

NERA Business Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2022, 8:30 am ET

In attendance: Puneet Srivastava (Chair), Matt Wilson, Wendie Cohick, Jan Nyrop, Olga Padilla-Zakour, Anna Katharine Mansfield, Lisa Townson, Anton Bekkerman, Kumar Venkitanarayanan, Blair Siegfried, Darrell Donahue, Jody Jellison, Margaret Smith, Jessica Leahy, Anna Sophia Roberts (Meridian Institute, Maryland Experiment Station Strategic Visioning partner), Rick Rhodes, David Leibovitz

Meeting opening, announcements, and administration – Puneet Srivastava, NERA Chair

- The group went through a series of introductions.
- NERA submitted comments to NIFA in response to its “NIFA Listens” session, [comments are posted](#) on the website.
- “The Northeast Agenda” meeting will take place tomorrow 12/16 – **all are invited to attend.**
- **The agenda for this meeting was approved unanimously.**
- **The minutes of the September 28, 2022, NERA meeting were approved unanimously.**

Multistate Activities Committee Report and Recommendation – Jan Nyrop

- A [report](#) on the MAC meeting of December 12, 2022 was shared with the NERA Directors prior to the meeting.
- The MAC recommends approval of the following Peer Reviewed Multistate Activities
 - NE_TEMP1962: *Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Other Green Environments: Understanding Human and Community Benefits and Mechanisms, 10/2022 – 09/2027* [Renewal of NE1962, AA: Matt Wilson – West Virginia]
 - NE_TEMP2201: *Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals, 10/2022 – 09/2027* [Renewal of NE1701, AA: Matt Wilson – West Virginia]
 - NE_TEMP2204: *A regional network of social, behavioral, and economic food systems research, 10/2022 – 09/2027* [New multistate project, AA: Kumar Venkitanarayanan – UConn]
 - NE_TEMP2206: *Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Agriculture, 10/2022 – 09/2027* [New multistate project, AA: Wendie Cohick – Rutgers]
 - NE_TEMP2203: *Legal Issues in Agriculture and Natural Resources, 10/2022-09/2027* [New multistate project, AA: Puneet Srivastava – Maryland]
 - **A motion was introduced to approve the above slate of peer reviewed multistate activities. The motion was approved by acclamation.**
- The MAC recommends the following changes to the Northeast Supplement to the Guidelines for Multistate Activities
 - The MAC recommends removal of the “support from two Agricultural Experiment Station Directors” requirement for statements of intent to draft a multistate activity.
 - A project lead’s station Director should be engaged in the conception of a new or renewing multistate activity.
 - **NERA Directors asked that the OED share formal correspondence with all Directors of any technical team being greenlighted to draft a multistate proposal.**

- This gives all NERA stations the opportunity to socialize a new (or renewing) proposal effort with investigators at their institution prior to the time writing begins.
 - **The NERA OED will work on making these changes and present them to Directors for vote.**
- There are several current Administrative Adviser vacancies, those have been shared with the Directors. NERA is seeking volunteers or nominees to serve in these AA roles.
 - **Directors will be approached, and AA roles will be voted on electronically after the meeting.**
- The MAC is seeking a new member and somebody to serve as Chair. Jan Nyrop has retired.
- *Reminder on Mid-term reviews:* beginning with projects approved 2021, a mid-term review will be conducted in the third year of a multistate activity's life cycle. Decision made at the NERA fall meeting 2021.

Station Profile: Evolving the Role of Agricultural Experiment Stations at Cornell – Jan Nyrop, Goichman Family Director, Cornell AgriTech

- Jan presented on Cornell AgriTech's strategic decision to "radically transform" the experiment station and shift the deployment of Hatch dollars.
- A slide deck will be posted on the NERA website

Issues discussions that require NERA decisions – Puneet Srivastava

- NERA March meeting (virtual or face-to-face)
 - A motion was introduced to approve the planning of a face-to-face NERA meeting in March 2023. **The motion was approved by acclamation.**

ESS/ESCOP chair update – Matt Wilson

- Matt Wilson serves as ESCOP Chair for 2022-23.
- Four meetings will be held throughout the year to engage the section. The most recent ESCOP meeting was held earlier this month.
- ESS is working to enhancing its public presence. A new brand concept, logo, and front-facing ESS website are in development. Directors have been engaged in the creative process.
- Advocacy organization Lewis Burke Associates (representing APLU FANR) gave insight into federal government activities impacting Experiment Stations and related to the Farm Bill
- The ESS passed its budget and assessment for calendar year 2023 earlier this month.
- Matt, along with Bev Durgan (Minnesota/ECOP Chair) visited with USDA and attended events with external partners in November 2022.
- Regarding infrastructure, Lewis Burke Associates urges directors to draft "if-then statements" to demonstrate why there is a need for increased funding.
 - A template for these types of statements will be released and communicators will be charged with developing a pool of language centered around infrastructure, for use in engagement with legislators.
 - ESS may run a contest to stimulate excitement around generating these "if-then statements" around the country.
 - *Simplicity and consistency are two critical elements we need in our communication.*

Summary comments and adjournment – Puneet Srivastava and Rick Rhodes

- Puneet thanked the Directors and asked everyone to stay tuned for the assignment of new Administrative Advisers and committee representatives. This will be conducted by the OED electronically.
- Rick thanked Jan Nyrop for his service to NERA and friendship as he transitions into retirement from Cornell AgriTech.
- *The meeting adjourned at 10:01 am ET.*

Future Meetings

- Experiment Station Section – March 8, 2023, 4:00-5:00 PM (virtual)
- Joint CARET/AHS Meeting – March 12-15, 2023, Washington, DC
- **NERA Spring Meeting – March 2023, LOCATION TBD**
- NEED/NERA Joint Summer Session – June 5-7, 2023, Annapolis, MD
- Joint COPS – July 18-20, 2023, Kansas City, MO
- ESS Annual Meeting – September 24-27, 2023, Grand Rapids, MI