

Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission
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REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Mid-Columbia Agriculture Research & Extension Center Meeting Room
3009 Experiment Station Dr., Hood River, OR 97031
Tuesday, April 12, 2016, 1:00 P.M.

Call to Order/Introductions

Dan Crouse, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. the following Commissioners consisting of a quorum, including Dan, were present: Stacey Cooper, Jim Markman, Leonard Aubert, Ryan Bond, Jeff Heater, Les Stephens, Andrea Galloway and Jared Gidley.

Brian Tuck, Mid-Columbia Ag Research and Experiment Center (MCAREC), Eric Shrum, Western Ag, Megan Thompson, Oregon Cherry Growers, Mike Steffey and Tom Kubitz, Seneca Foods and Dana Branson, OSCC Administrator were also present. Kris Anderson, Commodity Commission Program Manager for Oregon Department of Ag, joined the meeting at 1:40.

The minutes of the regular meeting held on February 23, 2016 were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. *Jeff Heater moved and Leonard Aubert seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

The financial statements for February and March were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. There were no questions. *Leonard Aubert moved and Jeff Heater seconded to accept the financial reports for February and March as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

Administrator's Activity Report

There were two fruit stands and two suppliers in collections follow up after last meeting. Dana was able to connect with one of the fruit stand operators and sent him report forms for 2014 and 2015. One fruit stand she has not been able to make contact with – despite sending a certified letter. The two suppliers have been looked into and it was determined they aren't first handlers so assessments are not due.

Dana attended the Commodity Commission Advisory meeting in Salem on Wednesday, April 6. The major topics discussed were regarding the Master Agreement with the Ag Research Foundation (ARF) and the future years' budget for the cost of the Oversight Fee. Russ Karow said he's

working on getting Memorandums of Understanding with universities that Oregon commodity commissions frequently collaborate with to pass funds through. For OSCC those are University of California and Michigan State. There is currently an agreement in place with Washington State University.

The expenses for ODA oversight are continuing to increase – mainly due to PERS increases, which aren't controlled by ODA. The current cap for expenses is \$300,000 (set in administrative rule) and for 2016 the estimated total is \$298,689. In 2017 the estimate is almost \$333,000 and the outlook for General Funds from the state to help with expenses is not favorable. The members of Advisory Committee asked ODA personnel to look again for cost savings through possible changes in oversight duties or personnel reduction and to report back on how ODA can keep the total at no more than \$300,000.

A draft of the 2016-17 OSCC budget was emailed in advance of the meeting, but Dana made revisions after working up a cash estimate as of the end of March. The second draft was handed out, the revisions and assumptions were explained and discussed. There were no changes so Dana will include it in the Spring newsletter.

Chairman's Report

Dan Crouse was the NW Horticultural Council Trustee for OSCC last year. He is willing to serve again. No other Commissioner expressed an interest in being the representative and no one voiced opposition to Dan taking the position. Dana will notify NHC.

Les Stephens had talked to some California growers and they reported 30% of the crop in Southern California is gone. They anticipate starting to pick May 22 and will be finished by June 1. Megan Thompson talked to Northern California and they are reporting such poor pollination that whole blocks are being skipped because the fruit is thin. The Northwest crop looks early again this year, perhaps not quite as early as last year.

Research Committee Report

Dan Crouse and Eric Shrum went to a meeting in Prosser regarding the breeding program last week. Dr. Nnadozie Oraguzie has decided to step away from his role as WSU's cherry breeder to focus full time on his genetics research. Dr. Oraguzie will remain at the Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center (IAREC) in Prosser until the end of the 2015 crop year. He will work with the new hire from Chile to identify and tag the crosses that are there. The pruning of the test blocks looks good and hopefully will yield better results. There is renewed hope and

enthusiasm. Washington State University has agreed to begin a search for a breeder in 2017. The proposal for this season's work is under \$150,000 in total. In previous meetings OSCC voted to fund up to \$37,500, but the amount will be less at \$32,338 so there was no need to re-vote.

