

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 09, 2022 MEETING MINUTES | Langdon Research Extension Center
LANGDON, ND**

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met for a regular meeting on November 9, 2022. Present: Jim Bahm, Doug Bichler, Tom Bodine, Pres. David Cook, John Dhuyvetter, Pam Gulleeson, Larry Hoffmann, Sen. Jerry Klein, Greg Lardy, Sarah Lovas, John Nordgaard, Mark Urquhart, Dean Wehri and Julie Zikmund. Absent: Rep. Tracy Boe, Doug Goehring

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

Approval of July 29, 2022, Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Jim Bahm made a motion to approve the July 29, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Larry Hoffmann. Motion carried.

Administrative Update from David Cook, President of NDSU

President Cook announced that NDSU will be experiencing several tough decisions with budget cuts this year - next July they are anticipating a 5.6% (7.6 million dollars) budget deficit. The following biennium is projected to have cuts as well, based off the last two years of enrollment. He shared that there are active goals on the legislative front to try and put a limit of 4% on the maximum budget cut per biennium. If the formula were to reflect the desired limit, NDSU would have had an addition 2.2 million dollars for operation expenses in the coming biennium.

President Cook also highlighted that NDSU is looking to provide more support for incoming students to aid in retention. He noted that tuition revenue is 65% of the overall funding. President Cook indicated that staff and faculty have had productive meetings to move forward in this transformative time for NDSU. He welcomes any advice from the SBARE, and appreciates their perspective.

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

Dr. Lardy shared that several REC construction projects are having difficulties getting contractors to bid. Rural areas particularly are facing challenges of get reasonable pricing and labor. He also gave the update that the Peltier Complex construction is on schedule. There is a current ongoing fundraising campaign for the construction.

The Fargo-Moorhead Chamber and the Economic Development Cooperation are putting together a campaign to brand the area as an epicenter for ag technology. Existing manufacturers in Fargo consist of Bobcat, Case IH, John Deere, and Precision AgCO. This initiative hopes to attract more startups to the Fargo-Moorhead area in addition to the established companies. There will be collaborations with the Precision Ag program to generate media attention and a campaign.

Dr. Lardy shared that the NDSU College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources (CAFSNR) is working to address the ability to retain students. Due to decreased enrollment and

the state funding formula, there will be reduced operating allocation of \$600,000 this fall. As a result of budget cuts, CAFSNR will be cutting three lecturer positions this fall. Additionally, the minimum class size requirement for classes will be raised to efficiently allocate faculty time and resources as directed by Huron Consulting Group.

Dr. Lardy announced three active administrative searches: Ag Budget Director, Director of the School of Natural Resource Sciences, and Williston Research Extension Center Director.

Dr. Lardy and Dr. Colleen Fitzgerald are working with a federal relations firm to generate additional grant opportunities and a programmatic request that will go to our congressional delegation. He shared that he has also been engaging with the Midwest Council on Agriculture, a group is interested in creating a policy center for the upper Midwest consisting of eight states. There is an authorization in the Farm Bill that allows creation the center.

Dr. Lardy shared that November 29 is Giving Day. A 1.6-million-dollar endowment gift from an estate settlement is expected toward funding projects in Extension and the dry bean program. Dr. Lardy concluded with a reminder that there is an opportunity to visit with legislators at the ND Ag Coalition social in Bismarck on January 12, 2023.

Administrative Update from Lynette Flage, Associate Director NDSU Extension

Dr. Flage welcomed the new NDSU Extension Assistant Director for agriculture and natural resources, Dr. Mohamed Khan, who has been serving in the position as interim. All three Assistant Directors are now in place, as well as the Big Data Specialist - Brock Gion. Dr. Flage thanked the SBARE board for their participation in serving on search committees.

She gave an update that Extension County personal have been asked to facilitate conversations with legislators in their district. Drs. Flage and Lardy have completed 16/18 visits as of November 9. These meetings have given them the opportunity thank the legislators and discuss the impacts of Extension in their district. She reported that it has been a very positive experience and thanked the SBARE members who attended the meetings.

Dr. Flage gave an update on five counties that had a mill levy measure on the ballot this November. This vote was to maintain an additional two mills levied for Extension work beyond the two mills that are provided by each county per Century Code. During the June election, eight counties passed their measures to maintain these two additional mills and during the November election five counties passed their measures to maintain these two additional mills. Not all counties will have to proceed with a mill levy vote as the base two mills are enough to support the county Extension budget.

