

**Potatoes USA  
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
The Four Seasons Hotel  
Denver, CO**

**Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions**

Chairperson Shelley Olsen called the meeting to order at 1:54 PM MT.

Committee members present included Shelley Olsen, Mike Carter, Dennis Wright, Ed Staunton, Leah Halverson, Trever Belnap, Les Alderete, Wendy Dykstra, and Dave Masser. Steve Elfering and Hunter Gibbs, TIPCEA board members, were also present.

Staff members Blair Richardson, Bonnie Johnson, Kim Breshears, Tiffany Thompson, Marisa Stein, Monica Heath, and Chelsea Gray were present. Cara Lawrence with Tierney Lawrence Stiles, Deanna Bakken, and Harrison Hodges from USDA were present.

**Antitrust Statement**

All attendees acknowledged and accepted the Antitrust Policy Statement. A copy of the Antitrust Policy Statement is also provided to attendees before meetings on BoardEffect.

**Welcome**

Chairwoman Shelley Olsen welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new Executive Committee and congratulated them on their nomination.

**Minutes Approval**

No minutes were voted on as there was insufficient time to prepare and distribute minutes from the previous meeting. They will be presented for approval at the next Executive Committee meeting.

**Regional Reports**

Regional reports were shared on Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> and no Executive Committee members had any new information to share.

**CEO Report**

Blair Richardson reviewed recent and upcoming potato industry events.

**Recent Industry Events:**

Jan 8	NFPT Variety Selection	Austin, TX
Jan 8-9	Potatoes USA Mtgs	Austin, TX
Jan 9	NCP Meeting	Austin, TX
Jan 9	PRAC Meeting	Austin, TX
Jan 10-11	POTATO EXPO	Austin, TX
Jan 16-18	Idaho Potato Conf	Pocatello, ID
Jan 23-25	WA/OR Potato Conf	Kennewick, WA
Jan 24-25	Eastern Shore Ag Conf	The Shore, VA
Jan 31-Feb 1	Mid-Atlantic F&V Conf	Hershey, PA
Jan 31-Feb 1	Michigan Potato Conf	East Lansing, MI
Feb 6-8	So. Rocky Mtn Conf	Monte Vista, CO
Feb 6-8	Wisconsin Potato Conf	Stevens Point, WI

Feb 13-14	New York Potato School	Waterloo, NY
Feb 13-15	Orientation/Pre-Caucus	Virtual
Feb 21-29	PILI	
Feb 21-22	Northland Potato Conf	Grand Forks, ND
Feb 26-Mar 1	NPC DC Summit	Washington, DC
Feb 26-28	Potatoes USA AMS/FAS Meetings	
Mar 5	H&M iLab Session	Denver/Virtual

**Future Industry Events:**

Apr 8-12	Int'l Reps Meetings	Washington, DC
May 15-16	CRCEO Mtg	Denver, CO
May 18-20	NC Grower Meeting	Elizabeth City, NC
May 22	Agristo Meeting	Wedeke, Belgium
May 21-24	Europatat Annual Mtg	Brussels, Belgium
May ___	All Agencies Meeting	Denver, CO
Jun 9	WA Potato Shippers	Leavenworth, WA
Jun 10-12	IFPA Conference	Washington, DC
Jun 23-26	World Potato Congress	Adelaide, Australia
Jun 26-27	NPC Summer Meeting	Fort Collins, CO
Jul 9-11	PSA Conference	Chicago, IL
Jul 21-25	PAA Conference	Portland, OR
Jul ___	NFPT Summer Mtg	_____
Jul 8-11	ExCom Meeting	ND/MN
Aug 5-7	Potatoes USA Summer	Vancouver, BC
Aug 9-15	China Market Visit	China
Aug ___	APRE Board Mtg	Virtual
Aug 28-30	IGSA Conference	Sun Valley, ID
Aug ___	PRAC Meeting	_____
Sep 23-25	State/Nat Workshop	TBD
Oct 22-24	SIAL	Paris
Oct 23-24	NFPT Field Day	Grand Forks, MN
Oct 17-19	IFPA Conference	Atlanta, GA
Oct ___	CRCEO Meeting	_____
Nov ___	APRE Board Meeting	_____
Nov 2-6	Japan Market Visit	Japan
Nov 8/9	PMANA Meeting	_____
Nov ___	IPC Harvest Meeting	_____
Nov 24-26	INTERPOM'24	Kortrijk, BE
Dec 3	ExCom/Fin/Comp Mtgs	Denver, CO
Dec 3-4	NCP Variety Selections	Chicago, IL
Dec 4/5/6	Pre-strategy committee virtual sessions	

