



Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

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### Fall 2017 Business Meeting

Hyatt at the Bellevue – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
September 26, 2017

#### Minutes

In attendance:

Mark Rieger, Chair

Bill Miller

Eric Wommack

Gary Thompson

Jon Wraith

Brad Hillman

Tim Phipps

Jody Jellison

Jan Nyrop

Adel Shirmohammadi

Bill Hare

Jeanette Thurston, NIFA

Rick Rhodes

David Leibovitz

#### Action items are in bold.

##### 1.) Call to Order and Introductions

- Mark Rieger called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves.
- Thoughts from the association go out to John Kirby (RI), who is taking care of a parent, and Kumar Venkitanarayanan (CT-Storrs), who was involved in a car accident.
- **Minutes from the 2017 NERA Summer meeting in WV were unanimously approved**

##### 2.) NERA Executive Committee Report

- Proposal for Ithaca and Geneva stations to merge within NERA for one single vote. Comments were generally supportive.

- **NERA will revise its operating guidelines to reflect the Ithaca-Geneva merge and present revisions for a vote during the December 2017 NERA teleconference.**
- Gary Thompson is the incoming ESS Chair, and NERA needs to vote on Rick Rhodes to support ESS as the Executive Vice-Chair.
  - **Rick Rhodes's appointment to Executive Vice-Chair was unanimously approved.**

### 3.) Executive Director and Coordinator Evaluation

- The Executive Director and Coordinator left the room for the association to discuss the annual evaluation.
- **The association provided unanimously supportive feedback for the Executive Director and Coordinator.**

### 4.) Multistate Activities Committee Report and Discussion

- The MAC met on September 11, 2017. Brad Hillman delivered the MAC report on behalf of the Chair, Fred Servello.
- The MAC's report and recommendations from 09/11 are posted on the NERA website: [http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599\\_6fcfc1ff7e314a0e883d62e73a8f9da0.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599_6fcfc1ff7e314a0e883d62e73a8f9da0.pdf)
- Requests to Write
  - NE1333 and NE1334, both longstanding projects, both received unanimous approval.
  - Discussion on "Sustaining Herbaria" request
    - Can this CC address collections as well as herbaria? One group for both herbaria and insect collection under one Administrative Adviser would be an effective consolidation.
    - Many institutions have herbaria in varying conditions. Will this serve as a base for people to do a certain analysis? What is the justification?
  - **A motion to approve all three requests to write was introduced, seconded and unanimously passed by NERA.**
- Regional Off-The-Top Funding
  - NE9 Discussion (Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources, Geneva)
    - The MAC was largely supportive of continuing NE9.
    - Jan Nyrop provided some supporting materials to answer questions about NE9: [http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599\\_7dbf872e810b4b948aad7f57286a7daa.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599_7dbf872e810b4b948aad7f57286a7daa.pdf)
    - The Germplasm center supports a Farm Manager, 2 field technicians, and a greenhouse person
    - How is plant coverage decided on, nationally? What plants are not covered by the regional projects?
      - Majority of crops are covered across all regions
      - There is a national ARS leader for germplasm centers

- This costs Cornell money in fringe and indirect costs
  - Benefits of hosting NE9 are twofold – larger ARS unit of scientists at Geneva, also proximity to the center.
  - NERA is committed to supporting NE9 as part of a National Germplasm Center.
- NE59 Discussion (Northeastern Regional Center for Rural Development, Penn State)
  - NERA unanimously recognizes the benefit of NE59
  - The project leverages the small amount of funding they receive.
- **A motion to support NE59 and NE9 was introduced, seconded and unanimously passed by NERA.**
- Peer-Reviewed Proposals
  - NECC\_TEMP1702 (Minor Use Animal Drug Program)
    - NRSP7 closed last year. This would reorganize that group to work toward pursuing funding.
    - If this group dissolves completely, their applications may dissolve as a result. This CC will examine pathways forward for the group.
    - The NRSP was canned because of an inability to draw money from industry. Many people were concerned the NRSP wasn't looking at the real needs in the field.
    - Per the MAC report, a recommendation to revise of Objective 3
  - NECC\_TEMP1700 (Equine Clinical Studies)
    - This group did not have many funding opportunities, or opportunities to meet.
    - The MAC recommends a mid-term review for this group.
      - A CC can be terminated after a negative mid-term review. NERA can communicate that to the group – these are the expectations, you will undergo a mid-term review after the year 2 annual report which determines whether or not the CC will move forward.
    - This CC is unique as there are not many equine programs in the region.
    - What is the cost/benefit analysis for this CC? On one hand, our states have equine industry, on the other hand, the CC didn't bring in funding.
    - If NIFA approves these CCs, they are deeming them important. Is there further funding coming in? (NIFA does not approve CC's...)
    - Potential AA – Fred Servello's successor in Maine. Maine drafted the CC and has the most participants on the committee.
  - **A motion to support NECC\_TEMP1702 with the revision of Objective 3 was introduced, seconded and unanimously passed by NERA.**
  - **A motion to support NECC\_TEMP1700 with the requirement of a mid-term review was introduced, seconded and unanimously passed by NERA.**
  - **NERA will follow up on the objective 3 revision (NECC1702) and the mid-term review (NECC1700).**

