Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc.

CITRUS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

April 28, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, in the Ben Hill Griffin Hall at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center, 700 Experiment Station Road, Lake Alfred, Florida 33850. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. Board President Morgan Porter called the meeting to order at 10:10 am after technical issues were resolved. Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Board members participating were Dr. John Davis, Dr. Chris Gunter, George Hamner, Deeley Hunt, Matt Machata, Ron Mahan, Ajia Orth, Morgan Porter, Joby Sherrod and Sarah Spinosa.

Ms. Porter introduced Dr. Leandro Peña, a consultant with CRDF from Spain, who was in town for three days to meet with board members and researchers. He met yesterday in Fort Pierce with researchers and toured Picos Farm, and participated in a roundtable discussion with the board. She also introduced Dr. Rob Gilbert, UF Dean for Research and Executive Director for Academic Affairs and Director of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, who was with the board to discuss the royalty issue.

Ms. Porter presented the Minutes from March 24, 2026, Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Mahan moved to accept the minutes of the March 24, 2026, Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamner and passed.

With no Public Comments, Ms. Porter continued with the committee reports.

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee did not meet.

Finance and Audit Committee: Mr. Mahan asked Ms. Nowicki to summarize the March financial statement. She noted the usual variances with the most noticeable being uncommitted research revenue and expenses. Mr. Dantzler outlined the reasons the uncommitted funds were not utilized. If the funds couldn't be used by the end of the fiscal year, they could be spent with CRAFT to fund growers currently on its waiting list for funding. Mr. Mahan moved to accept the March Financial Statement as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Machata and passed.

Governance Committee: Mr. Hamner reported on the Governance Committee meeting held April 17, 2026, to discuss the merger with CRAFT. Steven Hall and Lisa Jensen were in attendance at the Governance meeting. Lisa provided statutory regulations which were included in the Board meeting materials. Mr. Hamner noted that, while he would like to see everything completed by June 30th, it would be necessary to allow the Foundation to exist long enough to conduct the RFP on large-scale field trials for legislative funds to potentially be directed to CRAFT, assuming legislative proviso stays the same. Action on the merger is expected to be taken on June 10th. The plan is expected to address Audrey and Rick's retirement and Brandon's employment.

Governance also recommended that the Board propose to CRAFT that Matt Machata and Bill Bohde be appointed to the CRAFT board, as well as creating an RMC-type committee to receive and review future proposals and make recommendations to the CRAFT board. Recommended for this committee were Bill Bohde, Matt Machata, Charlie McKee, Riley McKenna, Aaron Nelson (growers), Dr. Scott Adkins, Dr. Brian Scully and someone from UF to represent UF.

Mr. Hamner made a motion to recommend Bill Bohde and Matt Machata for inclusion on the new CRAFT Board, and the creation of an RMC Committee to include the recommendations above. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mahan and passed.

Mr. Hamner suggested that discussions of collaboration with Fundecitrus should continue as scheduled and any agreements should be postponed until the merger with CRAFT has been settled so that CRAFT could have input on the collaboration.

Mr. Sherrod said the timeline in the Governance materials was helpful. (It will be updated and shared with the Board.)

Mr. Dantzler noted that staff would be in the office through July 10th to complete the FYE June 30, 2026 audit. Mr. Steven Hall said he is ready to step into the interim COO position and handle any board meetings needed in July to affect the transition. This will be included in the draft merger plan which should be presented in May.

Plant Improvement Committee: The Plant Improvement Committee did not meet.

Research Management Committee: Mr. Machata proceeded with the discussion of proposals and preproposals addressed during the April 21, 2026, RMC meeting:

He summarized project 25-019 from Dr. Yu Wang, 'Using Machine Learning on Juvenile Leaf Chemistry to Predict Future Sweet Orange Juice Quality,' noting that if validated, this approach could serve as an extremely valuable screening tool for both conventional and molecular breeders, as well as growers. Mr. Machata moved to approve funding for project #25-019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mahan and passed.

Mr. Machata continued with the re-consideration of C. Messina (& El Mohtar), 25-016 'Developing an efficient system to accelerate flowering in citrus seedlings,' noting that the RMC deferred the decision to the board once the PI responded to questions raised during the RMC meeting and that the SAB reviewers had a chance to weigh in on the responses. Considering RMC concerns on over-flowering and Spain having achieved shortened juvenility and hastened flowering with a simpler method, Mr. Machata made a notion to not fund this project. Mr. Mahan seconded with the motion to not fund #25-016 and the motion passed.

