

## **Annual Membership Meeting July 16, 2011**

**Richard:** Hi this is Richard Pomeroy and we have got some of the members of the Board of the LBHA here and we are having our first annual membership meeting. May there be lots more of them. I want to welcome everyone and thank you for attending, we appreciate it. This is something we have to do according to our By-laws, it is something we want to do because we want to make sure that everyone gets to find out all the information they can about the organization. I think you probably already would have heard that this meeting is being recorded so we can actually publish it on our website so that people who weren't able to attend tonight can actually hear what was going on. Everyone on the call apart from the Board Members are actually on mute. But you should be able to, if you are on the web portion, should actually be able to see up in the top left hand corner, a chat box. As the conference goes on, you can actually ask questions on there. Or you can just send me an email and you'll see the email address a little later on. You'll be able to ask questions there. I hope people actually get this right, I see some people still joining on the web and haven't joined on the audio call. I hope it gets sorted out.

We are planning on making this an hour or less. So, it is a formality that we need to go through and hopefully it will provide some useful information as well. Now I have moved the page on to the next screen. Board: Can you just confirm that you actually saw that change so that I know that that worked?

**Felicia:** Yes

**Richard:** Alright

**Unknown voice:** Yes I can see Agenda.

**Richard:** OK great. Yup, so we now have the Agenda is shown on there, right now. And I want to make an opening statement. I'm just going to go through these other points in here and you'll be glad to see that I am not going to be doing all the talking.

Basically the LBHA has gone through a number of changes since its inception back in 2009. 2009 and the second quarter is when the first minutes were recorded and there has been a number of changes since then. Change is good and there have been some good things happening and we have had some leadership changes back in 2010, September 2010. That's when I was appointed President by the Board. The Board changed again in June 2011, we had 3 people on the Board leave in rapid succession. It wasn't for the same reasons, it was for personal reasons and that of course, when you are dealing with a Board of 9 people that leaves a substantial hole. That is why we have filled those positions. That was filled in the beginning of this week. We actually appointed, and we will deal with why we did the appointment later on. We actually appointed some new people to the Board and before I go there I just wanted to show you.

The President is Richard Pomeroy

The Vice President is Mark & Kelley Escobedo

Dave Dalan is Treasurer

Felicia was appointed as Secretary and she is also our Registrar. So Felicia Krock is both the Secretary and Registrar. It is a very natural thing to put together. The Registrar is not actually a Board position. It is appointed by the Board but they don't actually have any say on the Board. So Felicia was a Board Member anyway so she is still a Board Member and Secretary as well and Registrar. So we keep her nice and busy.

The existing Board Members we have are Cathy Cox. Anthony Keisling.

The new Board members are Val and Deb (Aaron) and Kelly (Luzier) and Harvey Work. And so what I would like to do is just ask the Board members to just introduce themselves very briefly. I guess if we go down them in the order as it is shown on the presentation, that would make it nice and easy.

My name is Richard Pomeroy. I am the President of the LBHA. I raise Large Blacks and Gloucester Old Spots here on my farm. That is my primary business, raising animals. We do have another business as well which is at the moment anyway transporting animals and I am also a part time paramedic and computer programmer. I spend time developing code on the website. Usually pretty easy to get a hold of. You can email me at the President email address or call me at home, send me a personal email, whatever you want to do. And I will always try to respond to you. So that's who I am.

**Kelley:** My name name is Kelley Escobedo. Mark and I are both here and we own and operate South Texas Heritage Pork. Our primary focus is on the pork side of the business. We are breeders as well and promote breeding, however, we feel that if you want to preserve this breed, you've got to promote the pork. And that's what we are concentrating on. You can obviously get a hold of us at anytime and we are glad to help. We also have another business, but this is our primary focus. We are making great strides with the LBHA and we think that the Large Black is going to make a great comeback.

