



Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, February 27, 2024

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at the Seven Sebring Raceway Hotel, 150 Midway Drive, Sebring, FL 33870. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. President Morgan Porter called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Board members present were George Hamner, Aaron Himrod, Deeley Hunt, Matt Machata, Ron Mahan, Jeanna Mastrodicasa, Trevor Murphy, Morgan Porter, Joby Sherrod, Taylor Smith, Sarah Spinosa, and Matt Story.

Also participating were Scott Adkins, Ute Albrecht, Bobby Barben, Doug Bournique, Robin Bryant, James Cooper, Rick Dantzler, Bill Dawson, Jared Eddy, Justin Ezell, Steve Futch, Fred Gmitter, Jim Graham, Matt Joyner, Ed Leotti, Riley McKenna, Audrey Nowicki, Brandon Page, Bernadette Rashford, Michael Rogers, Ray Royce, Rashmi Singh, Jim Snively, Kyle Story, Jim Syvertsen, Barbara Thompson, and Leigh-Anne Vigne.

President Morgan Porter noted the minutes from the January 23, 2024, Board meeting were available in their packet for review and approval. Mr. Hamner made a motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mastrodicasa and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler introduced the Board's newest member, Taylor Smith, who in turn shared a brief history of her background.

Public Comments: None

Executive Committee: Did not meet.

Finance and Audit Committee: Ms. Nowicki presented the January 31, 2024, Financial Summary. For the end of January, we had a cash balance of \$1,570,853 with accounts receivable of \$9,783,076 and accounts payable of \$9,563,618, which left us with net assets of \$1,790,312. Mr. Himrod made a motion to accept the Financial Summary as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Spinosa and passed unanimously.

Governance Committee: Mr. Hamner presented the report on the February 22, 2024, Governance Committee meeting. Mr. Hamner noted that the Governance Committee recommended accepting David Howard and John Updike for Emeritus Membership, and moved for approval. Mr. Hunt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Regarding committee membership, Mr. Dantzler noted that based on the last Board meeting, we wanted to make sure there was room for every Board member to be on a research committee. That required asking some to step down, as well as changing the Bylaws from ‘up to 17’ to ‘up to 21’ committee members. By making those adjustments, the roster, as provided and based on the actions of the Governance Committee, would allow six Board members to be on the Research Management Committee and seven to be on the Plant Improvement Committee. Mr. Hamner made a motion to accept the committee as submitted. It was seconded by Mr. Machata and passed unanimously.

Mr. Hamner noted that the Governance Committee recommended that the Research Management Committee change the bylaws to allow up to 21 members on the committee. This would allow room on the committee for the two emeritus members and Dr. Scully, giving them voting rights. Mr. Hamner made a motion to change the bylaws to allow up to 21 members on the committee. It was seconded by Dr. Mastrodicasa and passed unanimously.

Mr. Hamner said the Governance Committee also recommended that we change the Plant Improvement Committee membership to allow up to 21 members as well. That would allow Dr. Erin Rosskopf to become a voting member instead of ad hoc, as well as a few others as the board saw fit. Mr. Hamner made a motion to change the bylaws to allow up to 21 members on the committee. It was seconded by Mr. Machata and passed unanimously.

Mr. Hamner noted that, with the board members whose terms ended, the Finance and Audit Committee was left with three remaining members: Ron Mahan (Chair), Chris Gunter, and Matt Story. Governance was comfortable with this committee remaining as is, as outlined in the Bylaws.

Governance Committee has five members: George Hamner as Chair, Jeanna Mastrodicasa, Morgan Porter, Joby Sherrod, and the newest board member, Taylor Smith from FDACS. The committee did not see the need for expansion. Mr. Hamner made a motion to accept the committee as submitted. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mastrodicasa and passed unanimously.

The next item for discussion was multi-year contracts. Since the single-year funding initiated in 2022 has created issues for both researchers and administrators, Governance recommended that approved projects be contracted to provide funding for the length of the project, plus have a policy that researchers continue to present their progress yearly to RMC or the Board. Also, to terminate a project would require an action to terminate instead of an action to extend funding for another year. This policy was affirmed.

