personal expenses versus Board expenses when traveling.

Chair Young further mentioned that the travel agency will help with getting everyone in or near the same hotel during travel, which has been a logistical issue in the past, further helping cut down on additional or unexpected travel costs.

Chair Young then introduced Van Provence of Take The Vacation LLC, who has put together a proposal regarding the travel agent arrangements mentioned by the Chair.

Van Provence then presented his proposal outline to the Board. **Attachment 1.**

Chair Young then asked the Board for a motion to accept the proposal from the travel agency to help facilitate all of the Board's travel arrangements for the year 2024.

**Moved by Kenny Falwell, seconded by Matt Smith.**

**Motion carried.**

Chair Young then began discussion surrounding travel arrangements for the 2024 Commodity Classic held in Houston, Texas, February 28<sup>th</sup> – March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. Chair Young emphasized the overall importance of the Board's attendance at this meeting, which sends a voting delegate. He also discussed how all Board members are eligible to attend this meeting.

Chair Young then opened the floor to Administrator Bray for other business. Administrator Bray mentioned that the Board needs to approve Board travel expenses for the year 2024.

Chair Young then asked for a motion to approve the Board's travel for all Board members, within the guidelines established by the state.

**Moved by Kenny Falwell, seconded by Trent Dabbs.**

**Motion carried.**

Administrator Bray then mentioned that the Board needs to elect a Secretary/Treasurer to replace past Board member Jon Carroll who was serving as Secretary/Treasurer. Falwell suggested Trent Dabbs to serve in this position.

Chair Young called for a vote to have Trent Dabbs be serve as the Board's interim Secretary/Treasurer until Board reappointments in July.

**Motion carried.**

Chair Young then shared his experience from a grain export mission with the U.S. Grains Council, which took him to Vietnam and Thailand. He highlighted the success of the mission, emphasizing the positive reception their team received and the effectiveness of the council's work.

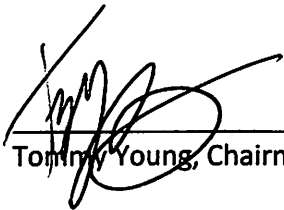
Chair Young then discussed that the next Arkansas Corn & Sorghum Promotion Board meeting will be held February 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at the Arkansas Department of Agriculture in Little Rock. Further information will be sent to the Board.

Chair Young also mentioned that if any Board member needed a hotel room for the night of February 21<sup>st</sup> to contact Van with the travel agency. For those unable to attend in person, a zoom option will be available.

Chairman Young then asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Moved by Kenny Falwell, seconded by Matt Smith to adjourn.**

**Meeting adjourned.**



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Tommy Young, Chairman

**Take the Vacation, LLC**  
**Van Provence, Owner**  
**60 County Road 7182 Jonesboro, Arkansas 72405**  
**870-206-1314 Van@TakeTheVacation.com**



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Arkansas Department of Agriculture  
January 24, 2024

Take the Vacation Travel Advisors propose the following:

- An 11% commission on all travel booked by Take the Vacation. Based on the figures from past years, this should remain under the \$20,000 threshold and provide a way to compensate the individual agent fairly.
- For billing and submission to the State of Arkansas, Take the Vacation would charge \$50 per hour, with a 1-hour minimum per trip where these services were needed or requested.
- For trip add-ons of a personal nature (i.e. adding a Walt Disney World trip to an already-established convention in Orlando), no commission billing to the State of Arkansas would be added. Those commissions would be paid directly to our agency by the supplier (in this example, Walt Disney World).
- Three to five agents, one of which is fluent in Spanish. would be selected from our roster to work with board members, ideally developing a business relationship with each board member where the board member would come to rely on that particular agent to handle his or her travel. Agents would then have the option of handling any personal travel the board member wished to book privately.

**Notes:**

The \$50 per hour charge would only be billed in cases where expenses need to be broken down for reimbursement to the board member by the State. We have a CPA who is part of our team who would perform this service. Obviously, she would work to learn the regulations regarding the state office of procurement. Should the board member wish to do this themselves, it will remain optional.

In instances where personal travel was mixed with state travel, the board member could opt to prepare the documentation needed for reimbursement or have the option of our CPA handling it.

*Take the Vacation, LLC was established in 2021. Today, our roster includes approximately 70 agents from coast to coast. In 2023, Take The Vacation's agents sold more than \$8 million worth of travel to our clients.*