**Dave:** My name is Dave Dalan. I would say my primary vocation is farming but I actually earn most of my financial income as an IT geek for a local city. I fell in love with the pigs kind of at random 3 ½ almost 4 years ago. As a result got together with some folks trying to fix some issues with getting pigs registration, cracking numbers, a lack of information. I still really like the breed years later. I think they are a great pork pig. I think they are a great farm additive, you know their temperament and personality. Yeah, I really really dig these critters and I like the direction the association is going.

**Felicia:** My name is Felicia Krock. I am owner of Triangle K Ranch in Ohio. Our primary focus is raising the Large Blacks right now. I'm also a stay at home mom and do specialty baking. I will bake for your allergies. I am very busy with the Registrar position which I am absolutely loving getting to know all the members and their pigs.

**Richard:** Val and Deb are you on the line? (pause) I don't think you actually made it, it was pretty short notice for them because they only found out they were on the Board today.

Cathy is not here. I don't think Anthony made it. Kelly, oh no, the other Kelly, I don't think you made it. So Harvey.

**Harvey:** I guess my primary focus is also the swine business. I spent 20 years as a vocational agriculture instructor in Iowa and later moved to Wisconsin. We have a small farm. We raise Large Blacks, Tamworths and Chester Whites. I am kind of focusing on heritage breeds, the Chester Whites because that was what my first love was when I was a FFA member a few years ago. I also do some part-time work as a grazing education consultant. (garbled) So I am glad to be on the Board. I am excited about the Large Blacks that I have. Even though I have three different breeds, I guess I believe each breed earned their focus a bit different besides colors. We are kind of excited to do it.

**Richard:** Excellent, well thank you. I just want to point out to everyone as well that we are all volunteers. Nobody gets anything by doing this apart from the pleasure seeing the association go in the right direction. Please keep that in mind, everyone is busy. We do get back to you as soon as we can.

But everyone is busy trying to make a living as well. We appreciate your understanding there.

Going on to the next topic. Dave this is all over to you. I hope people can read this slide. I tried to contract it as much as I could without making it so small it couldn't be readable. But Dave, over to you.

**Dave:** Well this is basically our quick and dirty T-note sheet for the last year. You will see that we're gaining money since last year. We've finally got to the point where we are looking into buying some additional advertising. We have bought some advertising in the past. We had to sort out some portability issues with the Registrar. There's a scanner and laptop and some other issues and we made records backed up and transferable. If we've got a new registrar, secretary, treasurer, whatever, we can move the access of the data around and ensure that whoever is doing the job has the tools to do the job. Like Richard said we are all volunteers and on top of having someone volunteer and have to spend hundreds and hundreds of dollars of equipment necessary to do the particular job and then have a new person after that have to make the same commitment didn't seem to make sense. We started having our conference call costs sorted through and did some printing and papers. I think most of our expenditures, except for the advertising, have been pretty mundane. As treasurer, I would kind of like to see us looking at some things that are looked at briefly in the past and the opportunities to promote the Breed. Shows, events, things like that. We do have some funds to do that and help people set up booth rent, booth space. Whatever as long as it is something we can sort out that is a benefit to the whole association. I encourage anyone who is at this meeting or listens to this recording to come up with ideas, ways, we could use the funds we have available to promote the breed. That's about it.

**Richard:** Excellent. If anyone has any questions for Dave, they can send them using that chat box that you'll see on the website or you can just drop me an email and we can certainly ask those questions a little later on.

**Felicia:** We have as you'll see on the screen, 155 active members, 21 of those are lifetime members, which is only a 200 dollar one time cost. We have overdue 55 members who have been removed from that active members list, so that's our numbers right now for membership. The numbers of hogs, their registration numbers are in the 1400s now. There are a lot of pigs it seems, but it is not actual. The actual numbers are as on your screen 618 actually registered hogs. Now we have 677 that are given registration numbers via litter certificate. That number has changed it is now 747. Records created for historical purposes of the pigs way back in the lineage, there are 53. Of those that have registration numbers there are 49. So you take all those off and you have 619 registered hogs at the present.