Mr. Machata reported that RMC recommends continued funding of Southern Gardens Citrus Diagnostic Lab in FY 2026-2027 up to $250,000 and so moved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mahan and passed.

Mr. Machata continued with the RMC recommendation that unencumbered Legislative FY2025-26 funds be awarded to the CRAFT Cycle VII Project 25-010 for the reasons he stated earlier, to wit, 1) the little chance that the use of penicillin for citrus would be approved the , 2) the combination of OTC and streptomycin proving to be less effective than originally thought, and 3) the plan to collaborate with Fundecitrus bringing transgenic trees from Brazil had not yet come together. Rather than risking forfeiting those funds, growers will benefit from increasing CRAFT's Cycle VII contract. Mr. Hall noted that allocating the additional funds to ETT projects will be the quickest use of the funds. Mr. Hamner moved to amend the current CRAFT contract with the addition of unspent legislative funds up to $1.5 million. The motion was seconded by Mr. Machata and passed.

Next, Mr. Machata summarized the preproposal from Dr. Can Baysal, 'Engineering Durable Citrus Tolerance to Huanglongbing via Rational Multi-Layer Defense Stacking.' He noted that Dr. Baysal discussed his project at length with Dr. Peña, and moved to invite a full proposal with the following conditions: 1) clearly justify the selection of gene combinations, 2) explain how the genes are expected to function together, 3) define the intended expression strategy within the constructs, and 4) clarify the transformation approach and skip the immature tissue step. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamner and passed.

Mr. Machata continued with Dr. Nicole Quinn's preproposal, 'Advancing Entomopathogenic Endophytic Fungi as a Sustainable Biological Control Strategy for Pest and Pathogen Defense,' noting the excessive price and questioning why, if EEFs were already available for citrus, they had not been adopted and the lack of preliminary data on them. Co-PI Dr. Terry Price discussed their enthusiasm for the project and noted they could reduce the initial project to a two-year screening at a greatly reduced cost. Mr. Machata moved to invite a full proposal for project screening the EEFs similar to Grove First with an extremely reduced budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamner and passed.

Mr. Machata shared Dr. Dawson's enthusiasm about Alex Schultink's project testing the FIT3 gene in citrus which could lead to immunity to CLas. Mr. Machata moved to invite a full proposal from Alex Schultink of Fortiphyte for testing the FIT3 gene in citrus. The motion was seconded by Ms. Spinosa and passed.

Ms. Porter invited Dr. Pena to introduce himself, which he did. He discussed field trials he is conducting with transgenic lines. He is working on planting a 75-acre trial with Cutrale. Another GMO program is studying resistance to CLas. They are trying to determine which genes are making the Australian species resistant and are testing those genes for resistance. They also have a GMO pink clementine in California proving successful.

Dr. Gilbert was introduced to answer questions from the Board on the calculations of royalty payments to CRDF and how they are calculated. Mr. Machata expressed his concern over the interpretation of the IP definitions, invention disclosure dates, and the absence of recognizing CRDF as a funder, and how that resulted in a lack of fairness in allocation and distribution of royalties to CRDF, since millions of funding dollars are spent on continuing research on selections after the defined 'selection date,' which is not defined in any of the documents. Ms. Porter felt UF should be open to consideration of CRDF's concerns since citrus isn't an annual crop and expressed hope that the definitions will be better defined and understood for conventional breeding as well as for projects that fall outside the realm of conventional, and that the terms of the Soilcea refinements be clearly understood. Mr. Hamner requested that Dr. Gilbert and UF discuss the matter further with CRDF and come up with a settlement. Dr. Gilbert agreed that he can do that, and asked for CRDF to give UF cultivars it wished to analyze for possible royalty splitting.

COO Report: Mr. Dantzler forfeited his time given the lateness of the hour and the desire to resume the discussion with Dr. Pena over lunch.

Partnership Updates - none

There was no New Business; and there were no Public Comments.

Ms. Porter said the board does not usually meet in May. If there is no business to handle related to the merger, the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 10, 2026 during the Annual Conference in Bonita Springs.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 PM, with the round table discussion to take place after a lunch break.

Minutes submitted by George Hamner, Secretary.