


WAAESD Agenda Item 9: WAAESD Spring Business Meeting Minutes
Presenter: Leslie Edgar
Action Requested: Approval

WAAESD Spring Business Meeting
March 23, 2022
10:30 AM – 5:00 PM
March 24, 2022
8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Atlantis Hotel, Reno Nevada

Minutes

Attendance: Scot Hulbert, Chris Pritsos, Gene Kelly, Sreekala Bajwa, Chris Davies, Mark McGuire, Adrian Ares, Leslie Edgar, David Gang, Walter Bowen, Shawn Donkin, Jodie Anderson, Eric Webster, Bret Hess, Jennifer Tippetts (recording secretary).

1. **Welcome** – Chris welcomed members and each member introduced themselves.
 - a. **Approval of Meeting Agenda**- Shawn asked for a few minutes for a presentation.
 - b. *Sreekala moved to approve the agenda with the amendment; Leslie seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.*
2. Shawn Donkin presented on the **Western Regional Aquaculture Center**- There are five regional centers across the US. The five centers receive a total of five million dollars for aquaculture research. These funds are split equally and are administered by each center without overhead or administrative charges. The regional centers recently had a meeting to address what changes could be made. The group determined that an ask should be made for more funding. The regions are being asked to work with their legislators to help support this ask. The BAA traditionally takes the stance that we don't advocate for the smaller lines, they focus on the topline that represent 70-75% of NIFA's budget. The concern is that the message on the Hill could be confused if the regional centers were added to the mix. However, this could be worth adding to the Farm Bill. Bret recommended BLC could take the concept of increasing authorized funding to CLP.
3. **Regional Agricultural Innovation Hubs Concept**- Sreekala clarified no brick and mortar as part of the request, and there would be a board of directors to see this project through. Ideally a public/private partnership would be created because if you partner with the University, then they own the intellectual property. The current proposal is a pay to play format to sit on the board, providing faculty or industry members. The board would have the first opportunity to buy licensing rights.
 - a. Scot recommended if there are several universities involved that they should specifically be ag based.
 - b. Shawn noted Agrinovus came along as a connector organization. The concept is that to retain and promote talent in the state. Shawn recommended emulating Agrinovus.
 - c. Chris D. asked what the staffing structure would look like? Sreekala shared that the biggest hurdle in Montana alone was that Universities are positioned to take cuts and it would be hard to find staffing.
4. **Approval of 2021 Summer Meeting Minutes**-
 - a. *Leslie moved to approve the minutes as presented; Gene seconded the motion. Motion approved with an abstention from Jodie.*

5. **Chair's Interim Actions & Executive Committee Report-** Chris reviewed the interim actions and executive committee report (page 8).
 - a. Sreekala noted that the relationship with ARS gets tested when transitions happen with staff. The idea was to express the challenges and then generate a standardized approach that can be followed for the future. The relationships are led by research leaders.
 - b. Shawn moved *to approve as a seconded motion; Motion approved unanimously.*
6. **Blue Ribbon Panel Survey-** WAAESD nominated several members to be on the panel. Three members are from the West on a ten-person panel. There is confusion about the exact role of the panel.
 - a. The panel was designed to study collaboration and coordination among LGUs and how to work together more effectively. An initial report will be available for review to ensure they have covered all topics. There will be an opportunity to provide feedback at some point. We can choose to respond as a region or organization.
 - b. The question from Wendy would like input on is "how do we incentivize collaboration?" Or great examples of good coordination between LGUs. How do we incentivize this work?
 - c. Members brainstormed ideas that are currently being done, future ideas and ideas on incentivizing. The ideas will be combined and presented by the Executive Committee in response to the panel's request for input.
7. **Excellence in Leadership Award Nomination-** Each region selects a nomination to be presented at the APLU meeting. The Executive Committee forwarded a motion to select Millan Shipka to receive this award. Chris called for additional nominations or discussion.
 - a. *Mark moved to close nominations; Jodie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*
8. **MRC Update-** The importance of MRC's primary functions was discussed. Each region now plays a more critical role because they make the final decision on which projects are approved as five-year projects. Once the regional ED makes a recommendation at the advice of the MRC then the decision is final. There was a glitch in the system that deleted the Western region's administrative contact, and automatic emails were not sent out. Consequently, MRC did not have an adequate number of peer reviews to evaluate multistate research projects. MRC only acted on the WERA's at their spring meeting. The second portion of the meeting will be in April. Eric Webster has volunteered to fill the upcoming position on MRC.
9. **Crosswalk Request-** The Science and Technology committee has asked all regions to perform a crosswalk of NIFA priorities and ESCOP Grand Challenges with all multi-state projects. We are looking at gaps and opportunities.
10. **Writing Impact Statements Workshop and Multistate Impacts Portion of NRSP1 with Sara Delheimer**


