



NERA Meeting

The Admiral Fell Inn
Historic Fell's Point, 888 South Broadway, Baltimore MD 21231

March 11-13, 2013

Draft Minutes

In Attendance:

Adel Shirmohammadi (MD), Chair
Linda Kay Benning (NEED)
Tom Burr (NYG)
Cameron Faustman (CTS)
Brad Hillman (NJ)
Michael Hoffmann (NYC)
Hiram Larew (NIFA)
Ian Maw (APLU)
Tim Phipps (WV)
Mark Rieger (DE)
Dan Robison (WV)
Daniel Rossi (NERA)
Fred Servello (ME)
Hunt Shipman (Cornerstone)
Kirby Stafford III (CTNH)
Dariusz Swietlik (ARS)
Gary Thompson (PA)
Jon Wraith (NH)
Rubie Mize (NERA), Recorder

Tuesday, March 12 [Admiral I Meeting Room - 5th Floor]

1. Welcome and Introductions – Chair Adel Shirmohammadi

Chair Adel Shirmohammadi called the meeting to order at 8:00AM. He welcomed the directors and guests to the meeting and asked everyone to briefly introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Agenda – Chair Adel Shirmohammadi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAAgendaMarch2013.pdf>

Action: The motion made to approve the agenda was seconded and passed.

3. Approval of Minutes from the September 24, 2012 NERA Meeting – Chair Adel Shirmohammadi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAMinutesSept2012.pdf>

Action: The motion made to approve the minutes was seconded and passed.

4. Interim Actions by the Chair and NERA Executive Committee Report – Chair Adel Shirmohammadi

- Approved the release of the 2013 NERA Planning Grants RFA and the electronic ballot to confirm the recommendations of the Multistate Activities Committee
- Prepared the agenda of the March NERA spring meeting
- Represented NERA and attended the following meetings:
 - ESCOP Executive Committee Meeting on November 12, 2012, at Denver, CO
 - Eastern US-Canada Advisory Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting on December 3-4, 2012, at Montreal, Canada
 - ESCOP Meeting on February 25, 2013, at Alexandria, VA
- Discussed logistics and administrative arrangements with NERA staff for the planned NIMSS Upgrade to be implemented by the University of Maryland – Division of Technology. MD-AES sponsors NERA staff as Affiliates to gain access to the UMD server. Proposed upgrade was also discussed with the NRSP1 Management Committee.
- Helped NERA staff by recommending peer reviewers for multistate proposals

5. USDA-NIFA Update – Hiram Larew

- Sonny Ramaswamy had sent out an email about the impacts of sequestration - \$13M reduction in AFRI, can only allocate 40% of FY2013, reduced travel for staff and more call-ins to meetings.
- New REEport from Bart Hewitt's group will be rolled out this spring
- Good feedback from ESCOP and ECOP Chairs' meetings with USDA Executives and NIFA NPLs. M. Hoffmann and D. Bucholz met with NPLs and gave seminar – good engagement
- Emphasis on impacts critical to stakeholders in Hill and communities. Sonny R. wants to coordinate impact writing with AES and CES. ESCOP already has mechanism in place for multistate research impacts. ECOP is also looking into this and setting up own system to collect impacts to measure excellence in Extension.
- Dimension of social sciences – more will be asked in RFAs
- International work – increased partnership overseas, work collaboratively and partnership contributes to domestic goals of programs – China, Israel, EU, Malaysia, etc.
- Combining Plan of Work report at state level will be problematic, e.g. CT-New Haven and CT-Storrs. Policies should be discussed first with directors. ***H. Larew will take concerns back to NIFA.*** Directors expressed frustration on time and money spent on reporting and when rules are changed, and suggested assessing value of reports and require only those that are useful.

- On reduced travel for NIFA NPLs, M. Hoffmann suggested quarterly calls with the state liaisons. Hiram Larew suggested that ECOP/ESCOP leadership continue the conversation and initiate calls from state level.
- Ian Maw met with Cathy Woteki about the Partnership Plan. Chavonda Jacobs-Young was given the responsibility but had since left and there's no strategic plan yet to move forward. Cathy will discuss with Sonny R. Dan Rossi suggested involving Meryl Broussard as he knows and understands the partnership.
- Hiram Larew recommended periodic visits/meetings of ESCOP/ECOP leadership with USDA/NIFA execs.