There are some things that we need to change, like making sure that everybody uses their full hog name when they are trying to register because it makes a big difference for me, it makes it so much easier. And when paying by Paypal, I really love for the members to start, on their registrations forms making a note if they use a different email for Paypal because I sit there and wait and wait looking for confirmation of payment and some other name shows up and I'm like "Well, who's that?" It would make my life a lot easier for a little bit of notes. I think that's all I've got.

**Richard:** I've got a question. The, maybe some other members have noticed, on the registration forms we used to have \*00712 and I know the asterisk has disappeared now. What was the reason for that.

**Felicia:** Before the asterisk was taken off, it was to keep it in line. Simply to make the computer read the numbers otherwise it would mess up when we started with the 1's, the numbers would be all wonky.

In order to get it to go from 1 to 1449, the 0's had to have the asterisk in front so the computer would recognize that.

**Richard:** OK so it was a computer issue. Did you have something else to add, Felicia.

**Felicia:** When people go to buy pigs, do not leave there without papers. There is NO reason that people should not have papers. The registration documents are being turned over within two weeks unless there is an issue with payment verification because I don't know who paid or there is somebody who paid and I don't know who it is for. There is absolutely no reason. Litter Certificates can be turned over within 48 hours of payment verification, so if someone is going to purchase a pig, there is no reason not to have papers. And I am extremely accessible. I give people my home number and my cell phone number and will take your calls all the way up to midnight which I have done.

**Richard:** Did you want to mention anything about the seal?

**Felicia:** Oh it's nifty! Richard designed our seal and if you haven't registered a pig yet, when you do, you'll find that it feels really neat and it looks very neat on the registration document. The purpose of this seal is to limit the ability of anybody to forge our documents, they are all printed on a computer, the paper can be bought at any print store, OfficeMax. You can get something that looks very very similar to forge documents. I'm not saying anybody has or will but because we need to make sure our documents are OUR documents I am the only person, or the Registrar when I am no longer, is the only person who can do that seal which is a raised seal like you would get at the DMV or a state seal.

**Richard:** As Felicia said, the idea behind that seal is to make it more difficult to forge because we have actually noticed some forged papers in the past from other registries. Honestly, it's our registrar's job to keep that stuff away and this makes her job a little easier and it makes the Registry a little more secure. And therefore it is better for all of us.

**Recent improvements:** We have been doing a lot of things since September, you will have noticed the new website, obviously, otherwise you wouldn't be here. We had some issues with the old URL and we needed to change things over. We needed to change to a new server, which we did and we tried to do it as cheaply as possible and then discovered very quickly that the new server couldn't cope with the volume of requests we were getting. It was getting hacked by hackers and all sorts of things. So we actually upgraded that again to a larger server which is mostly dedicated to us and I think it's working a lot better. We are working with a new URL. We're using new web software, the software that we are using is public domain so it isn't costing us anything and the advantage is that it is very well supported and we can make modifications easily. Of course when you bring in new things, that also means that you bring in new problems. Since September we have had some problems on and off. There are some issues that some people are noticing on some particular browsers. There are so many different ways to accessing a website. Some people will go onto, for example, the member's list and they will say that it is all gobbledy goop and all runs in together and other people will say that it all runs in together. As is the way with these things for every one person who says "Oh I really dislike the new website, it is difficult to find things" I have other people saying. "Hey, this new website is really good. We can actually find everything we are looking for. And it's easy to navigate. It looks a lot better, etc." I will talk about it a little later on as well, constructive criticism is great. We really do appreciate it, obviously, like I said we are volunteers we are trying to do the best we can with the time that we have available. We need feedback from people. If there is something you see that could be improved, don't just say "hey this is horrible, fix it" Please tell us "this is horrible because..." and then tell us what it is that would actually make it better. Sometimes there are technical reasons we can't do that. We had a

member the other day using our ticket system and they suggested that we had a link to the ticket system on the website. That was something that could be done and was turned over within 24 hours.