Dr. Flage shared that in October she attended the Association of Counties meeting and reported that there was great support for Extension. The county partnership is very important to Extension's budget as county funds pay for half the salary of every Extension agent and all local Extension operations. Total county support accounts for 30% of the Extension budget. They also have a resolution in support of Extension that is going to the legislature.

She informed the board of NDSU Extension and the ND Agricultural Experiment Station are creating initiative lists handouts (bookmark sized) with the top priorities. This is a good resource for networking to help communicate the priorities for each agency.

Dr. Flage updated that all the positions that were funded during the 2021 Legislative session have been filled. Additionally, Extension's Early Admissions Connections with 4-H and college preparedness have had several successful events.

Dr. Flage concluded that she and Dr. Frank Casey have been working with a group on a large National Science Foundation science grant around ag technology in Fargo and North Dakota. The innovation and development of ag technologies hopes to yield \$160 million dollars over the next 10 years.

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

Dr. Casey welcomed new administrative assistant for the NDAES, Erin McCall, who started on September 6. He continued that the Big Data Initiative is being headed by Dr. Ana Maria Heilman Morales with 1.5 of the state appropriated FTE hired. Hires in Dr. Morales' group are supplemented with USDA funding. The remaining 1.5 FTEs from the state appropriated initiative went to NDAWN. NDAWN used grant resources to add an additional 0.5 FTE so a total of two additional positions were hired.

Dr. Casey noted for that for the Agricultural Research Funds (ARF) barley fell under 2% threshold of cash receipts, meaning it will not be considered a major crop for this year and therefore applications would fall under the New and Emerging Crops Committee.

There is a new non-assistance cooperative agreement (NACA) in partnership with the USDA - ARS. This agreement funds activities between USDA-ARS in Mandan, Grand Farm, and NDSU and is one million dollars. The project is entitled, "Accelerating Internet of Things and Big Data Analytics to Drive Climate Smart and Precision Smart Agricultural Systems," and brings \$300,000 per year over the next five years to NDSU and is headed by Dr. Jane Schuh. An existing USDA NACA agreement is on its final year but is in the process of renewal for another 5 years. It is entitled "Closing the Yield Gap of Cotton, Corn and Soybean," which is a five-million-dollar proposal for the next five years of with a USDA-ARS partner in Starkville Mississippi. This NACA will also supplement Big Data Initiative.

Dr. Casey elaborated on Dr. Flage updates on the NSF Engines Innovation Grant. His visit to the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities (APLU) meeting discussed investments in New Geographies. It was noted that North Dakota is an ESCORE State. This means that more investment from the federal side as allocations will be raised to 20%. He noted that the Type 2 proposal is being submitted for Regional Innovation with Colleen Fitzgerald's team Fargo Economic Development, Grand Farm, Extension, and AES. It was clarified that NDSU does not directly monetarily contribute to Grand Farm.

Comments from Sarah Lovas, SBARE Chair

Chair Lovas thanked LREC Director - Randy Mehlhoff and staff for hosting this meeting. She welcomed Erin McCall and Dr. Mohamed Khan and congratulated them on their new positions.

Chair Lovas thanked President Cook and Dr. Katie Cook for hosting the SBARE reception at their home. She also thanked Drs. Flage and Lardy, and staff for coordinating the legislator's attendance for the event. She noted that the event was successful and looks forward to future networking events.

Chair Lovas believed that the information presented with Dr. Lardy at the OMB meeting in Bismarck was well received. She noted that the Fall Conference extended its welcome to SBARE and was grateful for the invitation, as well as the work by Extension for the event. Chair Lovas reminded the board that it is an important time to support the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources as they navigate this dynamic time as the university realigns its programs and colleges.

Chair Lovas announced that the next meeting will be in Bismarck on January 12, 2023. Board members also are encouraged to attend an evening Ag Coalition Social to include legislators following the SBARE meeting.

HREC Land Purchase Proposal Update

Dr. Lardy presented that Dr. Christopher Schauer is facilitating a land purchase. The land is appraised at \$1,149,000 and has been negotiated down to \$1,037,000. He emphasized that the land would be valuable to researchers to have a large consistent area to conduct long term research that cannot be done on leased land. The landowner's wish is for it to stay with the HREC and to receive appropriate compensation. Dr. Lardy clarified that once NDSU owns the property it would no longer pay local property taxes.

