

TACF BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020
ZOOM MEETING (RECORDED)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESENT

Steve Barilovits, Hill Craddock, Jay Cude, Deborah Delmer, Michael Doochin, Carolyn Keiffer, Dennis Liu, Lewis Lobdell, Greg Miller, Brian McCarthy, Chair, Allen Nichols, Cartter Patten, Jim Searing, Brad Stanback, Kim Steiner, Barbara Tormoehlen, Bruce Wakeland, John Wenderoth, Donald C. Willeke, Esq.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ABSENT

Jeanne Romero-Severson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS EMERITUS PRESENT

Gary Carver

STAFF PRESENT

Kendra Collins, Sara Fitzsimmons, Betsy Gamber, Eric Jenkins, Cherin Marmon-Saxe, Dan Mckinnon, Tom Saielli, Jules Smith, Lisa Thomson, CEO, Jared Westbrook, Paul Wingefeld, Brandon Yanez-Breeding, Shana Zimnoch

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Mary Ayers, Doug Gillis, Laurence Grossman, Tom Klak, Warren Laws, Kathy Patrick, Mark Stoakes, Jack Swatt

CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:00 PM

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (BRIAN MCCARTHY)

Brian welcomed attendees and reflected on the strength of the Foundation despite the personal and professional sacrifices that have been made by everyone during this COVID crisis. TACF had a seamless transition to working remotely, continuation of farm operations within CDC guidelines, and has been able to keep staff employed.

With the departure of Financial Manager Heather Nelson, TACF has been fortunate in the hiring of Paul Wingefeld. Paul transitioned very rapidly and has been instrumental in securing federal PPP funding during the initial stages of the pandemic.

Brian expressed extreme gratitude to the Executive Committee who stepped in immediately to assist Lisa and Betsy with operational guidance and support, in keeping the office and farm functionalities moving forward.

The virtual environment has presented TACF with unique opportunities to remain engaged with our membership through well attended Chestnut Chats. Virtual committee meetings such as Chapters and Science and Technology continue to drive our mission forward. Committee leaders need only to reach out to RSC's and staff to take advantage of these opportunities as well. With a solid response from staff, a great farm team, spectacular RSC's, helpful Board of Directors and amazing dedicated membership we are meeting the pandemic head on. Financials remain stable and donations continue to be strong.

ACTION ITEMS

I. CONDENSED PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR 2021 (BARBARA TORMOEHLEN)

- 1) Budget was revised.
 - a) Revenues reduced by 12%
 - i) Greatest share from individual gifts
 - b) Expenses reduced by 9%
 - i) External research largest share
 - c) Realistic reduction for running the Foundation
- 2) Paul
 - a) Normal funding lines might be moved to socio-economic issues
 - b) Wise idea to take a conservative approach
 - c) Will take it month by month
 - d) LTT: Surprised by some additional solicited and unsolicited gifts
- 3) Total income \$2.4 million and total expense of just over \$2.4 million with a net loss for this next year of \$80k
 - a) Forecast quite reasonable
- 4) Motion to accept seconded and approved**

II. WORKERS COMP RESOLUTION (PAUL WINGENFELD / BETSY GAMBER)

- 1) Refers to Lisa's travel as it relates her position with the organization
 - a. Requested by our Workers Comp Provider – Liberty Insurance to pass a resolution by the Board
 - b. Paul concerned about lack of coverage in states other than NC
- 2) More research required before passing
 - a. Staff will resolve these concerns and present at August meeting
- 3) Tabled until August meeting**

III. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CHARTER (STEVE BARILOVITS)

- 1) Charter was re-written by the Committee Chair and was reviewed and accepted by the Science and Technology Committee
- 2) Discussion: How does the committee work within the larger organization? Normally, the chairman is tasked with establishing procedure rather than specifying this in the committee charter.
- 3) SB: Science Committee Meeting format and reporting is basically being done as it has been
 - a. Senior Science Advisors will meet monthly
 - b. Chestnut Chats will cover additional topics
- 4) Motion to accept revised S&T Committee Charter was seconded and approved**

TREASURER'S REPORT (BARBARA TORMOEHLEN)

- 1) Treasurer's report has been updated and shared with the Finance Committee prior to this meeting
- 2) Lines of credit untouched
- 3) Cash accounts bump
 - a. Includes \$200k of the PPP
- 4) Investments have reacted to the volatility in the market
 - a. Down 9%
- 5) Cash flow
 - a. Paul has been vigilant with monthly projections

- 6) Appreciation to Paul for his great work in monitoring our finances during this time
- 7) \$208,100 in PPP
 - a. Most will be forgiven under HR 7010
- 8) Proposed budget previously discussed
- 9) External Audit in the coming months
- 10) JC: Projected year end expected?
 - a. BT: Will be confirmed in August
 - b. Marketing and Communications expenditures doubled from previous year
 - i. Scott Circle
 1. LTT: Split cost with SUNY-ESF 50%
 - ii. Down payment for mini documentary

PRESIDENTS REPORT (LISA THOMSON)