6. USDA-ARS Update – Dariusz Swietlik

- ARS is still waiting if CR will be extended or if FY2013 budget will be passed. FY2014 still uncertain.
- Personnel changes- downsizing still in progress but also hiring, 3 at the North Atlantic office for a shellfish breeding/quantitative geneticist, chemist and a computer expert on vision/robotic printing of trees.
- Judy St. John was replaced by Chavonda Jacobs-Young as Associate Administrator for National Programs
- *Dan Rossi requested D. Swietlik to circulate ARS vacancy announcements for executive positions through Rubie Mize so we can advertise them in the region.*
- ARS-Beltsville Area has reorganized. Joseph Spence is the Beltsville Area Director. Plant and Animal Science Institutes merged under BARC and Steven R. Shafer is the Director.

7. APLU Update – Ian Maw

- He met with Cathy Woteki and discussed partnership issues and budgets. FY2014 President's Budget will come out in April. Cathy is supportive of maintenance of capacity funding and understands that the Land-grant wants this to grow in its portfolio.
- Partnership report in December indicated that we are in deficit situation in R&D and we need to convince appropriators to invest more.
- Implementation committee needs to be established so we can move to more specific recommendations in the report.
- On infrastructure renewal, USDA wants to work closely with us. M. Rieger asked how this will be implemented. I. Maw replied that the legislation exists but we still need to convince the appropriators and need to have a strategic plan. Funding is in the pipeline for the 1890s, but not the 1862s. Dan Rossi added that if there will be a survey of infrastructure nationwide, it would have to be done correctly and strategically. Mike Hoffmann also noted that Sonny Ramaswamy had approached ESCOP to lead the effort on making the assessment of infrastructure needs and develop a convincing story (justifications).
- USDA Sec. Vilsack is against any furloughs, cutbacks will be from travel and hiring
- Committee to review AFRI formed – they have more questions than answers; will look at large multistate awards vs. single investigator; has broad representation and will seek input from Land-grant community leaders and directors.

- International consortium for higher education conference planned to be held in Moscow. The Board met in Uruguay last year where Chinese Academy of Science announced \$1M world prize in agriculture award. The Board is putting together the RFA and will be released soon. Award will be given on October 20, 2013 in Nanjing, China. Not to be confused with World Food Prize.
- APLU Annual Meeting will be in Washington, DC this November. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack has been invited as speaker
- APLU Board met and voted to open membership to 16 Canadian and 6 Mexican universities.
- On the GAO report about duplication, Ian Maw responded that Cathy Woteki took it seriously and realized the need to educate this group, e.g. duplication vs. replication. They have found 'zero' duplication. There will be a hearing at the Senate in early May and the report will be out prior to the hearing.

8. ESCOP Update and Discussion – Mike Hoffmann and Dan Rossi

- ESCOP Report
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/ESCOPReportFinal.pdf>
 Sonny Ramaswamy asked for an internal strategic plan. Bart Hewitt's group is working on this and will cover both programmatic and operational areas looking at the agency's business practices including grants administration, management and information technology. ESCOP and ECOP will have an opportunity to respond to the strategic plan. An outline will be shared as soon as it's ready. NIFA is now contracting a facilitator to initiate discussions and the target for completion is mid-summer.
- FY2015 Budget Priorities Survey
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/ESCOPBudgetPrioritySetting.pdf>
 The Budget and Legislative Committee met in February and is in the process of finalizing the survey. The committee refined the timeline at their meeting and the survey now includes questions across sections in the family. Are we hitting the right targets and who's listening? There was discussion about not having new money for AFRI that can impact the ability of young faculty to compete. We need to rebuild our faculty and ensure that they succeed. Need to change how we compete, go to NSF and NIH is AFRI is unreliable/uncertain. Funding situation shapes where we're going. Convince folks at federal level that we're starting to move away from agriculture. NIFA has Land-grant mission so they should fight for and carry out that mission. At the AHS-CARET meeting in February, Cornerstone had a vigorous advocacy plan to address senators and congressional reps. Is it high time to invite agency reps. from DoE, DoD, NIH and NSF to our table? Nature Conservancy is also interested to partner with us, noted M. Hoffmann. ***D. Rossi encouraged the directors to think about who/what agencies we can work with and benefit from, and then ask the COPs (ESCOP/ECOP/ACOP) to help promote these partnerships.*** Linda Kay noted that ECOP had sent out survey questions along these lines. ***Ian Maw also mentioned a memo on the AHS strategic plan that he will share with the group.*** D. Rossi suggested bringing together and analyzing all these strategic plans. This would be a good topic for the Joint COPs. BAA-PBD also needs to shape up. C. Faustman commented that agriculture should also play an active role in