Our new logo, when we changed over to the new website we also looked at our logo and decided that very few people actually thought what our logo was, was actually a pig. So we wanted something that reflected the professionalism that this organization does have. We commissioned a company to produce a logo and that's the logo we are using now. If you are on the website you will actually see that the logo at the bottom of the screen looks completely different, it is line art. That is what the seal will look like on your registration papers. And then the logo to the right hand side of the screen that says "Member" underneath it is a logo that I wanted to point out to everyone. It is similar but not the same as the official association logo but it has the member tag underneath it and that is for use for our members to put on their website or on a business card or whatever you want to do. That is one of the benefits to our members is that you can actually put this seal on your website and show the world that you are a member of the LBHA. You will find a link to those logos that you can actually download. Different sizes of files, it is all done for you to make it relatively simple and that will be in the Member section on our website.

One of the other improvements that we put together was the new support system. Basically, every time you make a query from the website or you do a registration or you create a litter certificate, whatever you do from the website actually creates a ticket. And that ticket is visible by a number of Board members and Felicia who does most of the work with those tickets. She is able to follow up and you are able to see the history with those tickets. So every time she sends you a message, it sends you and email but it records it on our database as well, so if anyone ever has a query and calls me and says "Oh I have tried to sort this out with Felicia and she is away for the next week" for example she is on vacation, I can see exactly the status and take over and look back into the history and do whatever is necessary and vice-versa. I think it is a very good system. It makes us as the Board and the people that work on this more accountable to you as members as well so you can actually see the process. You can see the progress as well.

One of the main things that we did, you probably won't see much of apart from the fact that you are now getting litter certificates in the possibility of 48 hours and that is that we improved the registration process and part of that was the redesign of the way the way things worked. It was taking hours and hours to actually enter information into the system. It had to be entered in twice in two different locations. It was fairly laborious. Brian Wright and I spent some considerable time working at how we would do things differently. One of those things was the laptop that Dave was talking about earlier, the software so we had some capital investment there as well. And then we made some changes to how information is uploaded to the website. There is still a lot more to do. We still have some great ideas that haven't come to fruition yet, simply because of time. We want to automate the CI process, so if you want to do a CI between two animals that are registered, then you can plug that information in on the website and it will give it to you instantaneously, you won't have to wait for Felicia to do that. Obviously there are going to be difficult areas where a pig isn't in our registry and in that case you are going to have to go and request it manually.

There is probably going to be some more behind the scenes changes, membership automation, how we actually maintain the registry. If those things happen, you won't actually see a lot of information there. Hopefully over all it will make everyone's job a lot easier and it will mean that everything is a lot more responsive.

We do have a couple of questions and I am going to just hold off on those questions for now and we'll

put those in to the question session. So thanks for asking those questions. I appreciate it.

We have a number of By-laws that we are thinking of changing and the Board, please feel free to jump in at any time. The By-laws are how we are governed as a Board. It governs the way that we govern the association. We have to follow those By-laws, it is a legal document and we can get into trouble if we don't do it that way. So we stick to those By-laws pretty closely. In fact very closely. In fact sometimes they need to be interpreted because they are not entirely clear in a particular situation and in that case we go through a democratic process and make sure that people are clear on how those things need to be interpreted. There are some By-laws that make it very difficult for the way we work and actually make it very difficult and costly for membership. One example would be the way the By-laws are written at the moment, if you join in December as an LBHA member, technically according to the By-laws you have to then join again on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Because your membership expires at the end of the year. We think that's unfair and unnecessary and in fact we have worked a way around it by creating a new class of membership which we are allowed to do in the By-laws and that class of membership is "if you c=join in the latter part of the year we can actually waive the fee for the following year". It's all very complicated so we want to change some of those things in our By-laws. There are actually a bunch of things we would like to change in the By-laws by obviously we can't run that past everyone all at the same time. It gets very confusing. We will not be in this meeting voting on any of these changes. To change the By-laws we have to have 60% of the membership or is it 66% Dave, correct me if I am wrong. We'll make sure we do the right one.