- 1) Kudos to our disciplined and productive team
 - a. Thank you again to Paul's ability to be able to grasp and excel in this environment
 - b. Recognizing all staff who are also parents and have kids at home and balancing it all
 - c. Tom has taken on the additional responsibility of the Southern Region with the departure of Ben Jarrett
 - d. Farm has been amazingly resilient with keeping the greenhouses and shade houses going
- 2) EC and Board have offered much help and guidance and have graciously given their time and expertise
- 3) Since Gettysburg a lot of our time has been dedicated to the Public Comment Period
 - a. All Chapter presidents contacted for their support
 - b. Kudos to Jim Searing for his leading the Public Comment Task Force
 - c. Also kudos to Cherin for her work on the stakeholder database
- 4) Outreach to Scientific Community and forging partnerships
 - a. Hudson Alpha
 - b. CRISPR
 - c. Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- 5) Cultivating partners at the USDA
 - a. March 5, 2020 meeting with 12 high level assistant chiefs in USFS
 - b. 20 minutes with Vicky Christianson – Chief of USFS
 - c. Rob McGregor from Sonny Purdue's – Sec of Agriculture
 - i. Supportive
 - ii. Suggested our attention with Trillion Trees Program and next federal farm bill
- 6) Thanks for all of the Spring Appeal donations and support

SCIENCE REPORT (JARED WESTBROOK)

- 1) Breeding
 - a. Challenge: Genetics more complex for blight resistance than assumed initially
 - i. Resistance as trees more American less resistant
 1. Phenotype for growth traits
 2. Crosses between trees with varying American ancestry
 3. Putting them in the forest to see if they function ecologically like American chestnuts
 4. Will be engaging more ecologists in our restoration effort
- 2) Outcrossing transgenics to wild type trees
 - a. Meadowview: crossing transgenics onto progeny of large surviving American chestnuts, Phytophthora resistant selections, blight resistant hybrids
 - i. Does the OXO plus Chinese genes enhance resistance?
 - ii. Can we combine blight and phytophthora resistance?

- 3) Gene Editing to enhance disease resistance in American chestnuts (CRISPR)
 - a. Need to understand the genes and the mechanisms for resistance before we can do gene editing
 - b. Hudson Alpha: American genome is assembled denote where the genes are in the genome – by August 2020
 - c. 2x Chinese genomes are assembled but need to be put into chromosome scale assemblies – in a few months
 - d. Hill Craddock – grafting Ellis, Nan-King and Mahogany and F1s trees
 - i. Will inoculate and see what genes are expressed in the stems in response to the fungus
 - e. Clemson / Penn State
 - i. Phytophthora inoculation – see which genes are expressed in the roots in response to the phytophthora
 - f. Susanna Kerio – new hire at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station – Poplar Tree response to disease
 - i. Genome editing training
 - ii. Enthusiastic about training
 1. Logistics for travel etc.

REGIONAL UPDATE (SARA FITZSIMMONS)

- 1) Adjustments due to COVID
 - a. Chestnut Chat series exceptional
 - i. Average 130 attendees
 - ii. 100 minutes of programming
 - b. Virtual meetings
 - c. Socially Distancing Plantings
- 2) Projects surrounding Leaf Collections
 - a. Landscape
 - b. Assessing Ancestry
 - c. Making better backcross selections
- 3) Landscape Genomics Project
 - a. Goals 500 – 1000 wild type
 - b. Good representation from across the range
 - c. Holes in the NW WV, SE OH, W TN & N MS
 - i. Tom pulling double duty to gather in these areas
 - ii. Areas important area due to prior data suggest this is where majority of diversity is
- 4) Making better selection from existing orchards
 - a. What makes an American an American?
 - b. Ecological Niche
 - c. Phenotyping samples
 - d. Form metrics quantified
 - e. Compare then to genomics data from VA tech
- 5) AIM's Project – Jeanne Romero-Severson
 - a. Help us to determine if trees are actually American chestnut
 - b. Is the info the same from the genotyping?
- 6) Regions ramp up SSA pre-screening
 - a. Much more time consuming with physical distancing
 - b. GA – Marty Cipollini chapter new SSA technique
 - i. Cutting top of stem and inoculating top instead of tiny incisions
 - ii. Cut time in half
- 7) Scion Collecting

- a. Lots of grafting (Hill hundreds)
- 8) Partners with OxO Crosses (Purdue, SUNY-ESF, Meadowview, SCBI, UNE – Tom Klak)
 - a. May be affected by the freeze
- 9) Lots going on – great innovation, enthusiasm and engagement
- 10) DD: RNA Quality?
 - a. JW: first 2 attempts not successful, but will continue with new methods

COMMITTEE REPORTS

I. CHAPTERS COMMITTEE (CAROLYN KEIFFER)

- 1) Well attended May 6th meeting
 - a. COVID guidelines
 - b. Sharing plans for projects that had to stop

II. RESTORATION COMMITTEE (BRUCE WAKELAND)

- 1) Looking for date in July for next meeting

III. FINANCE COMMITTEE (BARBARA TORMOEHLN)

- 1) Already presented

IV. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (STEVE BARILOVITS)

- 1) Already presented

V. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (LEWIS LOBDELL)

- 1) Committed to finding additional Board members
 - a. Bringing younger blood onto committees
 - b. Grow the next generation for the Board
- 2) Standardization of documents between incorporated and unincorporated chapters

VI. PROMOTION AND OUTREACH (JAY CUDE)

- 1) June 9, 2020 meeting
 - a. 4 new members
 - b. Review charter
 - c. Review and update P&O portion of Strategic plan
 - i. 3.1.1 – Define the product
 - ii. Science staff engaged
 - iii. Layperson and Technical version
 - 1. Product / Process / Timeline
 - iv. To be submitted to SUNY-ESF and S&T committee
 - v. Other components will be divided between the committee

NEW BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

- 1) New Nutters
 - a. Samantha and Peter Bowers
 - b. Steve Barilovits V

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:27 PM