Delheimer-Impact
Writing Workshop Ha

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/717228greerytedg1ujhj/Delheimer-PPT-WAAESD-Spring-Meeting-2022.pptx?dl=0&rlkey=yh7r63kfaucqp6t5t8d19decl>
11. **NRSP1 Proposal-** Bret added to Sara's presentation. NRSP1 is up for renewal and classified as a core proposal.

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/7j2wqsjamqawljzbkdk9b/NRSP1-Renewal-Presentation_20220319.pptx?dl=0&rlkey=nlj1owzp8w1228oy6di7xzfuy

WAAESD was pleased to learn about the decrease in OTT funds requested to start the new 5-year project cycle.

12. **Conversation with ESS/ESCOP Chair-** Chris Pritos presented the following power point presentation and shared a letter he wrote and sent to BAC-BAA.

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/43errvt3r0bl1bdj6u5no/Pritos-Spring-Meeting-Slides_CP-004.pptx?dl=0&rlkey=l671q3ezgzsgxs3lpigg928qz



BAC-BAA Letter
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There was a lot of discussion among WAAESD members about the presentation. Members were very appreciative of Chair Pritos for representing their interests.

13. **John Dryer- ARS** John reviewed the changing leadership in the different states.

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/74kq91vqinpw1e1fa2kpo/Dryer-WAAESD-ARS-Dyer-03.24.22.pptx?dl=0&rlkey=kf8a54aqhem0b0mp89kjc1qh>

14. **WAAESD Goals-** Scot reviewed the proposed WAAESD Goals and emphasized Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as it relates to engaging with 1994 and tribal communities.

15. Jodie questioned how we can help each other as we begin to have high turnover in the Dean position. Is there a way we can help each other to find and hire administrators with experience that also helps diversify the staff? The group discussed the challenge. It starts with the graduate students and trying to keep them. Shawn shared that there are some federal dollars that are available for diversity. The group also discussed having a civil rights review. Adrian also noted the additional challenge of the language barrier.

16. **Treasurer's Report-** Gene shared that information included in the Treasurer's report was pulled from QuickBooks starting with the reconciled balance at the end of December. The Accounts Receivable Report and Profit and Loss Report through December were also included because these reports will be utilized by the tax accountant when she prepares the 990EZ for the 501(c)4 non-profit.

- a. We ended the calendar year with a healthy net balance of \$254,551.68.
- b. The second page of the Treasurer's report shows that all members have paid their assessments. The negative \$1,183.88 for Alaska reflects a double payment for their academic programs assessment. A credit will be applied to this year's assessment. Utah and Hawaii show on the AR report because a penny overpayment due to rounding errors on the invoice. Those two lines have been corrected with a journal entry.
- c. The Profit and Loss Statement on pages 4 and 5 categorize income and expenses for the calendar year. Starting on page 4, the Association's total income for the year was \$265,041.20, thanks to all assessments being paid, income from the ESS event and the \$101,506.17 in carry over of funds that were transferred from CSU.
- d. Moving to total expenses of \$102,889.29 on page 5 of the report, the WAAESD non-profit will report a net income of \$162,151.91 in 2021.
- e. The reconciled balance through the end of February is \$234,945.47, which accounts for expenditures against the checking account's net balance of \$254,551.68 at the end of

the year. We project to spend roughly \$40,000 through the end of June, which will leave us with a balance of about \$194,000 at the end of the fiscal year.

f. Motion passed to approve the treasurer report. Passed unanimously

17. **2023 Proposed Budget.** The FY23 proposed budget is similar to previous years, only simplified for the operational side of WAAESD (or the non-profit arm). We were very close with our projection at this time last year; actual carryover was \$1,238 more than projected carryover. Thus, we feel confident in projecting a carryover of \$33,307 at the end of FY22. We expect carryover again this year because travel has been limited.