STEM. Work force development is also an important area in our curriculum that should not be overlooked.

- Science Roadmap Synthesis Paper [Tri-Fold]
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/FinalSynthesisPaper.pdf>

9. Budget and Farm Bill Update – Hunt Shipman, Cornerstone

Hunt's PowerPoint --

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/CornerstoneUpdateMarch2013.pdf>

- Six month C.R. is good until March 27. Sequestration takes effect March 1.
- FY2013 is very unusual and FY2014 has lots of uncertainties, but will reiterate message for FY2013
- Release of FY2014 President's budget is delayed to early April
- Query was made whether we're missing an opportunity and about having the Environmental Defense Fund advocating on our behalf. Hunt responded that there's no risk if they do.

10. Station Updates - All

11. Best Practices Session I: “Resources/Faculty Sharing – the UMD, Penn State and WVU Experience, and other MOUs”

– Adel Shirmohammadi, Gary Thompson and Tim Phipps

- The Univ. of Maryland has shared faculty with PennState on fruit tree physiology. MOU is signed by AES and CES. PA hired a non-tenure professor 75%R:25%E. MD hired a tenure track Research Associate/Asst. Prof. 60%R:40%E. Problem is similar across states and it is stated clearly in the job announcement/description that they serve both states. Integration is enhanced, not forced, when faculty is given joint appointment up front. *[A. Shirmohammadi was requested to share the MOU with the directors. He will send it to Rubie.]*
- UMD also shared water faculty with the Univ. of Delaware. State that has higher percentage use of faculty pays the salary.
- Other institutions are looking at non-tenure track model, but need to watch position as it may move to tenure track.
- Linda Kay shared that report on 21st Century Extension Professional will be discussed at their extension meeting next week.
- PA and NY-Geneva will be merging stations but still need to resolve stakeholder issues. There is currently one PA employee at the NYG Station, no salary crosses lines.
- This is the way of future collaboration across states.
- Another example is building a website for one industry that caters to neighboring states, ex. Lake Erie Grape Program
- Do relationships evolve better from need or should we encourage them? Having a champion(s) helps facilitate.
- Mark Rieger urged the directors to share their hiring plan, and also ARS. Stephen Herbert added also recent hires and positions that will not be filled, teaching positions included.

- If we can successfully conduct Study Abroad, why can't we do it across states? This will result to greater efficiency and expertise.
- On the teaching component, there should be revenue for both sides – barter or exchange.

Action: The following information will be collected through a survey:

- Positions planned for hiring
- Newly hired
- Will not be filled

Also include ARS, 1890s, research and extension positions. Dan Rossi will send out an email and draft the survey.

12. OED Report – Dan Rossi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/OEDReport.pdf>

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/OEDReportBioeconomyConference.pdf>

- ED Dan Rossi highlighted several tasks/activities and sought feedback from the directors.
- On the regional forum, none is planned this year.

Chair A. Shirmohammadi suggested 'Renewable Energy/Animal Waste/Energy Production' or Biomass/Bioenergy Production', ex. Poultry litter – Chesapeake Bay clean-up

The Sun Grant already held a conference that was well attended, but it may be time to hold another forum.

