



Minutes of the Governance Committee Meeting September 6, 2023

A meeting of the Governance Committee of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, September 6, 2023, at UF-IFAS-CREC, 700 Experiment Station Road, Ben Hill Griffin Jr. Citrus Hall, Room 101, Lake Alfred, FL 33850. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. The meeting was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Chairman Aaron Himrod. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Committee members participating were Rob Atchley, George Hamner, Aaron Himrod, Jeanna Mastrodicasa, and Joby Sherrod. Also present were Rick Dantzler, Chris Gunter, and Barbara Thompson.

Mr. Himrod noted that the minutes of the May 23, 2023, Governance meeting were provided for review. Mr. Dantzler brought the committee's attention to edits in the third paragraph that were needed regarding the new Finance and Audit Committee members: (delete Himrod, correct the wording of Dr. Mastrodicasa's motion from officers to members, and make that sentence part of the previous paragraph). Mr. Hamner made a motion that the minutes be approved with the two amendments presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Atchley and passed unanimously.

It was noted that several Conflict-of-Interest forms were missing from the report. There were no questions or remarks on what was turned in. Mr. Dantzler said that his COI form required a correction to state that he does not request or receive reimbursement from CRDF for travel related to his work with the law firm to which he is Of Counsel. Mr. Atchley made a motion that the COI declarations be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod and passed unanimously.

Mr. Himrod noted the proposed edits to the Bylaws to include the Plant Improvement Committee. As drafted, there was not a Category 2 member included, but to keep the membership in line with RMC and because CRDF is a DSO for UF, it was suggested that membership include a Category 2 board member.

The creation of the Plant Improvement Committee (PIC) was revisited. It was recommended that CRDF stay with the plan and use the PIC to assist in moving germplasm through the plant breeding pipeline. Mr. Hamner made a motion that the Plant Improvement Committee be approved as a Standing Committee with a Category 2 member included. The motion was seconded by Mr. Atchley and passed unanimously. Once they are made a standing committee in the bylaws, they will have the power of making recommendations to the Board. However, anything related to research related would continue to go through RMC.

Mr. Dantzler noted that Dr. Randy Niedz suggested that CRDF compensate Dr. Scully at the rate of \$100.00 for each compound he researched and identified for inclusion in Dr. Neidz's injection project. There was discussion regarding an upward limit of total compensation to Dr. Scully. Mr. Hamner made a motion that the Dr. Scully be paid \$100 per new compound, capped at \$10,000 total. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mastrodicasa and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler noted that one researcher had met with him and Ms. Porter and voiced his discontent about CRDF asking for a full proposal only to be denied funding since the reasons cited existed at the time the project was invited. He noted that this had happened to him three times. Mr. Himrod suggested that CRDF could better articulate their requests to PIs. Mr. Atchley noted that with 90 days between the pre-proposal and the full proposal, there should be a better description of the project and discussion should be more thorough at the Board level. It was also suggested that having the PIs present their projects to RMC at the pre-proposal stage might be a way to eliminate confusion or false expectations. It was also noted that SAB reviewers are experts in science, so their review should be answering the question "Is the science good?" Board members rely on them to judge the proposals on the science and the RMC and Board answer the question, "Will this proposal bring about results that are helpful to growers?"

Mr. Dantzler noted that Brandon Page had received a job offer in the range of \$75,000 per year. He is currently making \$61,112. The CRDF Office Manager, Audrey Nowicki, is currently making \$62,963. It was decided to ask for a market increase to raise Brandon to \$70,000 and maxing Audrey Nowicki out at \$72,900. Mr. Hamner made a motion to accept the suggested raises for Brandon and Audrey. Mr. Atchley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler's COO Review was discussed. Mr. Hamner asked about replacements for board members Rob Atchley, John Updike, and David Howard who would be leaving this year. Mr. Himrod said that new members need mentoring. It took him 2 years to get his feet on the ground and understand what was going on.

Rob Atchley and David Howard were Florida Citrus Mutual nominations so Matt Joyner and the Mutual Board will be making decisions about who they will nominate. John Updike was a DOC nomination so DOC would be nominating his replacement. Dr. Mastrodicasa will need nominations by mid-November.

Mr. Dantzler noted that the Citrus Research Board has agreed to providing six registrations for the IRCHLB in California with the CRDF sponsorship.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.