



## **Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, April 26, 2022**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, at the Lake Placid Government Center Community Room, 1069 US 27 North, Lake Placid, FL 33852. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. President Rob Atchley called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Board members present were Rob Atchley, Chris Gunter, George Hamner, Aaron Himrod, Greg Hodges, David Howard, Deeley Hunt, Ron Mahan, Jeanna Mastrodicasa, Joby Sherrod, and Matthew Story.

Also in attendance were Mike Aerts, Kim Bowman, Harold Browning, Ralph Chamberlain, John Chater, Rick Dantzler, Horace Durrance, Jarred Eddy, Pam Fentress, Steve Futch, Fred Gmitter, Jim Graham, Gio Ijpkemeule, Tom Jerkins, Matt Joyner, Zhonglin Mou, Trevor Murphy, Audrey Nowicki, Brandon Page, Raymond Royce, Andy Russell, Shannon Shepp, Steve Smith, Mike Sparks, David Stephens, Jim Syvertsen, Barbara Thompson, Frank Youngman, Callie Walker, and Rosa Walsh.

Mr. Atchley thanked Mr. Royce for hosting the meeting. He also welcomed the newest Board Member, Joby Sherrod with Alico, who was in attendance for the first time. Dr. Mastrodicasa stated that Mr. Sherrod would be formally considered by the UF Board of Trustees at their June meeting, and the appointments made earlier this year were confirmed on Friday, April 22. Mr. Sherrod is a long-time Research Management Committee member and understands the history of much of the research.

Mr. Howard made a motion to approve the March 22, 2022, Board minutes as presented, and it was seconded by Mr. Sherrod. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Atchley noted that there would be two separate times for public comments and opened the floor for comments, Pam Fentress of Lost Lake Groves said growers are anxious to learn of the Board's plans going forward and Andy Russell stated that the urgent needs for the grower industry are fruit drop and fruit quality, and that's where funding should be utilized. They agreed that solutions are needed in the very near term to allow growers to make decisions going forward.

**Executive Committee:** Did not meet.

**Finance and Audit Committee:** Mr. Mahan presented the March Financial Statement, noting there was a cash balance of just over \$3 million and net assets of approximately \$1.5 million. Revenue to date is a little over \$6 million, which is \$1.5 million short of budget projections. The financial statements are in line with expectations. Mr. Mahan made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Mr. Himrod, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Governance Committee:** Did not meet.

**Research Management Committee:** The committee had not met. Mr. Dantzler provided updates on the directed research projects, noting that directed research allows the funding process to work more quickly.

Dr. Vashisth will soon provide a proposal to evaluate products that are already available that have Gibberellic acid, 2,4-D, and Cytokine in them. From her previous research she is not convinced there is enough Gibberellic acid in the products to make enough of an impact, so she suggests increasing the quantity of Gibberellic acid. This will be discussed during the Research Management Committee meeting to determine if that is a policy choice that they want to make. Each of the directed research proposals are being reviewed by at least one scientific advisory board member, with their input to be considered by RMC on May 11.

Two other directed research proposals have been received. Dr. Santra, University of Central Florida, was requested to provide a proposal using zinc applications, and Dr. Alferes provided his proposal studying Brassinosteroids.

Dr. Steve Futch presented a proposed RFP for directed research centering on the “Injection of OTC in Mature Citrus Trees and its Impact on Yield and Fruit Quality,” levels, additives, and who should be the applicant.

Mr. Dantzler noted that Mike Aerts has reviewed the proposal and is available for questions.

Mr. Dantzler reported that he and Matt Joyner attended a meeting on May 2 with the regulators from FDACS.

Dr. Albrecht’s tests to date have been on young trees. Growers asked if federal funding could be pursued. Mr. Dantzler and Mr. Joyner have met with Senator Albritton recently to discuss future funding and the plight of growers.

With the RFP still in the planning stages, Mr. Mahan made a motion to complete the proposal outline with the goal to collect as much data as possible on injecting oxytetracycline and move it forward for RMC consideration. The motion was seconded by Mr. Howard and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler reported that, since CRAFT had denied the applications from the grower-cooperators who were seeking approval of the CRDF rootstock trials as CRAFT projects, it had become necessary to increase the amount of financial incentive to approximate that which CRAFT would have paid. In addition to the \$8.05/tree cost paid by CRDF, staff recommended \$13.95/tree for Hamlins and \$8.95/tree for Vernia and Valencia varieties. It was noted there is still a need for grower cooperators in the Ridge and Flatwoods. David Stephens noted he would be interested. Mr. Howard moved to approve the modifications to the stipends paid to grower cooperators. Seconded by Dr. Hodges, the motion carried. It was noted that CRDF must re-advertise for grower cooperators with the updated terms.

Dr. Zhonglin Mou, UF Microbiology & Cell Science gave a presentation on his project “Establish early-stage field trials for new HLB-tolerant canker-resistant transgenic scions.”

Dr. Harold Browning, Premier Citrus, gave a presentation on “Laser etching as a component of citrus huanglongbing (HLB) therapy in Florida.”

There were question and answer sessions after each presentation.

Matt Joyner has been working along with Mr. Dantzler to see if there is anything Mutual can do to hasten the regulatory path for injecting OTC. In addition, the Mutual Board voted to support the Referendum and preserve the mechanism for the Box Tax.

UF/IFAS – Dr. Mastrodicasa shared that Dr. Ron Cave would like to host the CRDF Board of Directors at their location and follow with a grove tour.

Dr. Browning noted that Premier Citrus is conducting field activities in cooperation with the manufacturer in their application to determine the potential value of aldicarb.

**New Business:** None

**Future CRDF Meetings:**

- CRDF Research Management Committee, Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 10:00 a.m. at the Grove House, Lake Wales.
- CRDF Board of Directors, Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., BHG Jr. Hall, 700 Experiment Station Road, Lake Alfred.

**Public Comments:** None

**With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.**

**Minutes submitted by John Updike, Secretary**