Mr. Hamner reported on committee discussions that the general sense was that comments from the SAB were very helpful and provided a high-level scientific analysis that better informs most

committee and board members who evaluate the projects for the likelihood of practical application. The Board agreed to continue utilization of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Mr. Hamner reported that the Executive Committee consists of the Board of Directors' officers, an appointee of the Chair of the UF Board of Trustees (Dr. Mastrodicasa) and a designee of the President of the University of Florida (Dr. Gunter). Mr. Dantzler as the COO is a non-voting member.

Research Management Committee: The committee did not meet.

Mr. Page gave a presentation of the data obtained from Mr. Yonce's CRDF field trial sites of mature trees working with two port injections. The presentation prompted much discussion with questions responded to by Mr. Page and Dr. Albrecht. A request was made for a comparison of the data from the previous season.

Plant Improvement Committee: Mr. Sherrod gave a brief outline of their committee meeting which was started with Mr. Johnson from Coca-Cola giving a slide presentation on the status of their approved project for Stage II field trials, including the selection of trees, the number of sites (two at the least and possibly a third. Evaluations will be made in May with decisions in June. The liners are currently being made.

Drs. John Chater and Matt Mattia reviewed their revised three-year grand plan, to include estimated annual budget amounts for UF and USDA of \$750,000 each, shared costs, and collaboration without overlap. This included the hiring of a bioinformatics person to join the team for gene editing. Mr. Sherrod moved to invite a preproposal, seconded by Mr. Hamner. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Rosa Walsh gave an update on mass propagation and the Donaldson tree processes, noting an increase of 4,000 trees presently in the industry. Ms. Tamara Wood noted that in CRAFT Cycle V over 600 acres of early varieties that included Donaldson have been contracted at \$8,000/A.

Dr. Jim Graham led the discussion of a forum held on the use of Satsuma and similar varieties as juice fruit as a way of keeping the processing plants open longer. While the research needs were not spelled out at this time, quality and quantity questions still need answered.

There was mention of the possibility of CRDF leasing field space for Plant Improvement trials for breeders to have additional properties to put some of their creations. This, however, turned out not to be a problem since 500 acres have been identified as being available at the DeLuca property. There was also mention of the need for grower cooperators to lease acreage for Drs. Michelle Heck and Dr. Brian Scully for their molecule trials. They enlisted two more grower cooperators, which

made four. Mr. Bournique wholeheartedly gave his support behind this project and the work Dr. Scully is doing in identifying molecules for testing.

COO Report: Mr. Dantzler noted that the EPA had issued new GMO and CRISPR guidelines.

He has also been in contact with IR-4 regarding their involvement in getting the identified molecules across the regulatory finish line. The researchers will contact IR-4 themselves. The focus is on compounds or molecules that will face virtually no resistance from regulators because the goal is to provide something that growers can use during the third year of the three-year OTC cycle.

Stakeholder panelists are being recruited for ECDRE project review, so if any growers want to serve, let me know.

There was previous discussion of conducting a survey of OTC products being utilized by growers, but since discussion of the issue has ended there is no longer a need for the survey at this time.

Partnership Updates:

Matt Joyner, Florida Citrus Mutual, was in Tallahassee this week. He noted that we should know where Legislative funding stands at the end of the week since there was a desire to trim the budget back significantly.

Michael Rogers, UF-IFAS- CREC, reported the researchers are staying busy with citrus field trials and GMOs. The first planting of gene-edited citrus is going into the field this week, along with some transgenics. All of those look fantastic in the greenhouse. Many updates to growers will be given at the upcoming Citrus Show on April 3rd and Citrus Growers Institute in Avon Park on April 9th.

Scott Adkins, USDA reported they are hosting the Citrus Show. In January, they had a lot of senior USDA officials and appreciated all the stakeholder support from CRDF, Citrus League, and other citrus folks. They had their administrator, along with a contingent of headquarters folks, program staff, and area office attending.

A few weeks later, the Indian River Citrus League Board met with us, and it was another good opportunity for that group of stakeholders. Also, and we hope that the collaboration between Dr. Chater from IFAS and Dr. Mattia from USDA is a sign of things to come for more cooperation to move the research forward. He noted annual funding contracts have been an issue USDA as well and have affected their hiring processes for new projects.

New Business: None

Public Comments: None

Future Meeting: Because a group from CRDF will be in California for the ICHLB Conference the week of the 26th, the next Board of Directors meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at the Turner Ag Center, 2250 NE Roan St., Arcadia, FL 34266.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:12 am

Minutes submitted by George Hamner, Secretary.