

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education

July 27, 2017

Minutes

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met at the Carrington Research Extension Center on July 27, 2017. Board members in attendance were Mike Beltz, Mark Birdsall, Tracy Boe, Chris Boerboom, Dean Bresciani, Doug Goehring, Ken Grafton, Larry Hoffmann, Jerry Klein, Brian Leier, Keith Peltier, JoAnn Rodenbiker, Dick Roland, and Dean Wehri. Member absent: Lance Gulleeson.

Welcome, Introductions, Comments from Chair

Chairman Mike Beltz welcomed members and guests. He also introduced Sarah Lovas, who is the ND Ag Coalition appointee to SBARE, and her appointment approval from the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) is pending. Lovas is a producer from the Hillsboro area. Beltz also announced that Brian Leier's second term is also pending approval by the SBHE.

A motion was made by President Bresciani and seconded by Mark Birdsall to approve the meeting minutes from the February and April meetings in 2017. Motion carried.

Administrative Update from President Bresciani:

All state agencies are hurting in the current budget situation. Approximately 100 faculty positions have been lost and this will have long term consequences on our institutions. NDSU was better prepared than sister institutions, yet it will still take at least a decade or longer to recover from a setback of this magnitude.

Administrative Update for the ND Agricultural Experiment Station (AES):

Dr. Grafton reported that the AES has implemented the budget. The Main Station eliminated 30 positions with 13 other positions lost at the Research Extension Centers (RECs). This is a mix of various positions. Due to state financial strains compounded by the drought, a hiring freeze will be maintained until January 2018. Faculty and departments have done a great job of leveraging funds, but it's taking a toll on office administration at the various stations. Lack of office support is becoming problematic, thus critical hires may include office staffing. Resignations to report include Dr. Kim Vonnahme, Department of Animal Sciences, who will be moving to a private industry position; Dr. Marcelo Carena, Department of Plant Sciences. NDSU is working with the council to help determine the program direction. Research scientists have been able to fund positions with 25% in other funds, and the amount of support they were able to garner through various grants was very impressive. There have been only three hires in recent months and all were critical needs. These hires were made on general fund monies with offers that went out before the freeze. Mark Weber, director of Northern Crops Institute (NCI) announced plans to retire effective December 31, 2017. This position will be filled as soon as possible as North Dakota Century Code requires that a Director is in place.

Administrative Update for the NDSU Extension Service (EXT):

Dr. Boerboom shared programming updates including the current statewide drought. Dr. Carl Dahlen has been leading the Extension team focused on drought issues; Dr. Charlie Stoltenow was asked to give update to the board on these efforts. He distributed handouts with Extension resources that have been shared with producers. Extension agents have provided observations to update the Drought Monitor. Many state agencies are working together to get information out to stakeholders.

The 2017 4-H program has held 19 camps this summer hosting 579 campers. Going forward this fall there will be a new 4-H enrollment fee in place; many other states already have a fee to help cover program costs.

A total of 20.5 FTEs in reductions have occurred Extension to date due to the allotment, the budget reduction, and retirements. Recruitment for EFNEP/FNP positions has continued because they are grant funded. Extension agent positions in Dunn and Morton counties are under recruitment. The Soil Conservation position is now vacant; discussions are under way regarding how to fill the position temporarily and manage the grant program. Dwight Aakre has retired and his specialist position is critical and will be targeted for filling in 2018. There are currently 6.4 FTEs vacant for Extension agents and district directors are working on criteria to prioritize positions. At the Federal level, budget bills appear to be holding Extension funding lines flat.

Drought Discussion

Commissioner Goehring was asked for an update from the Department of Ag regarding the drought. He does frequent interviews weekly with state, national, and international news outlets. His request for opening up lands for grazing was initially declined but in cooperating with other agencies, the access was eventually granted. Sonny Perdue, US Secretary of Agriculture, has been extremely responsive in working with North Dakota during this crisis. Goehring added that NDSU has been great to work with and that Drs. Grafton, Greg Lardy, Dahlen, Kevin Sedivec and other specialists have been great in providing information and sharing resources. NDSU offered a staging site for hay drop-offs for the Hay Lottery program which will allow donors and recipients a dropoff/pickup site for participants in the Lottery. The ND Department of Agriculture also approved \$825,000 to help with water-to-livestock issues for North Dakota producers. Sen. Jerry Klein added that when the legislature left session, moisture was more normal and the projections affecting budgets were much more positive than what has actually been experienced this summer. This drought could really prove to be a difficult time, financially. Rep. Tracy Boe added that he is hearing that producers are facing great difficulty paying their bills due to lost revenue and crops; already in July producers are hurting, especially those who have not experienced this hardship before. Richard Roland offered to make a motion to provide funds toward helping producers with managing residue that could assist them in the drought. After discussion, there was no official motion.

ARF Contract Approval

The contract was distributed and the Chair noted that all appropriate parties reviewed and vetted the contract. Board members were invited to voice any questions or discuss. JoAnn Rodenbiker moved to approve the contract as presented, seconded by Mark Birdsall. Motion carried.