Action: *This and other potential topics for a regional forum will be discussed again at the summer meeting.*

13. NEED Update – Linda Kay Benning

- Linda Kay is the NEED Executive Director. She works 20 hours per week, 50% national and 50% regional
- Extension will have their meeting next week and 'making/adapting to changes' will be the general theme.
- 12 out of 15 Land-grants in the region have Development Officers. NEED will meet with them at the end of March.
- She presented a proposal for a regional grants training for extension and research faculty. Similar training has taken place/planned in other regions. From other regions' experience, this type of training is effective if groups are already formed. The task is to identify the teams. Our Joint NEED-NERA planning grant is a step to the right direction.
- We need to see the ROI from the other regions. Faculty know that they need to work in groups and also need seed data. It takes collaborative work to collect data.
- ***NERA directors suggested talking about this in detail at the summer meeting in a joint session with NEED.***

14. Best Practices Session II: "Establishment of a Grant Support Unit in the Experiment Station, College or University Level" – Brad Hillman and Adel Shirmohammadi

- Rutgers is very pleased with the productivity of their unit. The staff helps with grant processing, not grant writing, and will step in whenever needed to move the process along. It works well at the department level.

- Questions to ask when establishing a unit are -- How well can they work on a variety of grants? Can they build teams? Rutgers has been fortunate that Xenia Morin knows lots of grants, knows the faculty well and so can help build teams. Someone who can work well with 'egos' is critically important. It is also in the best interest of the department to go after large awards. The unit receives funding from AES, CES and SEBS (college) and fundable from F&A return. The university-level office has become very difficult to work with, and their task is to simply push the button to submit the proposal through grants.gov
- At MD, the College of Ag. has 6 departments plus 3 other units under the Life Sciences College. We're investing in good faculty but not providing the support to help them be successful. Chair A. Shirmohammadi sent a survey to the NERA directors, Purdue and VA Tech.. Two out of six respondents have grants units, and four have some support staff, most are half-time appointments at the college level. Funding for the unit/staff is shared by the department and the college, and from F&A.
- Pre-award vs. Post-award or both. Rutgers also wants post-award support at the college level. Both are important if the college/department can afford. Post award is critical as funding agencies will take \$ back if not spent as planned.
- At PennState, G. Thompson took over the college's grants office and working to gain trust of faculty back. They can submit proposals directly to grants.gov from the college level. They need five people, 3 for pre-award and 2 for post-award. Only 12% of F&A go to the unit and the rest to the college. The college submits 600-800 competitive proposals annually.
- Staff support to collect info and take care of administration should be provided so that faculty can concentrate/work on the science component of the proposal.
- Real issue is subcontracts award. Award is usually awarded but subcontract is held up at the institution.
- Grants writer or grants facilitator? UMD Office of VP for Research will provide editors for multi-million proposals. PennState and Cornell had used this in the past for big grants.
- *Share position description for a Grants Facilitator at the department or college level.*

Wednesday, March 13 [Admiral 1 Meeting Room - 5th Floor]

Chair Adel Shirmohammadi reconvened and called the NERA Meeting to order at 8:04AM.

15. Multistate Activities Committee Report – Kirby Stafford III

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/MACReportMarch2013.pdf>

Action: Items 1 to 5 in the MAC Report were discussed individually and motions to accept MAC's recommendations were seconded and passed, as follows:

1. Conditional approval upon satisfactory submission of revised proposal for NE_TEMP2081: Biological Control of Arthropod Pests and Weeds, 10/2013-9/2018 [Renewal of NE1032]
Specific comments are:
 - a. Did not include any successes on biological control releases.
 - b. Important area and came back with strong reviews.

