

CITRUS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.

Minutes of the

Research Management Committee Meeting

Friday, August 23, 2019

A meeting of the Research Management Committee of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Friday, August 23, 2019 at the Hampton Inn and Suites Conference Room in Lake Wales, FL. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. The meeting was called to order at 9:01am by Chairman David Howard. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Committee members participating were Bobby Barben, Tim Dooley, Steve Farr, David Howard, Sean McCoy, Juan Carlos Motamayor, Tom Obreza, Daniel Scott, Joby Sherrod, Wayne Simmons, Jim Snively, Buddy Strickland, Forest Taylor.

Also participating were Mike Aerts, Ute Albretch (telephone), Rob Atchley, Brandy Brown, Rick Dantzler, Steve Futch, Fred Gmitter (telephone), Jim Graham, Matt Mattia, Peter McClure, Brandon Page, Michael Rogers (telephone), Sarah Strauss (telephone), Jim Syvertsen, John Updike, Jr., and Rosa Walsh (telephone).

Mr. Snively made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2019 RMC meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Simmons, and with no further discussion it passed unanimously.

Mr. Howard opened the meeting with comments on thoughts and ideas that have been filtering through the citrus industry. In the past we have fit our project recommendations within the framework of our available budget. Is it time to select projects strictly on merit/potential at any level below our allotted budget? (Shifting balance of funds to Field Trial effort) By not spending on projects, do we lose the interest of good scientists who will not have funding for potential breakthroughs? Will research dry up or are other avenues available for funding? (USDA MAC, NIFA, SCRI, CRB) By not spending on projects, do we lose credibility as a funding organization with the State Legislature with regards to future funding? (Especially if the field trial effort is viewed as a grower replanting incentive rather than true science.) Are we at a crossroads for State funded research? How long can we expect funding for an industry that is not what it was? (Public perception, 70 million boxes, Mexican imports, lower consumption surpassing lower production.) Is the industry willing to bet on Field Trials being the ultimate solution to greening if this becomes our only research avenue? Does grower Box Tax money dedicated to all citrus research get diverted to Field Trials as well? (Black Spot, CVC, Canker etc.)

Mr. Howard also discussed alternative funding options: incorporate field trial projects and current portfolio conclusions: 1) Kaolin (Vincent), 2) Psyllid Spray Rotation (Stelinski), 3) Minor Element Soil Treatments (Grosser), 4) Tree Netting (Alferez), 5) Foliage Phosphate/Phytophthora Control, 6) Aldicarb (Pending).

Mr. Dantzler gave an update on field trials as it relates to CRDF. He reported that we received \$8 million in legislative appropriations this year and were directed to spend \$2 million of that appropriation on large-scale field trials. From that directive, we put together an RFP for the large-

scale field trials, and proposals are due by the end of August. However, we are not limited to spending only \$2 million on large-scale trials, and we have the option to spend more on large-scale field trials if that is the decision of the CRDF board.

Mr. Dantzler reported that the CRDF budget for this fiscal year allows RMC to spend \$1 million for new projects that are being reviewed today. In years past, there was no limit on a dollar amount to fund projects if the project was something the committee felt could be beneficial to the citrus industry. Mr. Dantzler suggested that we possibly reevaluate our thinking on how we fund research. It was suggested that to keep the PIs from getting discouraged about not getting funded, that the committee should provide the PIs with feedback on how they can improve their proposals to get funded in the future.

Mr. Dantzler discussed the policies for the budgets in proposals regarding salaries, tuition and travel expenses. He reported that this year the committee was provided staff analyses to review with the proposals, which gave a summary and breakdown of costs included in the proposals. Mr. Dantzler discussed the large costs related to travel, tuition and, in some proposals, salaries. After speaking with some of the researchers, he believes that some of those costs, but not all, could be negotiated to lower the total amount of the proposals if said proposals are recommended for funding. He discussed a rough draft policy related to the large cost issues. Regarding travel, there would be no international travel allowed unless there was a unique circumstance, and for domestic travel, the researcher must have data to present before travel cost could incur. Regarding tuition, the cost of tuition has gone up, and tuition would not be negotiable. Regarding salaries, some researchers are entirely grant funded and for that situation it would be appropriate to allow salary for those researchers. However, for salaried researchers, we would not be paying additional salary funds for those researchers.