**Dave:** Now that you ask me, I totally don't remember. I think it is 66%.

**Richard:** We have to have 66% of the membership, not the Board, that's the general membership, 155 people that Felicia was talking about. They have to approve any of these changes. They can approve any of them or not approve any of them. It is entirely up to the membership. But that has to be done by email and that's done after this meeting. There is a 30 day time involved there as well that wait to get that information back. So those emails will go off to Kelley, our vice president, and she will calculate them. And let us know the results, but that will be taken care of after this meeting. So basically this meeting is to let you know what those By-laws changes are. It is just an overview at this stage, the actual details will be sent out in the email. There is no point in trying to put that detail in here.

Dave, you are the one who talked about the allowed voting by any sort of media, not just email. Do you want to just give a quick overview.

**Dave:** The real core purpose of the first by-law change is this. It's kind of a mix and match in the By-laws when it comes to how we are allowed to hold a vote. Some cases it is not specified at all and the one case it is actually specified that it is supposed to be a vote by mail. What we are looking to do is change it as a general provision in the first part of the By-laws to clarify that anywhere we can vote through any media means we need to vote through. If we decide to use web conferencing to vote or as in this case, most likely, email. So it is not medium dependent, it does not change the structure of the vote in whether we need a majority or a super-majority, it just frees the association to put it into the format that, frankly, allows the most access to people to do it.

**Richard:** And then the second by-law change we have got listed. Is the one that I mentioned earlier about the renewal date. We would like to actually change it to an anniversary system so if you join on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December, your membership is valid until the 30<sup>th</sup> of December at midnight on that day the next year. We have that information available so we know when people joined. I think it would be a much fairer system. Now it actually would be a lot more work if we were going to do this manually but

one of the changes we want to do behind the scenes is to computerize this. Once it is computerized then we can make it automated and can send emails and notify the Secretary when something isn't being taken care of and she can make a phone call. That would actually work out quite well.

The third point on there is simply that as the By-laws are written at the moment if a position on the Board becomes available, for example the 3 positions that we just recently filled, they became available because people left mid-term. So they didn't finish out their term that they had available. So, what we love to have done as a Board is to actually open it up to the membership and say "Hey, do you want to nominate people to come into this position and vote on them" and we weren't allowed to do that as a Board because the By-laws actually specified that we as a Board have to appoint people into that place. That's why we opened it up to everyone and said "hey who wants to come onto the Board", got the information, we talked to those candidates and made our decision there. We would love to be able to have the option to do that. Now, it may be a disadvantage in some cases because of the last point on here, point number 5 on the proposed changes. It may be a disadvantage in some cases, the Board would love to have the option of doing that where at the moment we have no option.

The 4<sup>th</sup> change that we would like to take care of is to remove the term limits. Term limits on a Board when dealing with 155 members and you don't have a huge number of volunteers that are able to work with that Board in that volunteer position, it actually means that if you have term limits you can't use those people who are still willing and able to work for the Board. We would like to remove those term limits. That does not mean that somebody will stay in that position forever the term will still end and they have to then be voted back in by the membership. Or somebody else can be voted in. At the moment, once you have had two terms in a position, then you cannot go into that position again and so you lose that skill set. We think that is a bad thing.

And the last point on there is that in the By-laws and this is historical, this is a problem that I inherited. The Board, according to the By-laws, the Board is meant to be staggered in expiration dates. So for example the President is not meant to come up for renewal for that position at the same as the Secretary and that's a safety factor so you don't have all your Board disappearing at the same time and new people coming in and not knowing what is going on and the association collapses. So we don't want to do that. What we need to do is, as a Board, we need to be able to say "OK, let's fix this because at the moment, everybody, all the offices expire at the same time and all the Board members terms expire at the same time. And general Board members are on two years and officers are on for three years. What we need to do there is we need to fix that staggering somehow. The only way we can think to fix that properly is by possibly extending some of the Board members time in the positions and obviously we cannot do that according to the By-laws without the members permission. That's another thing that we are going to be asking for.

