

## **NORTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION**

### **February 24, 2025 MEETING MINUTES | Bismarck, ND**

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The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met for a regular meeting on February 24, 2025. Present: Jim Bahm, Tom Bodine, Doug Bichler, Pres. David Cook, Mike Clemens, John Dhuyvetter, Pam Gulleson, Greg Lardy, Sarah Lovas, John Nordgaard, and Julie Zikmund. Absent: Commissioner Doug Goehring, Sen. Jerry Klein, Rep. Alisa Mitskog, Scott Ouradnik, and Mark Urquhart.

Chair Lovas called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** John Nordgaard made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Pam Gulleson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **Administrative Update from David Cook, President of NDSU**

Dr. Cook updated the board on the Horizon 2035 initiative presented to the legislature that would adapt NDSU's land-grant mission to meet modern workforce demands and improve quality of life in North Dakota. He noted the university's strategy on the current federal administrative executive orders that could affect operations and budgets. Finally, he shared that the NDSU football team won the 10<sup>th</sup> FCS National Championship.

#### **Administrative Update from Greg Lardy, Joe and Norma Peltier VP for Agriculture, Dean, Director, Director**

Dr. Lardy reviewed current federal executive orders that may impact NDSU Agriculture and its associated organizations. He announced that the State Board of Higher Education approved the Peltier Institute of Agriculture Technology, which will support scholarships and majors in agriculture technology and precision agriculture. There will be a position available for a Professor of Practice (external search) and an internal search for an Endowed Chair and Director of the Peltier Institute for Advancement in Agriculture Technology.

He also announced several upcoming retirements, including Dr. Jack Rasmussen, Chair of Plant Pathology, in June 2025; Blaine Schatz, Assistant Director of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, in May 2025; and Dr. Bill Wilson, CHS Chair in Risk Management and Trading and University Distinguished Professor, in December 2025. Searches for their replacements will begin later this year.

Dr. Michael Boland was named the AgCountry Endowed Chair in Agribusiness and Applied Economics. Additionally, NDSU's College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources recognized Michael Uetz as its 2025 Distinguished Alumni.

Dr. Lardy provided an update on a recent press conference held jointly by Governor Armstrong, NDSU Agriculture, Commissioner Goehring, and Commissioner Schilken, where they released the 2024 Economic Impact Study. The study highlighted that North Dakota's agricultural sector contributes \$41.3 billion to the state's economy and that 25 percent of all jobs in the state are directly or indirectly related to agriculture.

Finally, Dr. Lardy expressed his gratitude to Drs. Frank Casey, Lynette Flage and John McEvoy, and Bruce Sundeen, Electronic Media Specialist, for their efforts in creating and completing the NDSU Agriculture *Feeding the Future: The Power of NDSU Research and Extension* informational [video](#) which was used at the Joint meeting of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees. He also thanked Ona Vig, Grant and Contract Officer, NDSU Ag Budget office, for her diligent work in reviewing all current NDSU Agriculture federal grants as updates continue to be released.

### **Administrative Update from Lynette Flage, Associate Director, NDSU Extension**

Dr. Flage announced that more than twenty new Extension specialists are in place across North Dakota, and searches are underway for the Family Nutrition Program Coordinator, Extension Veterinarian, and Beef Cattle Extension Specialist. Additionally, Dr. Kelly Parker has been hired as the new 4-H Specialist working with the 4-H Ambassador program.

She reported that 4-H participation significantly increased in 2024, with an 11% rise in club enrollment, a 10% increase in camp attendance, and a 37% growth in overall Extension youth development program participation. The original goal of a 25% increase from 2023 has already been surpassed.

Dr. Flage also announced the Beyond Ready Initiative, a national initiative to reach 10 million youth through 4-H.

Lastly, she highlighted the FARMS Workforce initiative, which has conducted six listening sessions across the state to gather input on community needs related to agriculture technology education, workforce development, and future opportunities. There are several more sessions scheduled in 2025.

### **Administrative Update from Frank Casey, Associate Director, of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station**

Dr. Casey informed the board he is working with user groups, with the help of Facilities Management, on identifying equipment, and logistics of the Bolley Agricultural Field Laboratory. Also, building responsibilities are being identified that will be used to for a staffing plan for Bolley.

He provided updates on recent hires. Extension and NDAES have appointed Dr. Rogan Tokach as an Extension Honeybee Researcher in a split appointment beginning in June 2025. The School of Natural Resource Sciences has hired Dr. Vinicius Marcilio da Silva and another offer has been made for two assistant professor positions that have joint teaching and research appointments. Additionally, the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department has hired two assistant professors, Dr. Mathew Gammans to work on agricultural policy and Dr. Nicholas Pates to work on agribusiness and agricultural finance.

### **Comments from Sarah Lovas, SBARE Chair**

Chair Lovas expressed her appreciation to the NDSU Agriculture team for their efforts on Horizon 2035, the Joint Ag Committee meeting, SB2020, the 2024 North Dakota Economic Impacts press conference, the legislative session, and navigating changes in federal funding. She noted that the Senate hearing for SB2020 was highly successful.

She also reported that the Ag Coalition has received three candidates for consideration as a new board. The new board member will be recommended by SBHE Chancellor this spring. She also noted that there will need to be a selection of a new SBARE Chair, as her term will conclude in July 2025.

Lastly, she announced that NDSU Field Day dates have been finalized and encouraged board members to confirm which events they plan to attend.

### **Capital Projects Process**

The NDSU Agriculture Team gave updates on the current funded capital projects. The board reviewed and discussed the updated NDSU Capital Project Process that was requested at the previous meeting.

**MOTION:** John Nordgaard made a motion that the board concentrate on providing suggestions for the NDSU Capital Project Process at the following March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting and to provide a final vote at the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. John Dhuyvetter seconded. Motion

### **Legislative Updates**

Dr. Lardy shared the “*Feeding the Future: The Power of NDSU Research and Extension*” to facilitate the conversation around the current legislative updates.

**MOTION:** Pam Gulleason made a motion for SBARE Leadership to be involved in responding to HB1572 as it pertains to NDSU Extension. Seconded by Doug Bichler. Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Doug Bichler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Nordgaard seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Chair Lovas adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Erin McCall