- Administrative Adviser Recommendations
  - **A motion to approve AA recommendations for NE1962 (Fred Servello), NE1731 (Fred Servello), and NE1720 (Brad Hillman) was introduced, seconded and unanimously approved by NERA.**
  - NRSP6 AA discussion
    - Proposal for Fred Servello's replacement at Maine to serve as AA
    - Somebody from Maine or New York should serve (Potato states)
    - New York has a faculty member, Walter de Jong, who could serve as AA if Maine cannot provide a Director as AA.
    - **NERA will contact Fred Servello for an NRSP6 AA recommendation from Maine.**
  - NRSP9 AA discussion
    - Plan A: a representative from UConn (Cameron / Kumar or designee)
    - Plan B: a UDelaware faculty member designated by Mark Rieger
    - Plan C: a WVU faculty member designated by Tim Phipps
    - **NERA will contact Cameron Faustman and Kumar Venkitanarayanan to seek a designee from UConn to serve as NRSP9 AA, and will carry out plans B/C as needed.**
  - NE\_TEMP1748
    - Former AA Cameron Faustman nominated Kumar Venkitanarayanan to serve as AA, Kumar agreed
    - **NERA unanimously supports Kumar Venkitanarayanan as AA for NE\_TEMP1748**
  - NE1334
    - Bob Taylor, WVU will replace Mark Rieger as AA of NE1334. Bob would lead the NE1334 team in their resubmission in 2017-18.
    - **NERA unanimously supports Bob Taylor as AA for NE1334.**
  - NECC\_TEMP1702
    - Proposed AA – Margaret Smith, Cornell. Margaret was the lead writer of the CC proposal.
    - **NERA is supportive of Margaret Smith as AA for NECC\_TEMP1702. Jan Nyrop will contact Margaret Smith to make a final decision on her serving as AA.**
- NERA Decision on Peer-Reviewed Proposals
  - As captured in the MAC report, NERA provided the following votes on three peer-reviewed proposals:
    - NE\_TEMP1748 (Mastitis): Approve-13, Reject-0, Abstain-0
    - NE\_TEMP1701 (Mycobacterial): Approve-13, Reject-0, Abstain-0
    - NE\_TEMP1749 (Rural Econ): Approve-12, Reject-1, Abstain-0
      - Brad Hillman asked Peggy Brennan, VP at Rutgers to guide NE\_TEMP1749 group through to a strong mid-term review. Peggy agreed to serve as AA.

- Tim Phipps, former NE1049 AA, endorses Peggy's nomination. She has a strong ability to shepherd large, diverse groups together.
- **A motion to approve Peggy Brennan (Rutgers) as AA of NE\_TEMP1749 was introduced, seconded and unanimously approved by NERA.**
- **Based on the votes cast (13 of 15 stations), NERA has sent all three proposals to NIFA for final review and approval. NE\_TEMP1749 will undergo a mid-term review.**
- NERA Planning Grants
  - The MAC recommends funding of one NERA planning grant: *Scientists Interested in Identifying Non-antibiotic Alternative Therapies for the Treatment of Bovine Mastitis in the Northeast Region* (Kasey Moyes, Maryland)
  - **A motion to support the funding of this planning grant was introduced, seconded and unanimously approved by NERA.**
- NEED-NERA Planning (Seed) Grants
  - **The MAC will meet later in the fall to discuss the future of the planning grants program.**

5.) NERA Spring Meeting Decision

- Seven spring meeting options were posted on the NERA website for the Directors' consideration:  
([http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599\\_3c60b4e35a8a4a47b257294512e0c532.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/895599_3c60b4e35a8a4a47b257294512e0c532.pdf))
- **NERA voted to hold its 2018 March (spring) meeting March 5-7, 2018 at the Crystal City Hilton, in conjunction with the 2018 CARET/AHS Meeting.**
- **NERA will pay the cost of the regional business meeting room. Attendees are directed to register for the CARET/AHS meeting and book rooms on the CARET/AHS room block at the Hilton.**

The NERA business meeting adjourned at 10:00am.