In the last meeting there was a motion to request a refund of any money left in Peter Shearer's account at ARF. Dana checked and there was less than \$100 left in all his projects with charges still coming in. *Ryan Bond moved and Stacey Cooper seconded to rescind the motion to request a refund of any money not spent by Shearer for the 2015-16 fiscal year. The motion carried unanimously.*

Jeff Heater and Andrea Galloway inquired about the status of the letter authorized in February to the OSU Dean requesting a meeting to discuss the reasons for the personnel problems at MCAREC. Stacey Cooper, Jeff Heater and Dan Crouse have been attending the meetings with the MCAREC Advisory Committee. OSU has sent representatives and agreed they were late to recognize a problem. John Carter, who is also on the Advisory Committee, found the response and attention from OSU positive. At least they are coming here and communicating. It was because of this no letter was drafted. Todd Einhorn has not made a decision yet on staying and OSU can't authorize positions to fill until the legislature determines funding for the next biennium. There will an opportunity for OSCC to communicate its priority position in December. The earliest a person could be in place is June 2017.

The discussion moved to Yan Wang's request to divert money left from OSCC funding of his project(s) to the purchase of a better work vehicle. Yan was able to get additional money from other sources for his project and used that first – that's why there's money left over. Brian Tuck left the meeting to get the amount that is left. In the mean time Kris gave her report.

ODA – Kris Anderson

Kris went over the commissioners whose terms are expiring and the applications received so far. Megan Thompson is eligible to be on the Commission again after sitting out the past year. She will apply for the Fresh Handler position. Dana will talk to Steve Sandau about re-applying for one of the Willamette Valley positions. We will still be one short from the Willamette Valley because Tom Brateng will be going off as of June 30. There was a question regarding our current Public Member – Jim Markman will be retiring from the Farm Credit Services in June – does that affect his appointment? Kris said it does not – if he decides to continue to serve that is fine.

Kris went over the discussion at the Commodity Commission Advisory Committee that Dana referred to. She also presented information regarding trade missions to Japan with WASADA for anyone that might be interested. Theresa Yoshioka is the contact at ODA.

Northwest Horticultural Council (NHC)

One of the new people hired, John May, has left the organization so a search for his replacement is underway.

OSU Research & Extension Report

Brian Tuck returned with the amount of money left in Yan Wang's account, \$41,000, which he would like to use to purchase a used truck. There was a lengthy discussion during which it was brought out that under Peter Shearer's 'position' there are three vehicles. That position is open so Brian was asked why Yan couldn't use one of the vehicles until the position is filled or Yan's budget can be adjusted to include the purchase of a used truck. The OSCC has determined that grower money should be used to fund research work, not buy equipment. Brian explained that the assets included with a 'position' were used as an employment incentive and they needed to be saved or sold to maintain the resources match for a future applicant.

Stacey Cooper moved and Les Stephens seconded not to allow the funds to be re-directed toward the purchase of a vehicle. The motion carried unanimously.

Brian said that Vaughn Walton has taken over the SWD Project that Peter Shearer was working on under the federal grant. That project includes a post doc to do some work at MCAREC on SWD. In addition Nick Wiman is taking over the BMSB federal project and will have a post-doc doing some work at MCAREC. Brian wanted to know if the OSCC would consider funding for entomology work by other OSU researchers either outside of the normal funding cycle or within it. The OSCC is interested to continue work on all cherry insect management and will review proposals whenever they are presented. Jeff Heater and Eric Shrum volunteered to read any pre-proposal ideas and offer suggestions.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Les Stephens suggested that the slate of officers for the OSCC for the next fiscal year be included in the newsletter. Dan Crouse is willing to stand for

Chairman again, Stacey Cooper is willing to stand for Vice-Chairwoman and Jared Gidley is willing to stand for Secretary-Treasurer.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting and the Budget Hearing for 2016-17 will be May 31, 2016 on the Columbia Gorge Community College campus, Building 1, 4th floor, Room 1.454 in The Dalles, OR starting at 2:00 P.M. following the pre-harvest tour.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.