



## **Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 25, 2022**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center, Ben Hill Griffin Hall, Room 103, Lake Alfred. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. President Rob Atchley called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Board members present were Rob Atchley, Chris Gunter, George Hamner, Greg Hodges, David Howard, Ron Mahan, Jeanna Mastrodicasa, Morgan McKenna, and Matthew Story. Also participating were Rick Dantzler, Bill Dawson, Steve Futch, Jim Graham, Audrey Nowicki, Brandon Page, and Deidra Whatley. Other participants were Leigh A., Ute Albrecht, Gio Ijpkemeule, Brad Moggs, Michael Rogers, Shannon Shepp, Mike Sparks, Josh Steinbaum, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Johnson, and Rosa Walsh.

The meeting was opened with welcoming the new board members for 2022. UF appointed Dr. Chris Gunter, UF/IFAS Chair of Horticulture, to replace Dr. Rob Gilbert. In addition, the Florida Citrus Commission appointed George Hamner, President of Indian River Exchange Packers, and Deeley Hunt, Vice President of Hunt Bros., Inc. Dr. Gunter and Mr. Hamner, both present, introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds.

Mr. Atchley entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the last Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Mahan moved to approve the minutes from the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Story seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler invited Mr. Tom Johnson, TJ Biotech, to make give a presentation on his company's OTC injection device and the data collection from use of the device. Several regulatory questions were asked of Mr. Johnson and his team.

Next, Dr. Ute Albrecht presented results of her current trunk injection project and responded to questions raised regarding data collected on fruit drop and root data.

**Executive Committee:** Mr. Atchley reported the Executive Committee had not met.

**Finance and Audit Committee:** Mr. Mahan reported that the Finance and Audit Committee had met on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Mahan reviewed the December 2021 Financial Summary and importance of the Box Tax funding generated from the upcoming Grower Referendum in continuing research for citrus diseases. Mr. Mahan moved to approve the December 2021 financials as presented. Ms. McKenna seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Mahan reported that the F&A Committee discussed upcoming contract renewals which would require RFPs. It was the Committee's recommendation for Staff to discuss with Bunting, Tripp, and

Ingley, LLP, as well as Frankel Media Group, the continuation of their current contracts at the same rate for an additional year until the Grower Referendum is decided.

Mr. Mahan reported on Dr. Moira Sheehan's contract as co-chair of Plant Improvement Review panel. Dr. Sheehan billed CRDF at Cornell University's lower consulting rate of \$70/hour rather than the contracted rate of \$200/hour not to exceed \$1,000/day as the other panelists are contracted. Mr. Dantzler also mentioned that Dr. Sheehan had been involved in discussions of the formation of the Plant Improvement Review matter since the beginning of 2021 and invoiced for her time during the preliminary discussions, necessitating an amended agreement to satisfy audit requirements. Mr. Mahan moved for Staff make appropriate modifications to Dr. Sheehan's agreement as to the hourly rate, dates of service and scope of work. The motion was seconded by Ms. McKenna and passed unanimously.

Mr. Mahan discussed the AgerPoint agreement in which they proposed a three-year term at \$20,000.00/year. Mr. Dantzler explained the Board had previously approved \$17,500 in the FY2122 Budget for the AgerPoint contract, a difference of \$2,500.00 for this fiscal year. Mr. Mahan moved for Board approval of the F&A Committee recommendation to enter into a one-year contract with AgerPoint at \$20,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Story and passed unanimously.

**Governance Committee:** Mr. Dantzler reported that the Governance Committee had not met.

**Research Management Committee/ Commercial Product Delivery Committee:** Mr. Dantzler, on behalf of Mr. Updike, reported the committees met jointly on January 14th.

Mr. Dantzler reported on an amended budget and revised proposal from Dr. Alferez on Proposal 21-007, noting that the project pinpoints a number of the topics highlighted in the "Pathway" document. Dr. Alferez previously responded to Board questions concerning the budget and project leadership. Dr. Rogers answered further questions on product labeling. Mr. Howard made a motion to approve funding of Dr. Alferez's Project 21-007. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mahan and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler noted the committees reviewed topics for consideration for the 2022 RFP, some of which may be better suited for directed research. The list of topics, which were included as materials and attached hereto, were discussed individually, and upon conclusion Ms. McKenna moved to accept the 2022 RFP and directed research topics as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mahan and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler introduced the first of three off-cycle proposals for funding consideration, this from Dr. Zhonglin Mou. The Committees felt it was long-term research, should be federally funded, and recommended further consideration after receiving the Plant Improvement Review Panel report. Mr. Dantzler was directed to contact the researcher to discuss his funding situation in greater detail. Ms. McKenna moved to accept the Committees' recommendation to deny project funding. The motion was seconded by Mr. Story and passed unanimously.

The next off-cycle project was from Dr. Tripti Vashisth on “omics” as it relates to identifying trees that will experience fruit drop. The Committees felt the project did not focus enough on the physiological process that leads to fruit drop, is better suited for a molecular scientist, and recommended to deny funding for this project at this time. Mr. Story moved to accept the Committees’ recommendation. The motion was seconded by Ms. McKenna and passed unanimously.

The final off-cycle funding request was from Dr. David Gang for culturing CLas. The Committees felt the project is long-term and would be better suited for federal funding. The Board agreed and Mr. Howard moved to accept the Committees’ recommendation to deny funding for Dr. Gang’s off-cycle project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Story and passed unanimously.

**COO Report:** Mr. Dantzler reported that the Florida Citrus Commission expects to name the third appointment after the April FCC meeting.

He reported that twice during the period from January 11<sup>th</sup> to January 13<sup>th</sup> he met with representatives from California Citrus Mutual, California Research Board, and Texas Citrus Mutual. Florida Citrus Mutual hosted the meetings and UF/IFAS CREC held presentations from several researchers at their request, including Dr. El Mohtar regarding CTV vectoring.

He reported that the Plant Improvement Panel Review concluded its reviews and were currently compiling their report.

**Partnerships:** Mr. Sparks, Florida Citrus Mutual, stated that the Legislature was fully engaged, although a Covid outbreak was driving smaller committee meetings. Mr. Sparks noted that Senator Albritton supported the BMP manual. He went on to report that Florida citrus was being well represented in all areas, research as well as marketing. There was discussion surrounding MAC funding and the split of funding between California, Texas, and Florida; Mr. Sparks felt that Florida, specifically the CRAFT Foundation, would receive a significant increase in federal dollars.

Dr. Rogers reported that Dr. John Chater, a plant improvement researcher, had been hired as a replacement for Dr. Bill Castle.

**Extension Agent Report:** None.

**New Business:** None

**Public Comments:** Mr. Howard asked Staff to convene a joint meeting of the Research Management and Commercial Product Delivery committees to initiate specific direction on 2,4-D, OTC, and Gibberellic Acid.

Mr. Dantzler added that Dr. Diepenbrock had approached CRDF offering to present her progress on the mealybug project and potential funding for a third year of research, whether to the joint committee or the Board.

**Future CRDF Meetings:** CRDF Board of Directors, Tuesday February 22, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at the UF-IFAS, Citrus Research and Education Center, Ben Hill Griffin Hall, Lake Alfred.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

Minutes submitted by John Updike, Secretary