

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education
November 30, 2017
MINUTES

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met for a regular meeting at the NDSU Alumni Center in Fargo, ND on November 30, 2017, starting at 8:00 AM. Board members in attendance were Mike Beltz, Mark Birdsall (by phone), Chris Boerboom, Ken Grafton, Lance Gulleason, Larry Hoffmann, Jerry Klein, Brian Leier, Keith Peltier, JoAnn Rodenbiker, Richard Roland, and Dean Wehri. Members Absent: Tracy Boe, Doug Goehring, and Dean Bresciani.

Chairman Keith Peltier called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM. He welcomed members and guests and invited everyone to make introductions. Larry Hoffman made a motion to approve the July 27, 2017 minutes and Mike Beltz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

Dr. Ken Grafton stated that the Veterinary Diagnostic Lab is operational and staff are settled in to the new facility. Dr. Scott Pryor, Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, recently accepted a position as the new Associate Dean in the College of Engineering. The Department is in the initial stages of the recruiting process. Two lists of positions vacated as a result of budget cuts made in the legislative sessions were shared with the Board. They listed the AES Main Station and the Research Extension Center positions, respectively. During discussion, it was noted that Animal Sciences and Plant Sciences experienced deep losses primarily due to early retirement and voluntary separation agreements. Mike Beltz made a motion for SBARE to approve the closures of the vacant positions included on these lists, seconded by Sarah Lovas. Further discussion followed. Peltier called for a vote, and the motion carried.

Administrative Update for the NDSU Extension Service (EXT):

Dr. Chris Boerboom shared a list of Extension Service positions vacated as a result of budget cuts made in the legislative sessions. JoAnn Rodenbiker made a motion for SBARE to approve the closure of the vacant positions on the list, seconded by Dean Wehri. Discussion followed; members asked about the composition of the positions. They are a combination of resignations, early retirements and voluntary separation agreements. Peltier called for a vote, and the motion carried.

Extension interviewed for an agricultural finance specialist to fill the vacancy left by Dr. Dwight Aakre, retired farm management specialist. The Extension beef specialist position held by Dr. Carl Dahlen will be vacated as he transitions to a research and teaching appointment. Recruitment will begin to fill the position by June 2018 or later. Burleigh County agent Bruce Schmidt resigned in order to fill the vacant support position managing the Soil Conservation District grant program 50% of the time, and the other 50% of his time is grant supported. The Interim Ag Committee meeting on December 19, 2017 will begin the study of the State Soil Conservation Committee. Extension is interviewing to fill a Dunn County Extension agent position, and the county is providing bridge funding in order to be able to move forward with filling the position.

AES and Extension Positions:

Discussion followed on the closure of the positions included in the AES and Extension lists. These positions are now permanently closed and will not be reopened or refilled. If funds become available in the future, new positions could be structured to meet identified needs. A member asked Drs. Grafton and Boerboom how their current levels of full time equivalent (FTE) employees compare to previous budget periods. Dr. Grafton estimated that budget cuts lowered FTEs to a level approximate to the 2003 level of staffing. Dr. Boerboom indicated that Extension has also sustained a substantial net loss overall, as past increases in funding have primarily bumped up lagging salaries and paid for increased benefits costs, not only to add staffing.

Extension Review Process Phase 2 Report:

Mike Beltz, chair of the Extension Review committee, shared the Phase 2 report with the Board. He noted the composition of the committee and indicated that time was taken with new members to get them up to speed on background information they needed to proceed. Stakeholders provided outside input during Phase 2 and were engaged in review discussions. These sessions gave Dr. Boerboom information to share with county commissioners and get their

feedback. Changes already taking place include redistricting and restructuring of program areas. Districts are reduced from four to three. Program areas will be reduced from four to three: Ag and Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, and Family and Community Wellness. A draft base policy defining the cost share agreement to support Extension agents is being discussed with counties. Senate Bill 2020 specifies items to be reviewed and this report denotes these particular points in bold. Overall, the review process affirms that Extension's educational mission is on track, and there is no duplication of mission with other agencies or mission creep.

Historically the base policy supported agents with a 50/50 cost share of their salary between the NDSU Extension Service and the county with NDSU Extension funding 100% of the fringe benefits. With the rising cost of fringe benefits, the total expense to NDSU Extension is 65% of the cost of an agent with the county covering 35%. It is proposed to shift the split to a 60/40 cost sharing based on total compensation. Low population counties would be asked to fund a higher portion of the cost to support an agent, consider merging with an adjacent county to share an agent, or other options. Extension is short on funds and vacancies cannot be filled. The draft base policy is still a proposal and is subject to change. A State Advisory Council is proposed for Extension, similar to county advisory councils. Marketing and name change updates are in process as well.

JoAnn Rodenbiker made a motion to accept the Phase 2 Extension Review Report draft as presented from the committee; Sarah Lovas seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Sen. Klein, a member of the committee, noted that Sheridan County residents expressed that it would be unfair for lower-population counties to pay more for their agents. Citizens understood that base policy formula changes were warranted, but look to see changes distributed evenly to all counties. Dr. Boerboom noted that base policy is not a part of Century Code; this is an agreement between Extension and the Association of Counties and the details of the agreement had been negotiated between those organizations. Noting that the report is a draft in progress and the motion is to "accept" but not "adopt," Chairman Peltier called for a vote and the motion carried.

Approval of Agricultural Research Fund Committees:

Mike Beltz made a motion to accept the Agricultural Research Fund Committees as presented. Jerry Klein seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Stakeholder Input:

The following individuals, in order of appearance, talked about programs and initiatives important to them as part of the stakeholder and constituent input process:

North Dakota Dairy Coalition - Conny van Bedaf
North Dakota Farmers Union - Mark Watne
NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab - Dr. Brett Webb
Langdon Research Extension Center - Randy Mehlhoff
North Dakota Livestock Alliance - Craig Jarolimek
NDSU Extension Ag & Natural Resources - Dr. Charlie Stoltenow
NDSU Extension Family & Community Wellness - Dr. Lynette Flage
North Dakota Grain Growers Association - Dan Wogsland
North Dakota Soybean Council - Kendall Nichols
Hettinger Research Extension Center - Dr. Chris Schauer
Carrington Research Extension Center - Blaine Schatz
North Dakota Wheat Commission - Neal Fisher
North Dakota Soybean Growers Association - Scott Rising
North Dakota Corn Council - Dale Ihry
NDSU Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering - Dr. Sreekala Bajwa, Chair
NDSU Microbiological Sciences - Dr. John McEvoy, Interim Head
NDSU School of Natural Resource Sciences - Dr. Frank Casey, Director
NDSU Plant Sciences - Dr. Richard Horsley, Head
NDSU Plant Pathology - Dr. Jack Rasmussen, Chair
4-H Programs and Extension - Amy Fuglestad
ND producer, former member of ARF wheat committee - Brian O'Toole
NDSU Agribusiness and Applied Economics - Dr. William Nganje, Chair

Garrison Diversion Conservancy District - Kelly Klosterman
Traill County Extension - Chris McInnes
Benson County Extension - Tracey Kallenbach
Steele & Sheridan County Extension - Marita Rau

Chairman Peltier adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lorie Herbel.