

CITRUS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

April 28, 2020

A teleconference meeting of the Board of Directors of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday April 28, 2020. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. Board President David Howard called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Board members present were Rob Atchley, Larry Black, Rob Gilbert, Ned Hancock, Aaron Himrod, Greg Hodges, David Howard, Ron Mahan, Jeanna Mastrodicasa, Bob Newsome, Pat Ouimet, Josh Snively, and John Updike. Also participating were Rick Dantzler, Steve Futch, Jim Graham, Audrey Nowicki, Brandon Page, Jim Syvertsen, and Deidra Whatley.

Also present were Mike Aerts, Ute Albrecht, Kim Bowman, Kristen Carlson, Bill Castle, Peter Chaires, Vasililous Fotopolous, Fred Gmitter, Jude Grosser, Laurie Hurner, Mike Irey, Matt Joyner, Yianni Lagos, Tom Mitchell, Juan Carlos Motamayor, Ernie Neff, Chris Oswalt, Ajia Paolillo, Michael Rogers, Robert Shatters, Ed Stover, Callie Walker, and Rosa Walsh. Other callers were present on the line who did not identify themselves.

Mr. Howard requested comments or approval of the March 24, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Mahan moved to approve which was seconded by Dr. Hodges. With no further discussion, it passed unanimously.

Executive Committee: Chair David Howard stated that the Executive Committee had not met.

Finance and Audit Committee: Chair Ron Mahan reviewed the fiscal year-to-date Financial Statements for the period ending March 31, 2020. Having no questions, Mr. Mahan made a motion to accept the March Financial statements as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Black and, without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Governance Committee: Chairman Larry Black reported that the Governance Committee had not met.

Research Management Committee: Chair Pat Ouimet reported that the RMC met on April 22, 2020. Dr. Ouimet and Mr. Dantzler discussed the 2020 Nutrition RFP, noting it went live on April 15, 2020. The launch date was delayed to April 15 because April 1, 2020 was the beginning of the NIFA RFP and researchers were going to be busy preparing those grant applications.

Mr. Dantzler discussed the status of continuation funding for Dr. Dutt's Project 18-007, Investigating the Role of Transgenic Rootstock-Mediated Protection of Non-Transgenic Scion. He gave a brief history of the project, as well as where the project and funding currently stood, noting that UF/IFAS CREC had been funding the project until CRDF determines if it will continue funding. The Committee noted the significant potential of the project and recommended that it be funded until September 30, 2020 based on a pro-rated formula for the second-year budget as presented. This would allow Dr. Dutt to further prove his concept through either a reduction in titer or through the other gene expressions in the scion. Dr. Ouimet moved to recommend the board support continuation funding of Project 18-007, pro-rating the budget through September 30, 2020. Mr. Mahan seconded the motion. After brief discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler thanked Brandon Page for his efforts in arranging for Mr. Henry Yonce to collect valuable field trial data on the Valencia harvest for the Lykes trial, as well as Lisa Jensen and Marlon Clements with FDACS for opening the lab in Bartow to test the quality of the fruit, as well as UF-IFAS for agreeing to pay for these jobs.

Commercial Product Delivery Committee: Chairman John Updike stated that the Committee had not met and had nothing to report. Mr. Dantzler informed the Board that CRDF received an off-cycle proposal from Soilcea to test Dr. Nian Wang's five target genes that have been identified as the most promising in combating HLB. Soilcea has acquired the rights to these genes and requested funding to assist in testing them. Three members of Scientific Advisory Board provided their review of the proposal and met with Staff on April 14, 2020 to discuss their responses, which will be shared with and addressed by the committee at its meeting in May.

COO Report: Mr. Dantzler reported that the co-funding documents are in place and the Bayer agreement has been executed. Having done so, Phase II of the project has been funded from July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. CRDF, Bayer and CRB, are in the process of preparing a preproposal for a NIFA CAPS grant to fund the project for the next three years.

Mr. Dantzler gave an update on the MAC application status, noting that four proposals from the 2019 RFP that were not funded by CRDF were sent to Mr. Sparks to be considered for MAC funding. Two other proposals were also included for consideration, one on gibberellic acid and the other on mechanical harvesting. Mr. Dantzler also compiled a list of potential members for the NIFA relevancy review panel for Mr. Sparks to consider sending to WDC as recommendations.

Mr. Dantzler gave the Board a brief overview of the process to handle requests for Letters of Support from CRDF.

Mr. Dantzler reported that, in rebuttal to criticism CRDF had received in a South Florida newspaper guest column, he had sent in a letter to the editor. However, the criticism had surfaced again. The criticism itself stemmed from a company wanting CRDF to test its product. The company had submitted a pre-proposal pursuant to the 2019 RFP which was not selected for funding. Mr. Dantzler stated that he would devote his *Citrus Industry* column addressing how CRDF deals with these types of requests and would also like the Board's feedback.

Mr. Howard asked if CRDF should adopt a process of handling off-cycle requests that the committees and Board oversee. Dr. Rogers also suggested revising the wording on the website and including a link to consultants to help those seeking assistance. gather preliminary data.

