



August 12, 2021
NREC Council Meeting Minutes
Held at Illinois Soybean Association and virtually via Zoom

Council Members Present in person: Ed Corrigan, Jeff Kirwan, Don Guinnip, Chuck Cawley, David Wessel, Tom Kelley, Don Guinnip,
Council Members present via Zoom: German Bollero, Matt Duncan, Trevor Sample, Robert Mullen, Cindy Skrukud, Al Grosboll

Staff Present: Julie Hewitt, Shani Golovay

Others attending: Scott Lager, Austin Omer, Tim Laatch, Liz Hobart, Michael Woods, Lisa Martin.

Meeting was called to order by chairperson Jeff Kirwan at 10:03 a.m. and the meeting agenda and purpose were reviewed. Jeff Kirwan moved and Ed Corrigan seconded to add an Executive Session to the agenda for the purpose of reviewing employee compensation.

Chairman Kirwan asked for a review and approval of minutes. Minutes were approved with a motion by Chuck Cawley and a second by Ed Corrigan.

Executive Director Julie Hewitt provided an operational update and reviewed the calendar of activities plus the list of priorities identified during her annual review. In addition, she shared a couple of the outreach tools that will be utilized at both Farm Progress Show and other upcoming events. She also let new board members know that they have 90 days to complete their Open Meetings Act training.

Chuck Cawley reviewed the status of invoicing and collections for NREC assessments. IDOA and NREC have developed an improved process for both the current period reporting but also for invoicing and collecting past due balances:

- 1) Initial invoice sent after reported semi-annual tonnage (twice a year – roughly Feb and September)
 - 2) Second invoice sent
 - 3) September phone call
 - 4) October – final certified mail invoice with notice of license revocation
 - 5) January 1 – non-renewal of license
- ** Each calendar year invoices to be “cleaned-up” at following year-end. Example: 2020-1 and 2020-2 unpaid subject to non-renewal January 1, 2022.

Don Guinnip and Julie Hewitt reviewed the final audit for 2020. Don Guinnip and Ed Corrigan moved and seconded the approval of the audit. Audit was approved.

Don and Julie reviewed the current year financials and presented the 2022 budget for review.

Discussion was held around the statutory requirement of NREC designating a minimum of 20% of the funds for cost-share programs and on-farm demonstration programs to study and address water quality issues. Long term board members and staff engaged with the original legislation provided historical background on this language and the council discussed, at length, the level at which they are (or are not) meeting that requirement. Cindy Skrukud recalled that the goal of the Sierra Club and Environmental Law and Policy Center was to ensure that the funds went towards addressing water quality issues and not just agronomic research. Julie and Shani Golovay are developing a tracking mechanism for this metric and discussions will continue.

Executive Director Hewitt reviewed the voting procedures that were utilized at the previous research committee and indicated that one member had cast his votes by proxy after leaving the meeting. A review of the bylaws indicates that this is improper voting procedure. In light of this, Chuck Cawley moved and Ed Corrigan seconded a motion to throw-out the votes cast by the absent member. Discussion was held that the member was in attendance for the entire meeting and his votes were based on discussion held during that meeting, he wrote down his ratings and provided it to staff but was not physically in the room for the votes. The motion passed as presented.

The Council considered a motion from the Research Committee that read: "The Council shall fund all projects rated 3.0 and above for the 2021/2022 research year with all projects funded at their full amount with the exception of Project 472 which will be funded at 85%. Total funding is \$3,912,499". Ed Corrigan made the motion, David Wessel seconded and the motion passed.

The Council broke for lunch at 12:15 pm and reconvened at 1:04 pm.

At 1:08 p.m. Chuck Cawley moved and Don Guinnip seconded that the Council go into Executive Session to review employee compensation. With a motion by Chuck Cawley and a second by Don Guinnip, the Council closed Executive Session at 1:27 p.m.

The council members reviewed committee appointments and added David Wessel and Scott Lager to Governance committee and Tim Laatsch to Research Committee.

With Ed Corrigan's departure from the Council, Chairman Kirwan appointment Matt Duncan to Vice Chair and Chair of the Research Committee.

Julie reviewed the final Employee Handbook with the Council. Ed Corrigan moved and Tom Kelley seconded the approval and adoption of the Employee Handbook.

Don Guinnip moved and Ed Corrigan seconded the adoption of the 2021-2022 budget. Budget was approved.

David Wessel moved and Ed Corrigan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 2:32 p.m.