

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education
June 24, 2016
Minutes

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met at the NDSU campus on June 24, 2016. Board members in attendance were Mike Beltz, Mark Birdsall, Tracy Boe, Chris Boerboom, Dean Bresciani, Ken Grafton, Lance Gulleson, Brian Leier, Keith Peltier, JoAnn Rodenbiker, Dick Roland, Dean Wehri, and Tom Bodine representing Doug Goehring. Members absent were Judge Barth, Jerry Klein and Lyle Warner.

Chairman Beltz called the meeting to order at 8:02 AM. After welcoming members and guests, he thanked outgoing member Judge Barth for his service to the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education. Larry Hoffman joins the board officially as of July 1 and the Chairman welcomed him as a guest. Chairman Beltz noted that the SBHE approved the budget as presented by SBARE. A report will be presented to Budget Section on Monday, June 27. At this time, it appears a second allotment may be forthcoming.

Nominating Committee Report and Elections

Vice Chairman Keith Peltier was called upon to act as chair. He asked JoAnn Rodenbiker to report on any nominations for Chair of the Board. She made a motion to nominate Mike Beltz as Chairman of SBARE. Dean Wehri seconded the motion. Peltier called for any additional nominations from the floor, and hearing none, Mark Birdsall moved to cast a unanimous ballot for Beltz as SBARE Chair. Dick Roland seconded the motion. The motion carried. Beltz thanked the board for their nomination and resumed chairing the meeting. He asked Rodenbiker to report on any nominations for Vice Chair of the Board. She made a motion to nominate Keith Peltier as Vice Chair of SBARE. Wehri seconded the motion. Beltz called for any additional nominations from the floor, and hearing none, Birdsall moved to cast a unanimous ballot for Peltier as Vice Chair, seconded by Rodenbiker. The motion carried.

Budget Discussion regarding the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station and the NDSU Extension Service plans for 10% budget cuts

Dr. Grafton thanked the board for modifying the priority list to include a request to restore the budget to a 100% funding level. This was approved during the May 17 meeting. The proposed \$8 million cut to the Agricultural Experiment Station would be difficult; 80% of the budget centers on salaries and fringe benefits. Conservatively this could mean a cut of possibly 22 positions and thus a sizeable setback in work. Eliminating infrastructure and equipment gains made in the last several years would be a deep setback to research progress. Voluntary separations could net some gains. Some positions vacated in recent resignations will not be refilled at this time, and possibly some could be cut completely. Maintaining the core mission is critical; any potential cuts must fall outside of the core mission. Board members asked if any of the positions eligible for voluntary separation would remain empty going forward. Dr. Grafton stated that if vacated, positions could be cut or funds redirected.

Dr. Boerboom said that a \$2.7 million dollar cut is the target for the Extension Service budget reduction. Salaries and fringe benefits also comprise 80% of their budget. There is no way to achieve this deep of a reduction without cutting positions. Preserving the core mission is central; they are striving to find ways to realign or rearrange positions and programs to result in savings. The Extension Service has a voluntary separation program as well. They are closely examining positions to identify which voluntary separations could actually net budget savings.

Chairman Beltz requested that a list of identified positions or programs for possible elimination from the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Extension Service be compiled and presented to the board for discussion and approval in the future.

President Bresciani stated that NDSU as a whole is facing similar challenges. Substantial impacts to productivity may result from these cuts. They must identify what is core to the NDSU mission and work, and make tough decisions. NDSU has been an excellent steward of the resources, and, though difficult, was able to absorb earlier cuts. Research productivity still continues climb to record breaking levels. Enrollment continues to be strong. NDUS implemented new admission requirements and this impacted enrollment numbers. Our national visibility has helped to foster interest in partnerships and there is promise for the future. Chairman Beltz thanked the President for his service during this is a very difficult time for the NDSU community.

Administrative updates: NDAES, NDSU Extension Service

Dr. Grafton notified the board that Dr. Jane Schuh has returned to the position of Associate Director for the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, after her service as Interim Dean for the School of Business. Given the current situation with budget, now is an opportune time to review programs and consider future goals for achievement; Dr. Schuh will assist in this process. Regarding budget constraints going forward, support should be continued for graduate students as well as needed equipment because those areas will continue to be critical in developing programs with an eye to the future. Research Extension Center directors will be handling their budget cuts primarily by cutting positions and reducing operating expenses. Dr. Shana Forster is doing very well as the new Director at the North Central Research Extension Center in Minot. Dr. Andrew Green, the new NDSU wheat breeder is on board now, also.

Dr. Boerboom said that recent hires were positions previously held vacant for salary savings and are now filled: Travis Hoffman starts in June as the new Extension Sheep Specialist with a 75% Extension and 25% AES appointments. This position was adjusted to become a cooperative position with the Minnesota Extension Service, which pays 25% of the Extension salary portion. The Center for 4-H hired Meagan Scott and Lindsay Leker as new 4-H Youth Development Specialists. Carrie Johnson starts in August as the Extension Family Finance Specialist to fill a 3-year vacancy left by Deb Panko. Jana Kincello will start in December as a Livestock Specialist at the Hettinger Research Extension Center. They are still working to fill the Northeast District Director position and the committee meets with Dr. Boerboom next week. Retirements include Dwight Aakre, Extension Farm Management Specialist; and John Kringler, Cass County Extension Ag and Natural Resources agent. Extension Swine Specialist David Newman announced his departure for a position in Arkansas. This year Extension Agents provided Farm Bill education to producers and assisted in doing over 4000 farm evaluations. A follow-up survey indicated that the impact of this assistance was substantial, and their spreadsheet tool was used extensively by not only Extension but also producers, insurance agents, and others in the industry. The 'Ignite' programming was funded after the last legislative session and they plan to continue it into the future as it was an excellent program. Dr. Boerboom offered the new 4-H Camp facilities as a possible site for a future SBARE meeting.

At 9:00 AM the Board heard three graduate student presentations. These students shared their 'Three-Minute Thesis' presentations: Manpreet Bains, a student in the Molecular Pathogenesis PhD Program; Maneka Malalgoda, a student in Cereal Sciences, and Meredith Schroeder, student in the Molecular Pathogenesis PhD Program.

Lynette Flage, Director, Center for Community Vitality, introduced members of the NDSU Extension Service who gave Lightning Presentations. They focused on three primary topics, as follows: 1) Economic Prosperity – UAS at the County Scale: John Nowatzki, Ag Machine Systems Specialist, Alyssa Scheve and Angie Johnson, ANR Extension Agents, Traill and Steele Counties; Grain Marketing: Frayne Olson, Crops Economist; 2) Community Engagement – LeadLocal: Tim Becker, ANR Extension Agent, Eddy County; 4-H Leadership: Billie Lenz, Kyle Clovers, Rolla; and 3) Healthy Citizens – Diabetes Prevention: Rita Ussatis, FCS Extension Agent, Cass County.

Following a break, the Board toured the location of the new NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (under construction), the NDSU Beef Cattle Research Complex, and the Commodity Trading Room at Barry Hall. After lunch, they participated in a guided walking tour of the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering building, Harris Hall, the NDSU Meats Lab, and Waldron Hall. Chairman Beltz adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Lorie Herbel.