Land Study Update

There are no final results yet as some information is forthcoming. Lardy was appointed chair of the study of longterm use of our land around the 19th Avenue North corridor and the land on both sides. Some of this land is owned by the ND Agricultural Experiment Station, and some of it is owned by NDSU. There are about 2600 acres of land associated with the Main Campus, most of it related to agricultural use and is a very important area for agricultural work and research. Bruce Bollinger, NDSU VP for Finance and Administration, was on this review committee and his understanding of agriculture and the University were very helpful. A number of key factors make this land an important area: its proximity to campus, and it is well suited to research purposes including horticulture, crops and animal research. Animal Science conducts research through several farms and centers in the area. The ease of access for students allows for critical hands-on farm activity and learning. The committee has looked carefully at the rationale for use of this land going forward over the next 25 years. At this time, it is generally determined this land is needed for ongoing research as well as additional needs for future expanded facilities for research, learning, and more.

One of the reasons for this study was the initial attempt by the legislature to consider selling it or trading it for less desirable land further away. Each of the Research Extension Centers have faced this scenario at one time or another; the public may not always fully understand how the land is used and the importance of the research. NDAES is aware of the land worth not only in dollars but also in terms of what the land can produce for research, keeping in mind accessibility, cropland drainage, and educational uses. One board member inquired about the total figure for the special assessment for the 19th Avenue North improvements made by the City of Fargo; there has been no firm number issued at this time but estimates could be around \$1.9 million over 20 years.

Extension Review Update

Beltz complimented the Extension Director's office in assisting him with the coordination of Extension Review meetings and thanked Rodenbiker as well. Boerboom noted that when SBARE requested a review last November, an outline of a plan was presented and the Board approved the plan. Donna Ray Scheffert (MN) was contracted to facilitate the effort. A review draft report was shared with the board. Six primary areas were reviewed by a committee over a several months process. Staff presented information at different stages and the pros and cons of Extension structures in adjoining states were examined through interviews of their administration. Ms. Scheffert led a formal process guiding members to consider many issues. Rodenbiker said the process enlisted new Extension advocates in North Dakota. Once the Legislature brought forward the bill addressing a review of the Extension Service, they contacted the Governor's office and were initially unable to find meeting times that worked. Going forward, close collaboration with the Governor's office will continue. Goehring noted that he felt further consultation with the agricultural community was warranted and Beltz

said they consider the process as still ongoing and will look to continue to get stakeholder input in Phase 2. This phase shall include selected SBARE members, representatives from the Governor's office, and additional stakeholders.

Klein noted that this was his 11th legislative session, and due to the environment he witnessed there will be substantial challenges going forward. SBARE members understand Extension, but new legislators may not have a connection to Extension and may not recognize its value. Discussion followed and board members were urged to read the Extension Review report and consider the issues and recommendations. Others stressed that some confusion during the legislative session was related to misconceptions about mission creep and overlap with other agencies; this topic was also included in the committee discussion during the review process. The original Land-Grant mission was examined and all key points were considered. Board members noted that Extension is mandated to do work in certain areas, thus are obligated to provide certain programming and that is a reality they must work within. There is a wide scope to Extension's work and the diversity of their stakeholders is broad as well; they include commodity groups, producers, community programs, and much more. Overall, county staffing seems to be highly valued by the citizens.

The recommendations contained in the Extension Review Report will be carried forward in the next phase of the process, and further input will be sought by the committee involved in Phase 2. Members are encouraged to speak with Beltz regarding suggestions for additional stakeholders who can offer input in Phase 2.

Elections

Rodenbiker presented the findings of the Nomination Committee for the position of Chair. Keith Peltier was nominated to serve as the new Chair of the board. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, Roland moved to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Peltier as Chair. Birdsall seconded the motion. Motion carried. Rodenbiker presented the findings of the Nomination Committee for the position of Vice Chair. Birdsall was nominated to serve as the new Vice Chair of the board. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, Boe moved to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Birdsall as Vice Chair. Roland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Recognition of Lyle Warner & Mike Beltz

Lyle Warner was not present, but his service was noted and a special clock will be given to him in appreciation for his work on behalf of SBARE. In appreciation for his dedicated service as Chair of SBARE, an engraved chair was presented to Mike Beltz and he was thanked on behalf of the board.

Tour of the Carrington Research Extension Center (CREC)

Following noon lunch, board members were given an overview of the CREC by director Blaine Schatz. The CREC has 1100 acres and seven different landlords. More land is always needed; there are many research programs and Extension efforts taking place through the CREC. They host a Farm Business Management position and a ND Forest Service position. The Foundation Seedstocks program that has 36 different cultivars among 10 different crops. This station also utilizes the Oakes Irrigation Research Site (aka Robert Titus Research Farm). Schatz gave an overview of how CREC is meeting the budget challenges and making changes to operations to work within funding reductions. Their annual field day was extremely well attended. Roland says the CREC can be credited as a leader in the development of the rise of the pulse program in ND. Members toured various areas at the station, research plots and livestock areas.

Chairman Peltier appointed Beltz to continue as the head of the Extension Review committee. Input from additional stakeholders will be solicited going forward. Peltier thanked all who were able to attend today. The meeting was adjourned at 3:33pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lorie Herbel.