MOTION: Larry Hoffmann made a motion to support HREC land purchase. Seconded by John Norgaard. Motion carried.

Chair Lovas called for a 15-minute break and resumed the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Legislative Strategy Discussion

Dr. Lardy discussed his trip to the OMB with Chair Lovas for budget requests. He noted that Governor Burgum will be building out a projected budget that will be presented to the ND Legislature. He shared that he brought the Capital Improvement Project list to the meeting. He thanked Dr. Flage and the District Directors for coordinating the legislative district meetings and updates. Dr. Lardy reported that there were consistent conversations across the state on challenges with workforce and retention.

He shared that there have been excellent opportunities for one-on-one visits with members of the Appropriation Committee to discuss budget priorities for SBARE.

Dr. Lardy shared that he has had the opportunity to host several legislators on campus and that they have been very helpful to show the need for the funding for the field lab facility that is being requested.

2023 Lawmakers of North Dakota booklets have been ordered and will be distributed to SBARE when received.

Dr. Lardy thanked Tom Bodine for his conversation about ideas for getting new legislators oriented to SBARE. He announced that there will be a "NDSU Agriculture 101" webinar being put together by Drs. Casey and Flage in December.

Interim Higher Ed and Interim Agriculture Committees have toured the campus field facilities. Dr. Lardy was able to show how research have developed critical developments in facilities that

are less than glamorous, and explain the potential of what would be possible with adequate resources.

Dr. Flage and Erin McCall handed out drafts of the Extension and NDAES pocket pamphlets. Dr. Flage noted that they can easily fit in a pocket to disperse to those interested in learning more about the priorities. Any feedback on the handouts should be received by Drs. Flage or Casey, or Erin McCall by the end of November.

Dr. Flage is requesting feedback for a Critical *Priority* statement to be listed on the SBARE initiative page. The critical priority language would be included on both the AES and Extension SBARE initiative list and read, "Hiring and retaining diverse candidates strengthens our ability to expand on critical needs in research, teaching and extension. Building attractive compensation packages for employees will be crucial in the recruitment and retention of top talent." Chair Lovas requested that the board vote on whether to support the Critical Priority language.

MOTION: John Nordgaard made a motion to support the critical priority language for the NDAES and Extension pocket handouts. Seconded by Mark Urquhart. Julie Zikmund abstained from the vote as she is a state employee.

President Cook shared about the Bison Caucus group of stakeholders and state stakeholders who are in conversations with legislators about issues. The group has a goal to provide higher education across the North Dakota system.

Chair Lovas noted that Dr. Lardy and team have been doing a very good job of interacting with commodity groups and stakeholders. Noting that term limits are going to change the relationships with legislators, Dr. Lardy suggested that preparing for new legislators should be happening now to prepare for the changing system.

Approve Agriculture Research Fund Granting Committee Membership

Dr. Lardy reminded the board that they are responsible for appointing the Agriculture Research Fund Granting Committee Membership who then distribute the research funds. He noted that categories may change over time, as an example, barley has been moved from a main crop to the New and Emerging Crop designation. These funds are used at the REC for initial projects for pilot data and experiments. He asked the board to consider a motion to approve the updated list for New and Emerging Crops granting committee membership.

MOTION: Jim Bahm made a motion to approve the Agriculture Research Fund granting committee membership of Hero Barth. Seconded by John Nordgaard. Motion carried.

Member Recognition

The board would like to thank Representative Tracy Boe for his years of service to SBARE. He represented at the conference committee that carried the appropriations bill for NDSU Extension and the ND Agriculture Experiment Station to the House floor. He brought provoking questions to the table and is appreciated for all he has done for the Agricultural Experiment Station, Extension, and SBARE. Dr. Lardy requested the board to make an official motion of thanks.

MOTION: Senator Jerry Klein made a motion of formal resolution of thanks to Rep. Tracy Boe for his service on the board. Seconded by Julie Zikmund. Motion carried.

MOTION: Senator Jerry Klein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by John Nordgaard. Chair Lovas adjourned meeting at 11:05 p.m.

Following the meeting Randy Mehlhoff gave a tour of the LREC Facilities. The board ended their day with lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin McCall