



Agricultural Research Stations Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

2:30pm-3:30pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom

Attendees: Julie Dawson, Phil Dunigan, Nancy Esser, Luiz Ferraretto, Erica Flyte, Claudio Gratton, Brian Luck, Deena Patterson, Mike Peters, Valentin Picasso Risso, Jamie Reichert, Phil Townsend

Not present: Francisco Arriaga, Doug Reinemann, Mark Rickenbach, Doug Sabatke

Minutes by: Erica Flyte

Attending as public meeting: None

MINUTES

Welcome and call to order

- The meeting was called to order by Brian Luck at 2:31pm.

Approval of October 29, 2021 meeting minutes

- Misspelled word on the last page. Claudio made a motion to approve the April 2021 meeting minutes with the misspelling corrected. Jamie seconded the motion. The motion was passed with 7 votes in favor, 0 votes not in favor, and 1 vote abstaining.

ARS Director's report

- ARS winter conference has been moved to a virtual format due to participants' close contacts to COVID. The banquet is cancelled. 2022 awardees will be recognized in the future in a format TBD. Amanda Gevens received the ARS Research award, Adam Roth received the Service award, and Jason Cavadini received the Staff award.
- Brandon Blackburn has been hired as ARS financial manager.
- Phil Dunigan's last day before retirement is January 31, 2022. Phil is helping to train and onboard Brandon Blackburn. Brandon was previously in the CALS financial division and is off to a great start.
- Jane Cahoon is taking the lead on ARS HR duties.
- The Arlington land purchase is moving forward as hoped, per the process recommended at the October ARS committee meeting. The offer to purchase has been accepted at approximately \$15 thousand per acre, which checks out to current market value. The acreage is under formal offer and is awaiting President Thompson's signature, after which it will go to the Board of Regents in April. Following these procedures, the acreage can be moved into ARS capacities for spring. Research projects will not be added to the area at this time in case the timeline is adjusted. Alfalfa will be continued this year, with potential changes occurring in the 2023 growing season.
 - ARS will identify 70 acres of their current acreage to meet the donors' certified organic agricultural land requirement. ARS is grateful to the Foundation for identifying a donor with this fantastic support.
- 120 acres on the south site of the Marshfield Station have appraised out at ~ \$5,500 per acre. 20 years ago, this land was agreed to be sold to the City of Marshfield and a \$250,000 deposit was placed on the land. The remainder of the proceeds from this land sale will be sent to ARS through the UW. Conversations will take place with the Marshfield ARS staff and the ARS committee for

how to best reinvest in the Marshfield site, such as facilities to support the research mission. This offer to sell is on the Board of Regents' agenda for April.

- Conversations are taking place with ARS and CALS leadership regarding how to disburse the other acreage (8 acres) with the buildings now that the Soils Lab has relocated.
- Ag input costs are skyrocketing, and some items are not available for price lock-ins. Departments will be notified that superintendents are doing their best to get what is needed for research at the best prices, but with the increasing price of chemicals, materials, etc., it may be costly. Please share needs early with station staff and communicate often about needs to meet research missions.
- Stefan Wahe will begin working with stations and the CALS IT staff for accessibility and networking capacity improvements. They will review the current status, make a strategic plan for network capacities across all sites, expand capacities in areas where network capabilities are lacking, and potentially expand wireless capacities in the field.

Questions/comments from committee:

- Where is the new 70 acres at Arlington ARS?
 - South from the headquarters building across the first intersection of road. Adjacent to already-owned land and within proximity to headquarters.
- Future agenda item: researchers have approached Brian Luck about equipment needs at the Lancaster station. They want to use the station more, but it is difficult to harvest there with no combine. The committee should begin thinking about how to meet this need. Possibility of a used machine?
 - The current program via which machinery is obtained may not meet long-term needs. A broader question to consider is how to meet future ARS machinery needs. May have to reevaluate dealers and equipment manufacturers.
 - The Big Red program is valuable and a suggestion to pass along.
- Is there the potential to open the internship program to students from other UW system schools?
 - Yes, this program is now open to students from other UW system schools. The call has been updated.

Extension staff at ARS

- A map was shared with committee members.
- There is interest in having more regional specialists that are better aligned with stations. Can leverage office space to allow for collaboration between regional specialists and ARS staff. There are many opportunities for collaboration and synergy.
- Email Doug Reinemann with questions and ideas for how to cultivate this relationship.

Questions/comments from committee:

- None.

General questions & feedback

- The next meeting will be TBD in April 2022.
 - April 6 will likely be Phil Dunigan's retirement celebration
 - April 7: ARS office managers will be in Madison.
- Send future agenda items to Brian Luck and Erica Flyte.

Adjourn

Valentin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jamie seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:59pm.