

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education Minutes – February 28 – March 1, 2013

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met at Loftsgard Hall Room 380, NDSU campus on February 28 and March 1, 2013. Board members in attendance were Robert Bahm, Mike Beltz, Chris Boerboom, Doug Goehring, Ken Grafton, Rodney Howe, Paul Langseth, Doyle Lentz, JoAnn Rodenbiker, Richard (Dick) Roland. Absent were Leland (Judge) Barth, Tracy Boe, Dean Bresciani, John Bollingberg, Jerry Klein, and Keith Peltier.

February 28:

Chairman Howe called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm and, noting that there was a quorum, welcomed everyone and made introductions. He asked for additions or corrections to the agenda and the meeting minutes from the two previous SBARE meetings. Hearing none, the meeting minutes for the November 15-16, 2012 and January 7, 2013 meetings were unanimously approved by the board.

Update: The Ag Coalition nominated Lyle Warner of Baldwin, ND to replace Mr. Bahm whose SBARE term expires June 30, 2013; his name will be forwarded to the ND State Board of Higher Education (SBHE).

Regarding the current Legislative budget (handouts): Chairman Howe explained that the spreadsheet illustrates the Governor's recommendations, one for the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station (NDAES) and one for the NDSU Extension Service. Chairman Howe congratulated Drs. Grafton, and Boerboom and their colleagues on their presentation to legislature. The bill passed the Senate 46 to 0.

Discussion on NDAES: with the State Data Center being moved to Bismarck in spring of 2012, it became the responsibility of the State Department of Commerce. The Director of the State Data Center resigned, which shifted those responsibilities to fall under the Governor's Office in the Commerce Department. They removed the .50 FTE + salary & benefits that had been the Director's salary and that is the amount that shows up as a negative on this spreadsheet.

Copies of SB2020 and SB2352 were distributed. Discussion: In the Senate, some additional items were considered, some were not. The board discussed the animal sciences position, and the long-term goal of fully funding this position. The board also discussed a request for assistance to find resolutions to soil damage from Souris River flooding. The ND Senate added funding for agronomy labs at the Langdon Research Extension Center (LREC) and Central Grasslands Research Extension Center (CGREC).

Chairman Howe stated that the cost of living sheets compiled by Dr. Boerboom were very informative, indicating the dollar amounts that impact staff in the Western regions (AES & Ext). The data highlighted the crisis of additional costs due to rising living expenses as a result of the oil boom. State employees are facing extreme cost-of-living expense hikes, and retention issues are arising. \$2.3M was requested however was reduced to \$100K, far below need. Verbally, it was stated that the \$100K was to be used for new hires only; budget lines were retained in the Senate but were then removed in the House. Commissioner Goehring noted that it could be a self-correcting issue as various other ND entities are also affected.

The \$250K requested for Extension agents-in-training will be combined to include internships and agents-in-training. SBARE recommended two Livestock Specialists, and one was put forth for funding. Dr. Boerboom added that the potato specialist request may need to be revisited.

JoAnn Rodenbiker asked about the Rural Leadership program funding and whether it is going into the base budget. Chairman Howe said yes. The Senate subcommittee voted to keep the funding for Western 4-H Camp. Dr. Boerboom noted that 'Gearing Up For Kindergarten' was moved over to the DPI Budget at the request of the Legislature. There was an Executive Budget there requesting a \$190K increase on top of last session's \$625K; \$500K was to be used by ND schools offering the program, and rest was to be used by

Extension to implement and train people on program delivery. As it went through the House, *all of it* was completely removed. They intend to reintroduce this to the Senate. Chairman Howe said that unless there is an objection from this group, he wants SBARE to be supportive of this as in the past. No objections were brought forward.

The Board discussed SB2020 and the approval process for the list of initiatives. The Ag Coalition amendment for the SBARE list to move through the SBHE without modification was introduced by the Ag Coalition and approved.

The Board had a brief discussion about funding being sought by a group of grape and wine producers. While SBARE seeks to be supportive to ag groups who are passionate about their field and well-intended in their work, there is a clear-cut process by which SBARE discerns needs and ranks priorities.