- c. Project has a history of a well-coordinated group with good output.
 - d. Weak outreach plan.
 - e. Milestones are vague.
 - f. Expected outcomes should be measurable and can be better documented.
 - g. Looks more like a coordinating committee and could better integrate their activities.
2. Approved proposal NE_TEMP2101: Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens and Pests, 10/2013-9/2018 [Renewal of NE1033]
 3. Approved proposal NE_TEMP2021: Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases, 10/2013-9/2018 [Renewal of NE1034]
 4. Return for revision proposal NE_TEMP2061: Commercial Greenhouse Production: Component and System Development, 10/2013-9/2018 [Renewal of NE1035]
Specific comments are:
 - a. Need to demonstrate and articulate interdependence better.
 - b. Emphasize Topics 2 & 3 and develop a more integrated approach.
 - c. This is an expensive technology so they need to explain the economic implications to those who will adapt.
 - d. Consolidate objectives. Majority of 'objectives' are methodologies, and appear to be written specifically for participants' activities/contributions to the project.
 - e. This is a good project that can have significant impact especially in niche urban markets, and can be easily integrated and multidisciplinary to better fit the definition of a multistate research activity. Reach out to faculty working in the urban centers.
 - f. It can have the potential to create opportunities and help develop markets for emerging immigrant farmers in the Northeast.
 5. Approved proposal NE_TEMP2041: Improving Quality and Reducing Losses in Specialty Fruit Crops through Storage Technologies, 10/2013-9/2018 [Renewal of NE1036]

MAC also discussed with the directors the need to guide the technical committees they are advising to make sure that proposals are integrated (and read as one proposal not paragraphs that were pieced together), review the regional guidelines and give them expectations. Printed version should be no longer than 15 pages. There is also some confusion on what multistate projects are vs. coordinating committees. MAC noted that multistate proposals being submitted lately fit the criteria for coordinating committees, and can be approved as such as long as they're peer reviewed. MAC suggested having a more detailed discussion about regional guidelines in future meetings.

Action: The motion was made to defer decision on the FY13-14 regional off-the-top funding for NE-9 to the summer meeting, and apply percentage cut due to sequestration to the FY12-13 level of \$233,972 that was approved last year.

Action: The motion to approve FY13-14 regional off-the-top funding for NE-59 in the amount of \$40,788 was seconded and passed. There will be no adjustment or decrease as a result of sequestration.

NRSP Review Committee Recommendations – Kirby Stafford III

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/AgendaBriefNRSPRC.pdf>

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/FY2013SummaryNRSPsOffTheTop.pdf>

- NRSPs 4-6-9 were given favorable midterm reviews
- NRSP8/NRSP_TEMP281 – the directors felt that funding should be reduced substantially to say a maintenance level of \$250K or reduce funding by \$50K each year in the next five years.

Action: A motion was made for MAC Chair Kirby Stafford III, as the NERA Rep. to the NRSPRC, to negotiate on behalf of the Directors, a reduction of the NRSP8 budget following the guidelines regarding the proposal’s Management and Business Plan to include a “transition plan and provisions for developing alternative funding or reducing off-the-top funding to a minimal level” [Ref. #5 page 6 of NRSP Guidelines].

- NRSP1 Proposal to increase the budget to hire the Impacts Writer fulltime.

The NERA directors raised concerns about asking for an increase in consideration of the present federal budget climate where reductions are anticipated. The comment on the proposal was that it is not necessary to write impacts for all the projects that are terminating, and the regions can pick and choose projects that are timely and relevant and will grab the attention and interest of their stakeholders and legislators. The directors recommend keeping the writer at half-time position and re-visit later on if the activity is creating impact.

Action: A motion was made to keep the current approved funding level for NRSP1 and subject it to cut equivalent to the percentage reduction for all NRSPs due to sequestration. The motion was seconded and passed.

- 2013 NERA Planning Grant
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/NERAPlanningGrantSummaryMarch2013.pdf>
- 2013 Joint NEED-NERA Planning Grant
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/RFA2013NEED-NERAPlanningGrant.pdf>
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/SummaryJointReviewComments.pdf>
- 2013 National Multistate Research Award Regional Nomination
– NE1048 Mastitis Resistance to Enhance Dairy Food Safety
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/NE1048Nomination.pdf>

Action: The motion made to nominate NE1048 for the 2013 National Multistate Research Award was seconded and passed.