So those are our changes and you will receive an email with the detail.

We have a number of questions, Board do you see those questions. I see 3 separate questions. Who wants to take a stab at answering any of them. Oh I tell you, How many members attending this evening? We actually have 6 members signed up to attend, we have 3 general members on the line and we have 5 Board members on the line as well. There are actually 9 Board members, some of them were short notice and could not make it.

Who wants to explain what CI is?

**Dave:** I will take a stab at it. I'll do a 10 thousand foot view of it. CI stands for Co-efficient of inbreeding what it does in a nut shell is identify how much of the ancestry of the pig was related to

each other. Kind of like identifying grandparents who were brothers and sisters or identifying a grandparent that is in both sides of the family tree which sometimes happens. Say your pig has a grandfather named Emmett on his mother's side well that same pig is the grandfather on his sire's side, so how many individuals back in those pedigrees, typically you are looking at two sides of a particular pig's family tree, how many common elements there are and where they are. If you have a relative on your maternal side that is a parent but on your paternal side to be a parent (that's probably a little bit of a stretch) so what the CI is a percentage the lowest, like a 0% would mean nobody in the ancestry on either side is a direct relation to anyone else on the other side or anywhere else in the same family tree. The reverse of course would be 100% and I don't know of a scenario which would actually produce 100% CI. The higher the number of common ancestors, the higher the percentage the co-efficient of inbreeding would become. For us, typically you would see something in the, and Felicia would probably actually be a little more familiar with that percentages, 5-6% is pretty low as a common, fairly low and I have seen them 30-35% I don't know if they go much higher than that. It is kind of difficult to get numbers much higher than 30% or so. You have to have a significant amount of in-breeding. I will also address, if you will permit me, I will address the last question to follow up about CI. Depends on who you ask. The question was what is the highest CI you want in your breeding stock. Typically I would say lower is better part of that goes back into the CI calculations that the registrar can do. Because you could have a number of low CI pigs but their offspring could be very high CI because their offspring could be close relatives, half-brother, half-sister, pure siblings those types of things. Both the stock you have and what their offspring will be and then further on down the road it could be metered with. I think the rule of thumb a lot of people I have talked with is that they want to stay under 20% total. It depends on your objective, if you are breeding butcher pigs and this is just Dave's view of this, you are probably looking more for conformation and daily gain and CI mate with that. You might have high CI pigs that gain quickly or low CI pigs that don't gain as much. This is a discussion with a lot of tentacles. I feel comfortable with in general if you are looking for breeding stock and you are going to breed piglets, not only do you want parents to have a low CI as you can get but what you want to look at is when those parents are mating together, what the CI is of their offspring. In particular if you are going to sell breeding pairs yourself. Find out before breeding what the CI is going to be and that's the CI analysis that the registrar can provide if you give Felicia the registration of the pigs you plan to breed to Felicia I believe a litter certificate will work as well, she can then mate them to a pig to tell you that this is what their offspring will be. You can get that analysis done. I recently, my personal position, I am trying to encourage a lot of people to use those tools. Because you get those questions of whether you like high CI or low CI, the offspring varies a lot. But I think everyone should do the best they can to get informed as to what those numbers are. At least they know that at least I know they are high CI or low CI and I'm going to breed butcher pigs maybe I will breed stock with a low CI because there is more marketable. It has a lot of tentacles on it. I advocate to use the Registrar.

**Richard:** One thing I would like to add there is we actually had a brother/sister pair that came to us already bred. The brother had bred the sister and I think the piglets that came out of that were 34% CI and technically that is not a breeding that you would normally do. However, the thing to look at is to look at the pig. Look at the piglet itself and look at the parents and look at the piglet. I know for a fact that we sold one of those piglets with a CI of 34% and by ten months she had a litter of 8 piglets. She is a great sow. You cannot just say that "It's a high CI, that's bad. Or, it's a low CI, that's good".