- a. For the proposed budget, refer to the far-right column. The admin line includes Jenn's contract and the fees we pay for UNR to host. The web manager and accountant are based on FY22 payments, whereas the facilitation line is reduced since we anticipate the Western Water Network will not require as much effort as it did to get off the ground.
- b. The list of operating expenses reflects the reality of returning to face-to-face meetings and the need to purchase a computer for WAAESD. Travel is expected to happen again over the course of FY23. In this case, Jenn will need to accompany Bret to record notes for various meetings. The roundtrip for Milan to receive the Excellence in Leadership Award could be pricy.
- c. Overall, the proposed budget of \$191,812 is greater than last year reflecting the return to face-to-face meetings and the contract for administrative services. However, we propose to assess members the same amount as last year or \$93,445 as highlighted in yellow below the table. Doing so will leave a deficit of \$98,367 if we only account for expenses versus income from assessments, but if we subtract the \$33,307 expected carryover then the deficit would be \$65,060. Recall that we applied last year's carryover to the budget, which allowed us to reduce assessments by 34%.
- d. As reported earlier in the Treasurer's Report, we have a balance of \$234,945 in the checking account. We project spending \$40,973 to finish the current fiscal year, leaving a projected balance of \$193,972 at the end of June. The \$60,138 deficit from before can easily be covered by the projected balance, and if all projections are correct, we would end FY23 with a checking account balance of \$95,605. We would be sitting on an estimated balance of \$6,000 less than what we had when we restructured the organization and created the non-profit arm.
- e. Thanks to Chris Pritsos for asking the question about the projected FY23 balance. It made us double check the numbers, and we located an error in the spreadsheet causing the difference between projected ending balance of \$95,605 instead of \$133,834 that was in the proposed budget presented last week.

f. Motion passed unanimously to approve proposed budget for next year.

18. **Budget & Legislative Committee-** Shawn Donkin reported that this is an ESCOP committee that works on providing a budget for the federal government. The next chair will be Anton Beckerman from the NE region. There are 11 members and 11 Liaisons. BLC worked hard on the request for the build back better number and request. BLC has been discussing the idea of Moonshot for Agriculture. The NSF's cure for cancer is a great example, and we have been trying to identify that key issue in terms that everyone can understand. Right now, the key idea that society can identify with is carbon neutral agriculture or climate-smart agriculture.

- a. Shawn would like a better way to gain input from regional directors and might be sending more emails asking for feedback.
19. **Diversity Catalyst Committee-** The committee meets every month, and anyone is welcome. DCC has posted a call to action to determine what different institutions are doing for DEI. Bret reviewed the challenge areas (page 39). Bret also reviewed the call for nominations of National Experiment Station Section Diversity and Inclusion Award.
- a. Jodie shared that they have an evaluator and civil rights representative. Training was offered that generated awareness. Alaska secured a grant for the experiment station to identify underserved areas. As a land-grant Alaska is struggling with how to write and inclusive land acknowledgement with 232 recognized tribes and multiple cultural groups. Alaska has a faculty training for mentoring first generation students. Jodie also held a virtual conference to support women in ag conference, with over 200 participants for 8 hours on a Saturday. All administration is attending a 6-month DEI training.
 - b. Scot shared an example at Washington State where competition was generated among department heads. Scot also noted that diversity statements at the bottom of a job description can be very inspirational.
 - c. Eric noted the difficulty of competing with industry because salary, retirement, and additional benefits are so much less at universities. Eric agrees that it is important to work with graduate students.
 - d. Shawn shared that they were able to change diversity in about 4-5 years at Purdue, with targeted recruitment and community support. Take a look at Purdue's website for agriculture research and grad research assistance program to view the model that was built.
 - e. Mark might nominate the President at Idaho. The President has continued to fight hard for the budget and DEI. Mark noted starting relationship with tribal communities and wondered if the 1890's might be a good starting point to recruit graduate students? Chris Pritsos is already scheduled to attend the 1890s Research Symposium, where there will be an opportunity for recruitment. Chris Davies noted they are trying to generate a relationship with a university with Fort Valley State University to build this relationship.
 - f. Jodie inquired about the opportunity of 2+2 programs where they can start at a smaller or local college such as a 1994 and then transfer to a larger campus for the last two years. Could this be a model for all the land-grants and tribal colleges?
 - g. The group discussed the opportunity to recruit for a graduate program where they receive a scholarship and once students are on campus further recruitment could happen.
20. **Science and Technology-** Chris discussed the template that could be used to share your institution's story on a local level. The other project that has been a recent focus is the interactive map and the work of updating stations.
- a. ESCOP has also approved a contract with a communications team that will be working on messaging. Even though ARS gets a large portion of money, the LGU's experiment stations conduct 73.4% of all publicly funded research.
21. **National Plant Germplasm-** Scot shared that there are over 600,000 plant species that are maintained. Many of the employees are both University and ARS. The largest station is in