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to approve Blair Richardson's travel to the above events as needed.

The Executive Committee is required to meet at least six times each year. Executive Committee meetings for the 2024-2025 year are scheduled for:

Mar 13	ExCom Meeting	Denver, CO
Jul 8-11	ND/MN Outreach Events	ND/MN
Aug 5-8	Summer Meetings	Vancouver, BC
Dec 3	ExCom Meeting	Denver, CO
Jan 6-10	Winter Meetings/EXPO	Orlando, FL
Mar 10-13	Spring Meetings	Denver, CO

### **Potatoes USA Executive Committee Orientation**

Blair Richardson reviewed with the Committee some of their roles while serving on the Committee. The responsibilities include:

- Hiring, firing, and annual performance review of the CEO.
- Support staff efforts to develop and implement the Strategic Plan. The current plan is designed to evolve and adapt continually.
- Chair/ Co-chair and lead the Operating Committee meetings.
- Provide information, guidance, and feedback throughout the year on such items and regional issues, industry challenges, potential problems, and perception of what information Potatoes USA is sending to the industry.
- Represent and communicate to the industry at state and regional meetings, Potato EXPO, grower outreach events, and board meetings.
- Assist with letters of support and media inquiries.
- Provide direct and indirect feedback throughout the year. Informing the CEO of any concerns.
- Review, approve, and recommend special projects to the board. These are one-time focused activities not included in the annual budget.

Mr. Richardson covered the overall budget process with the Committee. This included the budget's timeline and all appropriate committees and approval processes that need to occur while the budget is being developed and finalized. The preliminary budget is set by the Finance Committee in early Fall and presented to the Finance and Policy Committee in December. It is then reviewed by the Executive Committee in January and recommended to the board in January in draft form. The Finance and Policy Committee recommends the final budget to the board for approval in March. Blair informed the Executive Committee that they have authority over a \$25,000 contingency fund. The board must approve all other budget decisions.

Blair Richardson also shared the potato industry organizations Potatoes USA supports or is an active member of, including:

- Alliance for Potato Research and Education (APRE)
- Potato Research Advisory Committee (PRAC)
- National Chip Program (NCP)
- National Fry Potato Trials (NFPT)
- Fresh Working Group
- Processors Working Group
- Potato Chef Advisory Council

### **Department Updates**

Department updates were not provided as these were just shared at the March 11<sup>th</sup> Spring Meeting.

### **Administrative Update:**

Chelsea Gray shared a tentative schedule for the 2024 Summer Meeting in Vancouver, BC.

### **USDA Update**

No update was provided.

**Legal Guidance**

Cara Lawrence, Potatoes USA's legal counsel, reviewed the Executive Committee's responsibilities with the group. She reminded them that their primary duty is oversight and should leave day-to-day operations and decisions to the staff of Potatoes USA.

**Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

**Closed Session**

There was no need for a Closed Session.

**Adjourn**

Chairwoman Shelley Olsen adjourned the meeting at 3:12 PM.

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Approved by:

DocuSigned by:  
*Wendy Dykstra*  
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Secretary/Treasurer

7/17/2024

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Date