

Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission
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REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Columbia Gorge Community College, Boardroom, Bldg 1
400 E. Scenic Dr., The Dalles, OR 97058
Thursday, August 6, 2015, 10:00 A.M.

Call to Order/Introductions

Dan Crouse, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. with the following Commissioners consisting of a quorum, including Dan, present: Stacey Cooper, Andrea Galloway, Leonard Aubert, Jim Markman, Les Stephens and Jeff Heater. Ryan Bond joined the meeting at 10:17.

Brian Tuck, Mid-Columbia Ag Research and Experiment Center (MCAREC), Megan Thompson, Oregon Cherry Growers, Kris Anderson, Commodity Commission Program Manager, Mike Willet and John May, Northwest Horticultural Council and Dana Branson, OSCC Administrator were also present.

The minutes of the regular meeting and budget hearing held on May 21, 2015 were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. *Jeff Heater moved and Les Stephens seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

The financial statements for May, June and July were emailed in advance and available at the meeting. Year-end financial reports were submitted as required to the state and the July report was discussed. *Jeff Heater moved and Andrea Galloway seconded to accept the financial reports for all three months as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

ODA Report

Amy Gilroy, the Farm-to-School Program Manager could not be here today so Kris talked about some new developments in the program. More money has been allocated and will be used to provide grants. The next step is to develop rules regarding the grants.

Kris has been focusing on contract approvals and year-end reports. She talked about the Master Agreement with the Ag Research Foundation (ARF). The new director has said he will work with other universities to develop an agreement similar to the one ARF has with Washington State University (WSU) on behalf of the OSCC to pass through research funds approved by the commissions.

She also talked about the Pop-Up dinners being scheduled. The first one was held July 24 at the Food Innovation Center. The OSCC received an invitation. Commissioner Ryan Bond attended and gave his impressions of the event along with some suggestions that Kris will take back to the event coordinators.

Northwest Horticultural Council (NHC)

Mike Willet talked about a California project to control SWD involving introducing a genetically modified insect. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), a component of the USDA, has provided mixed guidance about it. It hasn't been released yet, but SWD might be a good candidate for this experiment because it is an introduced insect and it's not part of the native food chain.

A project on powdery mildew (PM) survivability was funded last year to determine what species of mildew is on cherries and is it alive or dead on fruit to be shipped. Gary Grove's assistant found a technique to do it. After packing and fumigation 98-99% of the mildew is killed. Another step is to better understand stone fruit bud development in Australia so we would know if there is tissue susceptible to PM during the time frame US cherries are being imported.

Work is ongoing to develop Minimum Residue Levels (MRLs) on new chemistries for export. Taiwan had trouble this year with the chemical being used to control little cherry virus. Taiwan negotiations are improving, but the financial requirements to meet South Korean MRL establishment seem high to prohibitive.

Administrator's Activity Report

The Cherry Research Review dates this year are November 10 and 11 in Yakima this year. Dana will be putting a list of people planning to attend together for reservations soon. The Request for (research) Proposals (RFP) went out July 31 and pre-proposals are due September 1. Commissioners will be contacted to rate them.

A crop and cash estimate for 2015 was handed out. It included input from all the largest handlers and some estimates Dana made. Total tonnage assessments were paid on last year was 54,650. The estimate for 2015 is 34,185 tons or a little over 62% of last year.

The annual Agri-Business Council (ABC) membership is up for renewal. There were a few comments about what the organization does and the benefits to individual members. *Les Stephens moved and Stacey Cooper*

seconded to renew membership at the \$500 level this year. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman's Report

Each Commissioner and grower representative gave an overview of the 2015 cherry season they experienced during the Roundtable discussion. Everyone agreed the season started and finished early. Some varieties held up better in the heat than others. Fruit set was variable and the damage from the November freeze was not as bad as feared in some blocks, but others continue to decline. Labor was not an issue for most, but because the timing for everything was so different there were shortages in some areas. The crop was lower than average in most areas.

There was a discussion regarding how to improve the definition of how fruit is to be assessed. The question came up because there are salvage pools developed for distressed fruit. It may be used for brining, canned or freezer cherries depending on quality and demand. The price per pound is usually about half of what fresh would bring. It's not the optimal outcome for a grower. There was discussion about how Washington determines assessments and perhaps that would help move our decision along. *Les Stephens moved and Jeff Heater seconded to check with Washington and get a description of their process to bring to the next meeting for further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Some Commissioners have completed and sent in the Administrator evaluation. Dan will collect the rest and have a discussion with Dana.

The meeting recessed at 12:04 for lunch and reconvened at 12:29.

Research Committee Report

A list of the cumulative (both Oregon only and Oregon/Washington combined) results on the research priorities was handed out. The two states were close on their priorities.

Eric Shrum, Research Committee co-Chair, is in Prosser today attending a meeting to discuss the breeding program and where it's headed. WSU can and is looking for a new candidate to head the cherry breeding program.

Andrea Galloway attended a meeting of the breeding program oversight committee in June. She thought the test plots looked good. The horticulture part of the program has improved. She was encouraged with the progress and hopeful that benefits will be realized from the effort. There were some things not budgeted for, such as bird netting, and the program will be asking for additional funds. Dena Ybarra is spending a lot

of time managing the work. Dena and others overseeing the program are looking at consolidating the acreage and reducing duplications to lower the plot fees.

OSU Research & Extension Report

Brian Tuck reported that the station is coping with the drought. They have reduced irrigation water usage by 25%. They're upgrading sprinkler systems to be more efficient. Pear harvest is under way. They have a real labor shortage because they aren't allowed to pay piece rate. It has to be hourly and that affects their ability make a profit to help support the station. They are also working on deer fence to protect plantings.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be October 8, 2015 in Hood River at the Extension Annex meeting room located at 2990 Experiment Station Dr. starting at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.