

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education
Minutes - February 24, 2003
Best Western Doublewood, Bismarck, ND

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met in Bismarck, North Dakota at the Best Western Doublewood Inn on February 24, 2003 beginning at 9:50 a.m. Members present were: Tom Archbold, Tim Bryan, Jerry Doan, Neal Fisher, Carol Goodman, Ken Grafton, Jody Hauge, Patricia Jensen, Burdell Johnson, Roger Johnson, Vern Mayer and Phil Mueller.

Chairman Doan called the meeting to order. Following introductions, the minutes of the January 10 meeting and February 4 conference call were approved as distributed.

Doan stated that H.B. 1389, was defeated on February 20. He thanked Representative Phil Mueller for his help in making that happen.

Jay Fisher, director at the North Central Research Extension Center, reported that Tom Hanson is chairing a committee to fill the July 1 multi-county program unit vacancy on SBARE (Tim Bryan). Doan indicated that the Ag Coalition is seeking a replacement for Jody Hauge. Doan added that the dedication of Jody and Tim will be missed and they will be hard members to replace.

Jody Hauge testified in support of S.B. 2334 (beef systems center of excellence) on behalf of SBARE at a February 6 committee hearing. Hauge stated that there is a lot of excitement and interest in such a center. She compared the initial discussions to the early plans for the Animal Nutrition and Physiology Center and stressed the importance of continuing the dialogue.

Chairman Doan stated that the hearing for H.B. 1021 was very positive. He thanked the Ag Coalition for their help and support. Doan said the subcommittee meeting also went well and there were very few questions or concerns.

Hauge complimented Patricia Jensen, Ken Grafton, Sharon Anderson and Bruce Bollinger for their hard work, suggesting that things were going so well at the Legislature because of their preparations.

Jerry Doan reviewed the sequence of events related to the defeat of H.B. 1389. He said the strong showing at the committee hearing confirms solid support for the SBARE process.

Doan shared several concerns that have been expressed by those critical of SBARE. They included:

- 1) SBARE is in the way of researchers
- 2) SBARE impedes process of obtaining outside grants and contracts
- 3) SBARE members are bringing personal agendas to the board
- 4) NDSU runs SBARE
- 5) SBARE lacks vision

The chairman told SBARE members that it is important to take conversations and complaints seriously to avoid the similar problems in the future.

Phil Mueller said that SBARE does have things they need to do better and can do better, but there are also a lot of good things happening. He said a huge issue is the complexity of the board and the lack of understanding about it. Mueller stated that SBARE needs to be less defensive and educate people about what the board does.

Jerry Doan told board members that communication with NDSU administrators, faculty and staff has definitely improved with the implementation of SBARE, and said that the introduction of H.B. 1389 may have actually helped the board because it created an awareness of the support for the SBARE process.

Tim Bryan said that another issue that has been talked about is the leadership of SBARE and that needs to be discussed.

Ken Grafton told board members that Don Kirby, assistant experiment station director, will soon establish a committee to develop a strategic plan for the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources.

Phil Mueller stated that SBARE needs to continue to maintain the bridge between NDSU researchers and producers. He added that there needs to be open dialogue about what is right and what is wrong.

Roger Johnson suggested sharing some of the issues/concerns with faculty, commodity representatives, etc., and to ask for their reactions via a survey.

Patricia Jensen agreed it would be good to have that interactive discussion, but did not feel that a survey would be effective. She suggested using the SBARE subcommittees for the conversations.

Ken Grafton informed SBARE that there have been some concerns expressed about the amount of paperwork that is required with the Agricultural Research Fund granting process. Some individuals have complained that there are too many requirements for the small amount of funding received.

Jerry Doan stated that policies are reviewed annually and the board would be willing to simplify the process if such a recommendation was made.

Tim Bryan made a motion to direct NDSU agriculture administrators to make a recommendation to simplify the Agricultural Research Fund granting process. Neal Fisher seconded the motion, which passed.

Wade Moser, executive vice president of the North Dakota Stockmen's Association, told board members that he thinks SBARE needs to be more proactive and spend more time gathering input. He continued by saying they need to do a better job of letting people know their vision and give all producer groups time to share their ideas. He added that the stockmen's group is excited about the beef center of excellence and they are confident that it will become a reality.

Board members discussed how to proceed with an SBARE strategic planning session to define the role, mission and vision. Suggestions included hiring a facilitator, hosting a retreat and/or using the Group Decision Center at NDSU.

Roger Johnson said it would be good to have baseline data before SBARE holds a retreat.

Patricia Jensen suggested a facilitator could do personal interviews and bring the anonymous information to SBARE for discussion.

Phil Mueller shared a concern about the involvement of NDSU department chairs, center directors, and faculty at SBARE meetings. He noted that if there were specific or relevant issues they could be notified, but their continual participation is unnecessary.

Jody Hauge added that if researchers are represented, any concerns or issues should be delivered by SBARE members.

Roger Johnson made a motion to authorize the SBARE chair to solicit strategic planning entities to gather input from at least three stakeholder groups - producers, researchers, and administrators - with intent to begin long-range planning process ASAP. Jody Hauge seconded the motion, which passed following some discussion.

Ken Grafton confirmed his support of the long-range planning process for SBARE, noting that plan will enhance the efforts of the NDSU ag planning committee.

Jerry Doan indicated he is still concerned with complaints he hears about the SBARE membership selection process from the multi-county program units. The board needs to continue to talk about ways to do a better job of recruitment/solicitation of board members.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Recorded by Margaret Olson