



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
- 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
 - 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)
- **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.