

MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING of the NEBRASKA BRAND COMMITTEE

**Wednesday January 29, 2025
12:00pm mountain time
Mid-Plains Community College
512 East B St
Ogallala, NE 69153**

All agenda items are for discussion and action will be taken as deemed appropriate. The Committee reserves the right to go into closed session in accordance with Neb.Rev.Stat. §84-1410.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Duane Gangwish at 12:07pm

- The open meetings statement was read by Duane Gangwish

- **Roll Call**

Duane Gangwish	Present
Chris Gentry	Present
Marie Farr	Present via Webex
Steve Stroup	Not Present
Brenda Masek	Present
Sherry Vinton	Present via Webex

- **Adoption of Agenda**

Brenda Masek moved to approve the agenda with the addition of a Legislative update.
Chris Gentry Seconded the motion.
No discussion

Duane Gangwish	Yes
Chris Gentry	Yes
Brenda Masek	Yes

Motion Passed

- **Current Business**

1. Introduction of Attendees.
Duane Gangwish
Chris Gentry
Brenda Masek
Tom Hughson

Dean Anderson
Dalen Wood
Merritt Barton
Danna Schwenk

Webex Attendees
Elisabeth Hurst
Clint Vernal
Don Arp
Sherry Vinton
Bryce Dibbern
Jessica S.
Ashley McClinton
John Widdowson
Shawn Hanks
Kayla Jesse

2. Review of Employee Status

Don gave an update on the opening of a position in Alliance.

No action was taken.

3. Budget Review

Don gave an update, stating that the Budget hearing is the 21st of February and will move forward from there. Brenda asked about the Committees role in the budget hearing. Don and Clint Verner spoke on the process of the budget hearing. Duane also discussed our current inspection fees.

No action was taken

4. Update of technology issues

Don gave an update on our current Technology and Looking at advancements after the budget approval.

No action was taken.

5. Legislative update.

Duane gave a synopsis of LB 646

Tom and Don gave their explanation of how the bill read to them and how it compares to current programs within the Brand Committee.

Duane requested that Committee members and staff write down any questions they have about the bill for the February 11th hearing.

Discussion was had on possible affects this could have on the Committee, other statues, and our ability to enforce them, as well as producers and other stake holders, such as lending institutions and packers.

Clint Verner and Don gave possible problems and solutions for the financial impact this bill could have on the committee.

The Investigators gave their insight on the impact this could have on crime and their ability to investigate certain crimes.

The pros and cons of presenting either for, against or neutral were discussed.
No action was taken.

6. Public Comment

Bryce Dibbern from LMA stated that Markets are worried about the viability of the Brand Committee if this bill passes. Also asked, if there was an issue at one of these exempt facilities, will the Committee go in there to investigate or are the exempt from all services from the Brand Committee. Chris stated that the money would be tough to overcome and on the second question, if it was a reported action the Brand Committee would go in. Don added that we have a responsibility to uphold the brand laws regardless of if we have the funds.

Bryce also asked what the committee had looked at as far as fee structure. Duane stated that there would need to be increases across the board.

Question from Webex: Did the introducer of the bill have any communication with the Committee or staff prior to the introduction of the bill? Duane stated that, we did not have any of the wording before us prior to the bill coming out. There was discussion at a meeting in December, but that was about cattle movement.

The question was asked as to what position the Committee would take at the hearing? Duane stated that, that is what they were there to decide today.

John Widdowson stated that the Committee as a whole, represents everyone in a situation like this and the Committee should not have a position on this bill. You can ask all the questions and state things from a neutral position. Chris disagreed with Johns comments.

7. Executive Session:

Brenda Masek moved to move into executive session To Receive Legal Advice Related to Potential or Anticipated Litigation, Legislative, Personnel matters and Review of Special Projects.

Chris Gentry seconded the motion.

No Discussion

Duane Gangwish Yes

Chris Gentry Yes

Brenda Masek Yes

Motion passed

Committee moved into executive session at 1:30pm

Brenda Masek moves to come out of executive session.

Chris Gentry seconded the motion.

No Discussion

Duane Gangwish Yes

Chris Gentry Yes

Brenda Masek Yes

Motion passed

Committee returned to public session at 3:24pm

Chris Gentry moved that the Official statement of the Brand Committee is that, We are against LB 646 as currently written.

Brend Masek seconded the motion.

No Discussion

Duane Gangwish Yes

Chris Gentry Yes

Brenda Masek Yes

Motion Passed

- **Adjournment**

Brena Masek moved to adjourn the meeting.

Chris Gentry seconded the motion.

No discussion

Duane Gangwish Yes

Chris Gentry Yes

Brenda Masek Yes

Motion Passed

Meeting adjourned at 3:26pm