Presentations: Mr. Howard and Mr. Dantzler each explained that this informational session has been an outgrowth of the January Board retreat where plant improvement was pegged as a primary focus along with nutrition. Mr. Dantzler gave a brief background of the Plant Improvement Committee, its recommendation of creating a Standing Committee on Plant Improvement, and his recent conversations with key members in the industry. Based on these conversations, he had concluded that the organizational meeting of the Standing Committee should be delayed until after the board heard these presentations.

Mr. Irely of Southern Gardens summarized the "Florida Sugarcane Breeding Program," providing a history of the program. He explained how growers are fully involved in advising the breeders and

funding the program. He went on to explain the sugarcane breeding program's focus is more program-based than projects, allowing a higher return on investments. Since the program funding is based on grower assessments, the breeding program's success results in growers' increased revenues. Lastly, he compared how the Sugarcane Breeding Program could be replicated and successful in the citrus industry.

Ms. Carlson and Dr. Motamayor gave a presentation on the CRAFT Foundation's preproposal being prepared for submission to NIFA for funding. They discussed the goals CRAFT and CHAMP desired to accomplish if they received the grant and requested a letter of support from the CRDF Board of Directors to submit with their pre-application to NIFA.

Mr. Chaires, New Varieties Development and Management Corporation, presented on that corporation's engagement with Plant Improvement, giving a brief history of the NVDMC. Mr. Chaires discussed how the NVDMC, IFAS and FFSP co-developed a Fast Track model as a means of making fresh market selections available for trial/production very early in the process, benefitting growers down the line. One conclusion from the Fast Track model is that scientifically designed trials must be run concurrently if data is to benefit growers later and substantiate planting decisions.

Dr. Kim Bowman gave a presentation on the USDA-ARS field trial locations and evaluation process. He discussed the three-phase process of plant evaluation. Phase One consists of field trials with new rootstocks; Phase Two adds additional trials with winners from Phase One; and during Phase Three there are evaluations of two or three active USDA rootstocks.

Dr. Fred Gmitter presented on the CREC Rootstock Field Trial Activities. He presented a list of the rootstock trials that he, Dr. Jude Grosser and Dr. Bill Castle collaborated on, and highlighted one in particular and its success against greening. He went on to discuss various grower partnerships for MAC Rootstock trials and MAC Scion trials. Dr. Gmitter concluded the presentation with his perspectives on the age-old questions of "What should I plant?" and "Do we need more trials?"

The final presentation was given by Mr. Brandon Page of CRDF, opining that new rootstock trials focusing on processed fruit varieties and large-scale testing are needed to narrow down promising selections. He discussed the plant material selection process and how the trials could be designed, what would be evaluated in the rootstock trials, and who would be collecting the data from the trials.

Following the presentations, Mr. Howard noted this model is a concept and open for discussion. Mr. Black spoke in favor, in part, of Mr. Page's presentation of the Phase Three type trial noting that, while twenty selections may be too many and CRDF may not need to be the main host for this particular trial, the industry does need something where each breeding program nominates a few of their top rootstocks to be tested in multiple locations around the state for growers to observe and evaluate. Mr. Black would like to see the project fully developed, and if that takes CRDF jumpstarting the process by having the trees propagated and ultimately turning the project over to the newly formed CHAMP entity, he would like to see CRDF move forward in that direction. There was additional discussion regarding funding for the trials. Mr. Howard requested that additional details be worked out to share at the next Board meeting before a decision is made to be pursue further.

Partnerships: Matt Joyner spoke on behalf of Florida Citrus Mutual and reported that the FY 2020-2021 budget has not been sent to the Governor for approval. He noted the uncertainty created with all

budget considerations because of the impact of COVID-19. He said there is talk of a special session late next month.

Dr. Michael Rogers reported that the researchers at CREC remain busy despite the Center being closed to regular operations. He has been working closely with Dr. Gilbert and Dr. Norton and has made a series of requests for approval for researchers to be in the field for the collection of critical data, and to carry on with research in the labs in order to not lose momentum that could cost years of research. Other faculty remain busy working with data from their projects and preparing grant proposals. Discussions continue with the UF Administration as to how to safely phase back in once the restrictions are lifted. Dr. Rogers also mentioned that the new Nutrition document can be found online on EDIS and printed versions will also be available soon.

Extension Agent Report: Laurie Hurner spoke on behalf of the Extension Agents. While the Agents are not able to spend time in the fields meeting with growers face to face, they have come up with new ways of communicating including video calls with growers to assist with their questions. Ms. Hurner reported that the soil project is continuing with weekly virtual meetings being to discuss results of the samples tested. Extension Agents have also been discussing the topics for webinars and/or online courses for growers and others to access. The Department of Agriculture and UF Pesticide Information Office ruled that it is not possible to continue the Restricted Pesticide Licensing test as they are handled in person. Currently, an online test is being developed, with an independent online proctor, and it is anticipated to be announced soon.

New Business/Public Comments: Mr. Howard reported that FCM's Annual Grower Conference in Bonita Springs, Florida scheduled for June 17-20, 2020, has been canceled.

Future CRDF Meetings: Details and location of the next board meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2020, will be announced later.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Minutes submitted by John Updike, Secretary.