16. US-Canada Climate Change Collaboration – Mike Hoffmann and Dan Rossi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/US-CanadaClimateChangeUpdate.pdf>

- Collaboration is on-going and monthly calls are being held and facilitated by NERA.
- Farmers/producers participated at the Montreal Meeting in December, and the plan is to hold a bigger conference to talk about what the farmers are already doing to adapt to climate change.
- M. Hoffmann submitted a Letter of Intent for an AFRI proposal to establish a communication network with the intent of sharing information with growers and the farmers feeding info into the network.
- There is another USDA RFA that can be used to fund conferences that is due on April 15. Don Smith at McGill Univ. also has funding source for collaborative workshops for \$25K in Canada.
- Ian Maw asked that APLU be included in this activity.
- Chair Shirmohammadi is also working on an ASABE Climate Change conference proposal for the April 15 deadline.

17. Regional Grantsmanship Workshop – Dan Rossi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/GrantWorkshopAgenda.pdf>

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/GrantWorkshopExpenses.pdf>

The proposal to hold a joint extension and research workshop was discussed briefly yesterday with Linda Kay. The concern is that timing will be difficult to pull the teams together at short notice. The directors need to determine if there are teams already being formed to respond to RFAs. *Discussion will continue at a joint session with NEED at our summer meeting in Cornell.*

18. 2013 Summer Session Program – Fred Servello, Mike Hoffmann and Dan Rossi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/NESummerMtgDraftAgenda.pdf>

Action: Invite Canadian colleagues, Leslie MacLaren and Rob Gordon, and ACOP's Rick Ludescher. Dan Rossi will write a proposal with Rick Ludescher and invite 3-4 academic directors. Don Viands (Cornell) and Cameron Faustman (CT) will be at the Cornell meeting. Send ideas to Dan about topics that may be of interest to ACOP.

19. 2013 ESS/SAES/ARD Workshop Program – Mike Hoffmann and Dan Rossi

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/March2013Meeting/Sept2013ESSMeeting.pdf>

- Steve Slack requested the EDs to inform their directors at their spring meetings about the changes in the time and format of the Sept. Meeting. Arrival will be on Tuesday, Sept. 24 (instead of Monday), and departure on Thursday, Sept. 26. Steve is urging everyone to stay until the last session which will end at 2pm. The regional meetings will be on Wednesday, Sept. 25 at 8-10am.
- The North Central topic session will be on Water Quality, a follow-up to the Colorado session two years ago on Water Quantity. Speakers are from Sea Grant, State Dept. of

Natural Resources, Executive Director of the Farm Bureau and Lonnie Thompson, member of the National Academy of Sciences.

- Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Dean Bruce McPheron will welcome the group. Cathy Woteki is tentatively confirmed as the Luncheon Speaker on Wed., Sept. 25.
- Topics suggested by the EDs for the Discussion Sessions are:
 - IR-4 – 50th Anniversary: Jerry Baron, IR-4 Executive Director, has been invited. A suggestion was made to discuss a possible ‘coming together’ of NRSP4 and NRSP7.
- *A suggestion was made to include a Private Industry presentation, like Pioneer or Monsanto, and talk about:*
 - *Workforce needs*
 - *Workforce development*
 - *Innovation in institutions that can feed into industry – What do they need from us? How should we prepare our students? What do we need to do with our curricula – undergrad and graduate?*
- *M. Rieger suggested Dow Agrosiences’ Drew Ratterman or contact Wendy Fink who organized workshop.*
- *J. Wraith suggested Matt Kuchan, Abbott Labs*

