

## Plant Growth Facilities Faculty Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – October 06, 2020

The meeting started at 3:07 PM

**Members Present:** Jinliang Yang, Ed Cahoon, Sabrina Russo, Justin McMechan, Stephen Wegulo

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Hector Santiago, Matt Anderson, Amy Hilske, Scott Sattler

**Approval of Minutes of April 17, 2020 Meeting** – Wegulo moved to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2020 meeting; Cahoon seconded. The minutes were approved without changes.

### Updates from Amy Hilske –

- Safety procedures have remained the same since the last meeting.
- Looking at ways to no longer use the ballast for lights.
- They have launched an online training video for the Worker Protection Standards (WPS). Paid employees should still do their first training in person.
- The construction near the greenhouses on East Campus is on the steam system and has made it so that those greenhouses are on temporary steam. There have been some delays and the expected finish date is not known at this time.
- Request to add rule to policy document: “If a user has been in the field, the user cannot enter the greenhouse complex the same day unless they have showered and changed clothes.” It is proposed to add this to Section 11 on user responsibilities.
  - Suggested by McMechan to add some signs to remind people at the entrances.
  - Suggested by Sattler to change the language from “complex” to something different for people who have offices in the greenhouse complex. Possibly “greenhouse bay/room.”
  - **VOTE:** Cahoon moves to add the policy with amended language, “If a user has been in the field, the user cannot enter the greenhouse bays/rooms the same day unless they have showered and changed clothes” to section 11. Seconded by McMechan. Passed unanimously.

### Updates from Hector Santiago –

- Thank you for following all the safety guidelines as that has helped us continue our research activities. There is some PPE available at NIC greenhouse at no cost.
- Travel remains restricted as follows:
  - Within the state, the traveler needs to use normal travel procedure and coordinate with the research center they are visiting to ensure appropriate distancing is followed.
  - Outside of the state, there is a double approval process.
  - International travel is prohibited.

### Agenda Items –

- In mid-November, the rates will need to be submitted for 2021.
  - Hilske presented the current budget. The revenue was not affected by Covid-19.
  - Hilske suggested that removing Tier 3 space and transforming it into Tiers 1 and 2, would streamline the budget.
  - The NIC budget is separate as it is only Phenotyping. The revenue from NIC is much lower than that of the others.

- Cahoon asked about capacity needs and the possibility of a new greenhouse.
  - Hilske responds that although there is a need for additional greenhouse space, this is probably not the appropriate time to request that kind of funding given the budget climate.
  - Cahoon asks if there is a reason it should be/not be a priority.
  - Wegulo spoke to Mike Boehm on this matter and this is not currently being considered.
  - Cahoon suggests putting together a proposal for new greenhouses to present to Mike Boehm this year.
  - The issue of the lights being a fire hazard was brought up by a few members as a reason to prioritize a new build. Hilske confirms that the lights that were causing the fires have been replaced.
  - Some documents have been created along the lines of a proposal. Ann Streich created one for the external review a few years ago. Schnable worked on one recently.
  - Russo asks if the committee wants to add this as a priority for the committee this year. Wegulo agrees that it should be pursued.
    - There is a question over who the proposal should be presented to. Possibly Mike Boehm, ORED, other kinds of fundraising from private industry?
    - Santiago explains that for NIC, it is not reliable to depend on industry partners for income. There have been many partnerships, but they are not steady enough to model another greenhouse build off of
  - Russo asks what is the best way to move forward on this issue.
    - Santiago answers that we could build onto the NIC greenhouses and explore that as an option
  - Russo asks about the cost of renovating vs. Building new
    - Santiago answers that there was an assessment done that revealed details on this.
    - Russo suggests that we review that assessment and come up with a strategy with the document Schnable has been working on.
    - Cahoon brings up that the rates are significantly higher at NIC than the other greenhouses, so adding onto that house is impractical.
    - Santiago brings up that Barry Shull can provide some idea of cost
  - Santiago suggests that the committee create a 2-pager on this topic for the Archie Clutter to review and possibly bring forward. He also brings up that there is a push in congress for funding for infrastructure which could influence this discussion.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Kaitlyn Smejdir will create a folder including the external review documents, the assessment, and the document James Schnable has been working on.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:07 PM.**