Oversight of the Ag Research Fund is one of SBARE's responsibilities. It is based on a percentage of crops affected in ND; those percentages are dropping to such small amounts it is getting difficult to do research with those low amounts. Dr. Greg Lardy, NDSU Department of Animal Sciences head, added clarification.

The group discussed the high value of commodity groups and how they enhance state agricultural research work. Howe asked the governor for suggestions on additional avenues to increase ag funding. In the future, North Dakota may be more open and able to obtain general fund dollars to stabilize funding. In the past, general fund dollars were obtained in smaller amounts to assist on occasion. Perhaps more can be sought next time.

Administrative Reports from Drs. Grafton and Boerboom

Dr. Grafton: the NDSU greenhouse is 85% complete; some evaluations during the process took longer than expected but everything is still moving forward. He has taken oversight of the School of Food Systems after Deland Myers stepped back to the faculty. A committee is tasked with determining the future of the School and its configuration.

SB2352 discussion: possible trade or sale of land to relocate the North Central Research Extension Center (NCREC-Minot) and the Williston Research Extension Center (WREC) due to expansion of cities. In Minot, there is a proposed highway bypass that could dramatically affect research plots. Relocation expenses vs. feasibility of staying in place are all being discussed.

Dr. Boerboom: in the past 12 months Extension has filled a total of 33 positions. Those include 12 Extension agent county hires for Ag & Natural Resources and eight Agent positions in 4H/FCS; and three specialists in FCS. Currently there are eight more open positions yet to be filled. This should help provide perspective regarding ongoing challenges in retention and recruitment. A pie chart handout illustrated the four main legs of Extension funding. With the Feds, appropriations equal 13% of the budget. Depending on what happens with the Feds, sequester, etc., they're facing a possible reduction that will affect Extension. Extension is continuing to try to support the federal package; another handout depicted "formula funds" - the Smith/Lever funds. The handout showed how Extension relies on these funds to sustain their capacity to be able to deliver programs via staff. A pie chart showed statistics on the number of contacts Extension made in 2012 (these are educational efforts by agents and specialists). The high contact numbers made via Agents emphasizes just how important county staff is to our citizens.

Ag Coalition handout: explains Who the Ag Coalition is, and What the Coalition does.

Before going on tours, Chairman Howe informed everyone that at 1pm the following day, an informal discussion would be held regarding the issues of global Extension, not only agricultural Extension. The NDSU Extension Service is comprised of four programmatic areas: agriculture and natural resources, community economic development and leadership, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development. All were welcome to attend the informal discussion. There would be no voting or agenda.

Group Tour: SBARE members viewed a presentation and attended a tour of the NDSU School of Natural Resource Sciences labs and facilities. SBARE reconvened in Loftsgard after the tour, and proceeded to evening meal.

March 1:

Refreshments were provided at 8 am.

At Dr. Grafton's request, Alisha Nord gave a brief update on the new Facebook site for the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources. She noted that a similar site will be developed for the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station.

Group Tour: SBARE members viewed a presentation and attended a tour of the NDSU Department of Plant Pathology and the Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering (ABEN). Dr. Jack Rasmussen, Plant Pathology chair, and Dr. Sreekala Bajwa, ABEN chair, gave presentations and provided folders containing detailed information on each of their departments.

Lunch was provided for the Board members in Loftsgard 380 at 12 noon. The meeting was adjourned at this time.

An informal 1 p.m. meeting followed the regular meeting. Members participating were Mike Beltz, Chris Boerboom, Ken Grafton, Rodney Howe, Paul Langseth, and JoAnn Rodenbiker. Also in attendance were Cherie Fischer, Deb Gebeke, Janelle Quam, and Dave Ruhland.

Discussion centered on addressing the issues of global extension, not only Agricultural Extension. The NDSU Extension Service is comprised of four programmatic areas: agriculture and natural resources, community economic development and leadership, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development.

It is believed that there is confusion during the priority/initiative determination process. The group discussed ideas for clarification of the process and needs of NDSU Extension as a whole.

A suggestion was made to highlight NDSU Extension programmatic areas and their needs during the 100th Anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act.

The informal meeting was adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lorie Herbel, Alisha Nord, and Janelle Quam