



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics (REE)

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board

NGRAC Meeting – November 16, 2022, Meeting Minutes

National Genetics Research Advisory Council Members Present: Dr. Jim McFerson (Chair), Mr. Preston Hardison, Dr. Paul Gepts, Dr. Terrence Tiersch, Dr. Sarada Krishnan, Dr. John Buchanan and Dr. Stephen Kresovich– (7)

Members Absent: Dr. Chad Dechow, Dr. Margaret Smith, Dr. Amir Ibrahim, Dr. Steven Kerns Dr. David Butruille and Dr. Katherine Rainey – (6)

Ex-Officio(s) Present: Dr. Peter Bretting

Ex-Officio(s) Not Present: Dr. Harvey Blackburn

NAREEE Board Staff Present: Kate Lewis, Executive Director and Danielle Farley

Guests Present: None.

I. Welcome, Roll Call of Council Members, Ex-Officio Members, Other Attendees, and Quorum Check

The roll was taken, and the quorum was met at 1:03 p.m. DFO Kate Lewis introduced Ms. Danielle Farley to the members on the call.

II. Approval of September 2022 and October 2022 Meeting Minutes

The September and October meeting minutes were moved and seconded, and all were approved. DFO Lewis informed the Council that the NGRAC minutes will be posted routinely to the NGRAC website starting with fiscal year 2023.

III. Update on NGRAC Membership for FY23

DFO Lewis extended the membership of Dr. David Butruille, Dr. Amir Ibrahim, Dr. Katherine Rainey and Dr. Stephen Kresovich until the end of January. Dr. David Butruille and Dr. Stephen Kresovich asked the Secretary to renominate them to the Committee.

There are several reasons for the slow process of the Board’s memberships being completed: (1) The Pollinator Committee has been added; (2) DFO Lewis has had to hold down the NAREEE Board Office by herself these past several weeks; (3) The vetting process

DFO Lewis and Ms. Farley are working to document and share the onboarding and offboarding process. Dr. Jim McFerson wants to be a part of the development. Ms. Farley welcomes feedback from the committee on



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their own onboarding experiences so to better develop the process and the complementing documents.

IV. Update on NAREEE Board Office Administrative Support: Welcome Ms. Michele Simmons

DFO Lewis introduced Ms. Michele Simmons (who was on sick leave at the time of the meeting) who started this Monday as an Administrative Assistant on a 16-week detail. Dr. McFerson asked for clarity on what Ms. Farley is working on. Ms. Farley answered that she is doing a gap analysis on the Diversity Letter and updating a 2020 Climate Summary for the Ag Climate Report.

V. Update on NGRAC FY22 Work Products Transmittal

DFO Lewis happily announced that the four reports and the NPGS recommendations have been formally transmitted to Dr. Simon Liu with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). DFO Lewis expects a formal acknowledgment from Dr. Liu shortly.

Dr. Terrance Tiersch asked why are the recommendations with ARS when the Congress mandates that it be moved up to the Secretary? DFO Lewis explained that the Committee Management Office has been revamping their approval process and unfortunately the NGRAC's work got caught up in the confusion. DFO Lewis and Ms. Farley have a meeting with the Committee Management Office tomorrow and hopefully she will have something concrete written down about the transmittal process.

Dr. McFerson noted that he has been working with DFO Lewis and that a memorandum was drafted and submitted stating the displeasure of the committee's work not moving forward.

Once the Secretary has seen the Committee's four NGRAC reports DFO Lewis will contact the USDA's Congressional Relations and the four reports will be transmitted by the end of December.

Dr. McFerson does not see why the plan cannot be widely disseminated once it has been acknowledged by Dr. Liu. DFO Lewis went on to communicate how frustrated she is with this slow process as well.

VI. Continued discussion on proposed, upcoming face-to-face meeting

A doodle poll went out and it was identified that the dates of 4-11-22 and 4-12-22 worked best for most Council members. Dr. McFerson has been in contact with USDA personnel at Ft. Collins in Denver, CO and believes it would be a good place because of the conference rooms available and a visit can be scheduled to the Denver Botanic Gardens.

A motion was made to start the plans for a face-to-face meeting in Ft. Collins, Colorado in April 2022.

VII. Final Remarks and Adjourn



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Dr. McFerson asked if the December 21st meeting will work for the council members. It was agreed that the meeting will take place.

DFO Lewis cannot be at the December 21st meeting, and she is mandated to be in all Council meetings. But DFO Lewis suggested that Ms. Farley can act in her absence and that the meeting still take place. Dr. Stephen Kresovich suggested that the next meeting be focused on the upcoming face-to-face meeting in Ft. Collins.

The committee expressed that less meeting time needs to be spent on work transmission and the USDA process.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 21st.