- Pullman, WA. COVID only slightly affected the Pullman station. There was significant staff turnover, and there is concern on the training and knowledge transfer with the aging staff.
22. **Communications and Marketing-** Bret shared a message sent by APLU on February 15th. All voting members receive 30 days' notice before ballots were sent out. The regional offices just received clarification and an updated spreadsheet. A follow-up communication will be coming soon.
23. **National Impact Database-** This is what our national partners are using to develop stories. The group reviewed the number of entries in NIDB as of March 8th. In 2021, there were 380 public statements. DCC asked if DEI projects could be tagged. The management committee outlined 3 different areas that should be addressed to improve the database. If CMC is made a standing committee of BAA, then NIDB will become a subcommittee of CMC. One of the solutions to maintain integrity of peer review was to create an editorial board and offer a small monetary incentive for members to sit on the board.
24. **Farm Bill Priorities-** Shawn Donkin shared that the WAAESD Budget and Legislative committee members will meet with Western Governors' Association (WGA) on April 6th. At a local level we work with government relations, at a state level we work with our Senators and Representatives and at a national level we will work with BAC to focus our work into one budgetary ask. However, this would be more focused towards the Western region needs. The group reviewed the summary of ESS recommendations for the 2023 Farm Bill (pages 67-68). Shawn asked the group what key issues we should be focused on in our conversations with WGA.
- a. **General:** Add LGUs as recognized research collaborates where other entities are acknowledged or added in other Titles of the Farm Bill and with pertinent research thrusts.
 - i. Experiment stations funded in the HATCH Act.
 - ii. The group recognized the branding issue of people recognize Extension but not experiment stations. Gene noted that CSU goes by Ag "Observatory". To be recognized on a broader level.
 - iii. Experiment stations need a more defined identity. The 1862 directors are called experiment station directors and the 1890s directors are called research directors. The Farm Bill needs to be more explicit in defining who is authorized to spend research capacity funds. We have sought council from APLU and realized that the language is not as tight as you would think.
 - b. **Infrastructure:** Engage with any opportunity to do singularly or as a partner on new construction and deferred maintenance of agricultural research infrastructure at LGU's and Non-LGU's with agricultural programs.
 - c. **Matching:** Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI)- Remove or modify with waiver authority for Secretary. Continue funding at current level. The group would like to have this defined further to be more descriptive of the intent.
 - d. **Matching:** Remove or modify the current 100% match requirement with the New Beginning for Tribal Students (NBTS) grant.
25. **Climate Change-** There has been discussion among NIFA and APLU. The BAA is interested in organizing a large climate summit. When Carrie Castille was the NIFA director, she made money available and delivered a charge to establish a Climate Summit. The research ED's have asked to be included to avoid research being washed out. ESCOP will be asking for nominations to serve

on climate summit committee to help provide direction to our representative. Our representative is Gene Kelly. The broad plan is to have a face-to-face meeting, but with several virtual meetings before hand. There is a proposal to host in Kansas City, but there was push back that attendance would be low in Kansas City. An objective is to have separation from APLU and USDA. They would want to give a university the money to facilitate the conference. Gene has sent the concept to CSU for review. The goal is to host the conference this summer. Gene is going to continue to send updates as the meeting progresses. Bret asked members to begin thinking about members in climate science that could be involved.

DRAFT