

Greenhouse Committee Meeting minutes, April 21, 2015

Present: Alan Christensen, Lance Meinke, Anne Streich, Hector Santiago, Ed Cahoon, Keenan Amundsen, Matt Anderson, Scott Sattler, Amy Hilske. Absent: Stephen Wegulo

The minutes from the meeting on March 17, 2015 were approved.

Updates and Announcements:

Amy and Vincent have moved into the NIC greenhouse. Training on the Lemnatech continues and we expect to take full possession of the instrument on about June 1.

The two growth chambers for Beadle and the two for Plant Path have been ordered and should ship in August. Removal of the three old growth chambers in AGH has been completed. The concrete floor is going to be assessed and vendors will be working up proposals soon.

AGH greenhouses A & E are essentially done. Final installation and sump linings will be complete this month. Plant Path greenhouse B1 the construction on new floor and drains has begun. The benches from A & E will be refurbished and retrofitted to be used in PP B1.

The new Beadle assistant greenhouse manager has been hired.

There is an open house for faculty scheduled on May 18.

Old Business:

The Learning Environment Subcommittee expects to be able to continue gathering information and planning after the spring semester ends.

Additional Infrastructure needs and priorities: The current renovations and repairs are well underway and there are no urgent concerns. The next step will be to make 5 year and 10 year plans.

Proposed new rates: The new rates proposed by Amy Hilske and Accounting were discussed at length. Increases will be necessary to keep the revenue and expenses within 15% of each other. The rates for 2014-15 were based on very rough estimates of usage for the various tiers of greenhouses and growth chambers. There were very few accurate records available for making the estimates. With one year of usage data the projections should be more accurate for the future.

Increases were capped at 5%, consistent with our goals and approved resolution from September 2014.

Accounting may be shifting the service center to a calendar year basis next January, so we would have an opportunity to revisit the rates in December or leave them unchanged until December 2016.

There was discussion about the issue of faculty associated with private companies and whether they would pay internal or external rates.

There was also discussion about whether F&A return from grants was being used to support the greenhouses.

Finally the question was raised as to whether PIs who has submitted grant budgets before the new rate system was established in September 2014 could be grandfathered in to the rates that were in effect when the proposals were submitted. The most likely solution to this issue will be for unit heads to assist PIs in making up any differences, rather than for the Greenhouse Director to keep track of multiple different rates.

A motion was made by Amundsen to approve the rates for the coming year, and seconded by Meinke. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Amy noted that the Athletic Department had inquired into the possibility of using the Greenhouses to produce food for the training table. The committee explored possible concerns, and Amy will look into the legality and liability questions, and whether Health Department regulations permit such activity. Biosafety concerns

were also raised. Depending on those answers, she may bring the question back to the Greenhouse committee for further discussion.

Alan reported that he and Hector had met with Archie Clutter, ARD Dean, regarding committee structure. Dean Clutter invited us to propose bylaws for the committee. A draft by Hector was modified with input from Alan and Amy, and the committee's prior discussions of committee structure. This proposal will be considered by committee members, with edits and suggested changes being discussed over the next several weeks by email, followed by an email vote. Once the committee reaches a consensus the proposed bylaws will be forwarded to Dean Clutter for his consideration.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Alan C. Christensen, chair