

NORTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION November 9, 2023 MEETING MINUTES | Dickinson, ND

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met for a regular meeting on November 9, 2023. Present: Jim Bahm, Doug Bichler, Tom Bodine, Pam Gulleeson, Larry Hoffmann, Scott Ouradnik, Sen. Jerry Klein, Greg Lardy, Sarah Lovas, Rep. Alisa Mitskog, John Nordgaard, Mark Urquhart, and Julie Zikmund. Absent: Pres. David Cook, John Dhuyvetter, and Doug Goehring.

Chair Lovas called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. MST

Approval of September 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Larry Hoffman made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Pam Gulleeson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Administrative Update from Greg Lardy, VP for Agricultural Affairs, Dean, Director, Director

Dr. Lardy reported that an architectural firm has been selected to design the building for the Ag Field Lab project (Waldron Hall replacement). Construction is anticipated to start in spring 2024 with a 24-month construction timeline. A fundraising and development team has been established. He noted that upon completion of the Peltier Complex in April 2024, Harris Hall and the Northern Crops Institute building will be decommissioned. Gretchen Wagendorf, Ag Budget Director, is overseeing planning for several REC biennium construction projects.

Dr. Lardy noted that NDSU enrollment is down by 300 students (Fall '23 vs. Fall '22).

Dr. Barney Geddes of the Microbiological Sciences department was awarded the Richard and Linda Offerdahl Faculty Fellowship. Dr. Geddes is pioneering research to harness the plant microbiome for sustainable agriculture, with the long-term goal of engineering nitrogen-fixing cereal crops. Additionally, the Microbiological Sciences department received a \$1 million donation from Michael and Victoria Chambers (co-founders of Aldevron).

Dr. Lardy announced that the WREC Director position has been filled by Dr. Sam Funk, who begins January 1, 2024. Dr. William Nganje will be taking a one-year developmental sabbatical beginning January 1. Dr. Cheryl Wachenheim has been selected to serve as interim chair for Agribusiness and Applied Economics.

He concluded by thanking Jim Bahm and John Nordgaard for serving on the ND State Board of Higher Education Envision 2023 strategic planning committee.

Administrative Update from Lynette Flage, Associate Director, NDSU Extension

Dr. Flage announced that the soybean pathologist position has been filled by Dr. Wade Webster. The Big Data Pipeline Unit has hired Vimlesh Kumar to work on app development for Extension. There are currently three candidates for the swine Extension specialist position. She noted that several REC and campus positions are going to open due to retirements in Extension, and they have several good candidates for the positions.

Dr. Flage reported that the NSF Farms site visit for NDSU has been completed. Final results are anticipated in early December. She noted that up to eight of the sixteen finalists will be funded.

Dr. Flage concluded that at the REC Extension Conference, the Friend of Extension awards were awarded to Senator Rich Wardner, former SBARE Chair Mark Birdsall, and former Representative Tracy Boe.

Administrative Update from Frank Casey, Associate Director, North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station

Dr. Casey echoed Dr. Flage's update that the NSF Farms visit went well. He noted that North Dakota has several attractive factors to the grant as an EPSCOR state with a strong tribal component. He thanked Dr. Colleen Fitzgerald, NDSU VP for Research and Creative Activity, for her and her team's leadership on the grant.

Dr. Casey reported that as the College transitions to a tuition incentive model, there have had to be updates to the Graduate Tuition Waiver. The College will continue to offer waivers to ensure that graduate students graduate, while implementing a credit cap to keep within budget. He noted that most of research is conducted by graduate students and that they are vital to the success of research at NDSU.

He also announced that there were seven projects funded under the AES Precision Agriculture Grant. All the proposals were highly competitive and had an exciting amount of collaboration across the RECs and departments. A total of \$670,864 was awarded for the next biennium and a total of \$3 million has been distributed since the start of the program.

Comments from Sarah Lovas, SBARE Chair

Chair Lovas thanked the NDSU team for all of their work on the NSF Farms Grant and is looking forward to the announcement. She also briefed the Board on the input session for the day.

Vote on Granting Committee List

MOTION: Jim Bahm made a motion to approve the granting committee list as presented. Larry Hoffman seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Dickinson REC Update

Dr. Chris Augustin gave several updates on various construction projects at the Dickinson REC. The REC has openings for an Extension cropping specialist, Extension conservation agronomist, and ranch technician. He shared that a local 4-H summer intern has put together several informational videos for the Center.

Testimony:

- ND Soybean Council - Miki Miheguli
- Dickinson REC - Edward Cuskelly, Urban Agriculturist (verbal testimony)
- Hettinger REC - Christopher Schauer, Director
- Williston REC - Christopher Schauer, Interim Director
- ND Beekeepers Association - Tim Hiatt, Southwest Director
- North Central REC - Shana Forster, Director

- Co-op Elevator McClusky- Kendon Faul, Agronomy Manager
- North Dakota Grain Growers Association - Ed Kessel, President

Hettinger and Williston REC Capital Improvement Updates

Dr. Christopher Schauer presented updates to the Board on the capital improvements of both the Hettinger and Williston Research Extension Centers.

MOTION: Larry Hoffman made a motion to grant the North Central Research Extension Center the opportunity to pursue land appraisals for two parcels of land they are currently renting in the Minot area. Senator Jerry Klein seconded the motion. Motion passed.

MOTION: Scott Ouradnik made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Jerry Klein seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Lunch followed for the Board.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin McCall