**Dave:** Absolutely.

**Richard:** That's what Dave was saying. It varies. You will find breeders out there that can tell you the CI's. I know for example, Liz, my wife, has done some research and actually have a bit more in depth information than the LBHA has in its database. Now the LBHA registry we can't just say 'oh take Liz's



information and slap it in there” because A) it affects everybody and B) Felicia has to check that through and make sure it is all done right. Sometimes we will have a 2% difference because we have a little bit more history than the LBHA does. Also, be careful with your CI's if you see them on your registration documents if you notice there are missing generations because we just don't have the history of them, then that affects the CI calculation as well. It may show a CI of .2% for example but then if you look and see a load of missing ancestors, that's why. The CI calculation won't be correct.

There was another question there:

Why not prorate the first year? This is obviously dealing with the membership renewals.

Why not prorate the first year and then have it annual after that? Then all renew at the same time, it is much simpler even if it is automated.

That was in fact, the suggestion that I put forward and Felicia who is going to have to do all the work suggested that we go back the other way. So I am going to let Felicia answer that one.

**Felicia:** By separating it by month, it brings the workload on the secretary down from having to scramble to make sure everybody needs are met with their membership renewals or new membership, it makes it so that there is a handful each month that get the quality response and the quality customer service that they really deserve. Rather than being a quick email form letter out to each person. That is why we wanted to go with each month having on your anniversary date, and that means that some people, if it goes through of course, some people will have a great benefit and some people it won't change anything for them.

**Richard:** Excellent question. Thank you very much. You can always ask those questions as you can see there it says to send questions at any time to any Board member. All the Board member's emails are listed on our website under “home – About” You will see a list of all the Board members there so you can ask questions at any time. We will get back to you, we promise.

We are coming very rapidly to the end of our meeting and we are nearly there and we are good for time as well.

Just wrapping up, we have seen many changes in the LBHA. Some of those changes have been a little painful. There have been a number of members out there that have complained about things. Quite frankly, a lot of it has been due to our fast growth. We grew from in 2009 having a few pigs registered to 2010 to having hundreds of pigs registered. As you see now, our database is quite large. If you look back at some of the figures that Felicia has personally been working on, she has only been registrar for a couple of months and she has already done several hundred pigs that she has been dealing with. This is actually encouraging because means that as an organization, although we have had some difficult moments, we have actually coped with it. I think we have actually come through to the other side. As an organization we were basically a start-up organization and I think we have come to the place, I think we are at the beginning of maturity. We can start concentrating on other things. This is something that Dave was talking about in our Board meeting the other day. We can now start to concentrate on things like Breed Standards and those sorts of things because we have the rest of it in place. Because the growth rate is actually fantastic for the breed. We pass all our figures on, Felicia is going to get a notification each year requesting that she sends information to the ALBC (American Livestock Breed Conservancy) and they collate figures from all over the country and they make determinations of whether this breed is a critical breed or in recovery or whatever it is and they keep an eye on all the different heritage breeds. We are nearing the place that the Large Blacks are going to be moving down a level because quite frankly, our membership. I know it is the pigs that do the breeding but it's our

membership that is enabling them to actually take care of business. As members, I think the fact that we have seen such a growth and we have had some difficult times because it has been so busy for us, I think it is a great indication for the breed.

I am really encouraged by seeing that. I think I mentioned it earlier, if you are going to give us feedback, please give us feedback that helps us understand what you mean. There's been a number a people who have sent me emails saying "Oh I really don't like the website" and that doesn't help me at all. When I ask details, why don't you like the website, I never seem to get anything back from them. "Well, this is a problem, etc" Please, we are volunteers you are volunteers as well, please volunteer your time to actually sit down and say "this is a problem for me, it would be better if we could do it this way". It would really help us. It would mean that we could actually get in and focus on a problem, fix that problem and make everything better for everyone. Please just take the time to do that.