20. Proposed NERA Budget for FY13-14 – Adel Shirmohammadi, Chair [The budget was distributed at the meeting.]

- There is no proposed increase of the NERA budget for FY13-14. The carryover will be sufficient to cover the expenses. However, based on the assessments alone (there has been no increase since 2002) we have a shortfall of \$15K in 2012, estimated to increase to \$55.6K in 2013 and \$66.8K in 2014. What does the group want to do in the longer term? Should we keep using the carryover to cover the shortfall? How low do we want our reserve to be? Should we increase the assessment?
- Dan Rossi explained that NERA is subject to Rutgers University policy for salary increase.
- The directors held a closed door session to discuss the proposed budget.
- Chair Shirmohammadi commended Dan Rossi and Rubie Mize, on behalf of the directors, for their excellent service to NERA. Dan commented that Rubie should be paid at a higher rate and the only possibility of doing that beyond the allowed merit increase is to apply for a reclassification of her position. Dan will discuss this further with Brad Hillman.
- There was also concern that there is disparity among the salaries of the Executive Directors and Dan’s salary should be comparable with the rest.
- The directors recommended giving the staff the highest merit increase that Rutgers University will allow for FY13-14. The rates may range – for Dan Rossi: 2% to 6% and for Rubie Mize: 1% to 4%. Chair Shirmohammadi will write a letter of recommendation to Brad Hillman commending both for the work they do for NERA.

Actions: A Subcommittee composed of Cameron Faustman, Jon Wraith and Mike Hoffmann was appointed by Chair Shirmohammadi to look at the NERA budget, assessments of the other regions and staff salaries to come up with a set of recommendations for future NERA assessment and salaries for the staff by the end of May.

21. Best Practices Session III: Resource Use in our Experiment Station/Research

Centers/Facilities – All (How does each station handle it? Do they charge faculty conducting research for the resources that they request of our research facilities? If so, how and in what form? Each Director can take 2-3 minutes to describe their method)

Fred Servello presented a list of fees commonly charged:

1. Crop Farm/Plot Fee
2. Greenhouse Fees
3. Large Animal/Livestock Per Diem
4. Small Animal/Laboratory
5. Growth Chamber Fees
6. Laboratory Analysis Services
7. Shared Equipment Expenses

Other issues to consider:

- Apportionment of fees between College and Station
- How do you arrive at those numbers/rates?
- How are fees collected?
- How are rates assigned for shared equipment or use of common laboratory/
- Farm budget expenses – baseline infrastructure like fences; labor; teaching component. How do we get hold of other expenses?
- For ARS, they charge for free standing locations – how much per sq. ft.? Go by historical data and project those costs. Each project has to pay admin. fees from indirect, shared and research grants.
- Include all fees, no need to label research, extension or academic
- Include fees charged to grants. How do you charge to grants?
- Survey demand on facilities. What is the projected need? Current ones may no longer be needed in 5 years due to retirement. How do we keep them viable?
- Faculty who work with companies want to be charged for bench space, greenhouse. Should these be covered under F&A? Cornell charges 4X to faculty.
- Include off-campus facilities

Action: Fred Servello and Dan Rossi will organize a survey and will ask volunteers to lead the discussion at the summer meeting. Other questions/topics send to Rubie Mize.

22. Nominations Committee Report – Jon Wraith

Action: The motion made recommending the following assignments was seconded and passed:

- Northeast Region Aquaculture Center Member of the Board of Directors and NERA Representative: Rick Rhodes III (RI)
- Mark Rieger (DE) as Advisor for the following multistate research projects:
 - NE_temp2021 - Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases, 10/2013-9/2018 [Renewal of NE1034]
 - NE1041 – Environmental Impacts of Equine Operations, 10/2009-9/2014

- Gary Thompson (PA) as NERA Delegate for the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee and NERA nomination for Incoming-Chair of this Committee
- Tom Burr (NYG) as NERA Delegate for the ESCOP Science and Legislative Committee

23. Resolutions Committee Report – Tom Burr

No resolutions were put forward at this meeting.

24. Future Meetings:

- Northeast Joint Summer Session – July 7-9, 2013 at Cornell ILR Conference Center, Ithaca, NY [<http://nejss.cce.cornell.edu/>]
- Joint COPs Meeting – July 24-25, 2013 at Manhattan, KS
- ESS/SAES/ARD Workshop and NERA Fall Meeting – September 24-26, 2013 at Hilton Easton, Columbus, OH. [Note that NERA Meeting will be on Wednesday, Sept. 25, 8-10AM.]

25. Summary Comments and Adjournment – Chair Adel Shirmohammadi

Chair Adel Shirmohammadi thanked everyone for the spirited discussion of the best practices topics and for a productive business meeting. He adjourned the meeting at 12:05PM.