Mr. Dantzler gave a brief report on the proposal review and recommendations from the SAB members. Mr. Howard reviewed the scoring process and there were lengthy discussions as the committee reviewed each proposal. The committee reviewed and discussed the following projects:

- #19-020 Ritenour – Mr. Simmons made a motion to defer funding for project 19-020 Ritenour, post MAC meeting, for possible reconsideration at the next RMC meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barben, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-026 Ampatzidis – Mr. Strickland made a motion to not recommend funding for 19-026 Ampatzidis. The motion was seconded by Mr. Simmons and it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza. Mr. Simmons made a motion to recommend project 19-026 Ampatzidis to the next round of MAC funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barben, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-014 Killiny, #19-011 Kadyampakeni and #19-022 Vashisth – Mr. Simmons made a motion for CRDF staff to direct Drs. Killiny, Kadyampakeni and Vashisth to coordinate their research efforts into a consolidated proposal, which should include both grapefruit. The motion was seconded by Mr. Strickland. There was further discussion to enlist Dr. Kelly Morgan’s expertise and come together as a group and design a field trial to address

micronutrients and to bring it back for consideration. After no further discussion, the motion was restated, and it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.

Mr. Howard requested that the committee review and discuss the projects that the SAB scored 2.58 and lower. There was discussion on the quality of the proposals as written, and concern that the committee might miss out on funding a proposal that has potential due to how it was written. The question was asked, how do we help the researchers write a better proposal for future RFPs? Mr. Dantzler reported that the turndown letters would be more complete, would go into detail as to why and where we felt the proposal came up short, and give the researcher feedback on how to improve their proposal for future RFPs. Mr. Simmons made a motion to not recommend for funding the following projects:

- #19-005 Chaparro
- #19-006 Duan
- #19-007 Dutt
- #19-008 Elhanafi
- #19-013 Killiny
- #19-018 Mankin
- #19-019 Mou
- #19-021 Vashisth
- #19-025 Wright
- #19-028 Zou

The motion was seconded by Mr. Snively, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.

Mr. Howard requested that the committee review and discuss the proposals that the SAB scored 3.0 and higher, starting with the lowest ranked score by the RMC. The committee reviewed and discussed the following projects:

- #19-003 Alferez – Mr. Simmons made a motion to not recommend funding for 19-003 Alferez. The motion was seconded by Mr. Strickland. There was discussion on providing feedback to the PI to have him clearly define the proposal’s objectives in future RFPs. With no further comments, the motion passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-016 Duncan – Mr. Farr made a motion to recommend funding for project 19-016 Duncan with an amendment to the proposal to bring the dagger nematode into the research trial in relation with Phytophthora. The motion was seconded by Mr. Strickland, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-017 Levy – Mr. McCoy made a motion to not recommend funding for project 19-017 Levy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Scott, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-015 Killiny – Mr. Sherrod made a motion to recommend project 19-015 Killiny for funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. McCoy, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.

- #19-027 Zchori-Fein – Mr. Simmons made a motion to recommend project 19-027 for funding with direction from the staff to request proof of concept and for year 1 to not exceed \$50,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-009 Johnson – Mr. Taylor made a motion to recommend project 19-009 Johnson for funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Strickland, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-024 Wang – Mr. Barben made a motion to recommend project 19-024 Wang for funding with a stipulation that the processors are involved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dooley. There were discussions on reducing the budget related to salary and travel, which Mr. Dantzler reported he would discuss with the researcher. After no further discussion, the motion passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-010 Johnson – Mr. Snively made a motion to recommend project 19-010 Johnson for funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-012 Kanissery – Mr. Barben made a motion to not recommend funding for project 19-012 Kanissery. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod, and with no further discussion it passed with one opposing vote from Mr. Snively and one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-004 Bonning – Mr. Howard made a motion to not recommend funding for project 19-004 for funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Farr, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-002 Stelinski – Mr. Simmons made a motion to recommend project 19-002 Stelinski for funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barben, and with no further discussion it passed with one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.
- #19-023 Vincent – Mr. Simmons made a motion to recommend project 19-023 Vincent for funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod and it passed with opposing votes from Mr. Farr, Mr. Howard, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Strickland, and one abstaining vote from Dr. Obreza.

At the conclusion of the review it was noted that the RMC will recommend the 8 approved projects for a total of \$645,811 for year 1 funding. This does not include the 3 nutrient proposals that will be readdressed at the next RMC meeting.

Mr. Dantzler opened discussions on projects vs. programs and reported that the CRDF Board believes that we should be funding projects and not programs. Programmatic costs should be handled by UF and CRDF should fund projects that come from those programs. One of the things that has been discussed is for CRDF to give an annual lump sum of a negotiated amount to UF for “programmatic expenses.” Mr. Dantzler discussed the sugarcane model and reported that we are learning more about how it works and if it could help improve the interface between plant breeders and the industry.

Dr. Syvertsen gave a report on the June 30, 2019 Project Manager’s quarterly report. Mr. Howard encouraged everyone to review these quarterly reports because they are very useful. Dr. Syvertsen added that the committee can contact the Project Managers or the PIs for clarification on the reports.

Mr. Strickland made a motion to accept the June 30, 2019 Quarterly Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Snively, and with no further discussion it passed unanimously.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.

Minutes submitted by Brandy Brown.