There are a number a new changes that I would like to see happen, these are my thoughts. I haven't brought up to the Board yet. So Board, please don't beat me up. I would like to see us do things like newsletters, articles on our website those sorts of things to provide interest to some other people. With these new Board members we have some great experience. For example, Harvey, is a grazing consultant. I really want to see us as the LBHA steal his abilities and get him to do a series of articles for us like in the newsletter or on the blog posts etc. To actually help the rest of us understand grazing and grazing practices and those sorts of things. There are a number of other people in the general membership as well, if any one of our members has got that experience, we would love to do those sorts of articles. There are a number of things in there that I would like to see. I am toying with the idea of approaching the Board with maybe a new forum system and there maybe some groans from people who just got used to the new one. There are better forum systems out there, but it would only work if I could actually transfer the information, when we moved from the old website, we couldn't transfer the information so people's user names, people's passwords were lost. We lost all the information that was on that previous website which was a real shame. Anything we move to would have to be a prerequisite that we would have to move that information across.

There are going to be a number of new membership tools. Some of those will be behind the scenes, but the membership will be talking about like the CI calculation and maybe a member look-up to see if someone is actually a valid member of the LBHA. That is really important because you cannot have registered, they cannot be selling registered piglets if they are not a member of the LBHA. We will provide that as a service maybe to the members and non-members as well. One thing I didn't make a mention of on here, we are actually working as a Board on a Buyer's Guide. Would be something that would be publicly available and would give ideas of what to look for in a piglet, of how to make sure you are not being conned. Making sure that you are buying registered stock, making sure that you have got contract information, those sorts of things. What to look for in a piglet so you don't end up with some horrible thing that isn't even a Large Black for example. We're working on a number of things, so bear with us and if you have any available time, we have committees that we would love to have people help out on. Board, do we have anything that any of the Board members would like to add, we have 5 minutes to spare?

**Kelley:** I would just real quickly like to say that We've done some advertising we would like some feedback regarding that advertising if someone has been contacted by someone that said they saw an ad for example about the LBHAs. If somebody has got a local publication that they would like to see some advertising done, we would definitely like to see some input and opportunities to expand the LBHA and just get the word out about eh Large Black hogs. If anyone has any ideas, volunteer, send in your information, absolutely we would love to help.

**Richard:** There was a question about ear notches. There is ear notching information available if you go to the website and go to the Home Menu and then drop down to Files, you will actually see a number of files there and one of those is about ear notches. Now before she left, one of our previous Board Members, JoAnn Smotherman was actually working on an updated, possibly easier version of that and that's still on my list of things to do. I have been concentrating more on getting the membership meeting done. We do actually have another document that may be able to help you in the field as well, so once you are there with a piglet, you sit there with a check-off list and I think JoAnn borrowed heavily off of Kelley and Felicia for that information as well. We will certainly update that. But there is a poster available there as well.

OK, is there anything else from the Board?

**Felicia:** I would like to say that if you have a question contact one of us. Don't assume that we're going to know what you're thinking. If you think there might be an issue, just call, ask, email, post it on the Forum, we need to know how the hogs are doing in your life and how we can help you better and how you can help us with more information. If you have a hog that passes away, I would really love to have that information, so I can take them off the book as far as being an active breeder for the ALBC numbers. Just remember that we are available and the only silly question is the one that is not asked.

**Harvey:** Richard? I would like to commend all the efforts that have been put in by the current and previous Board members, they have put lots and lots always a labor of love to put all this together. You're not getting paid to do this and what is being put together in this scenario is fabulous. I thank you guys.

**Richard:** Thank you. We are at the end of our allotted time. I appreciate everyone coming together. There was a question that just popped up there, someone likes this meeting format and it's really cool. That's good feedback, thank you. I appreciate you coming along. Just looking forward to another great year with these hogs, hopefully by next year, we will have a bunch more stuff to report as well. Thank you everyone and Good Night.

(Board says their good nights)