

NOTES

IANR Liaison Committee

Friday, February 6, 2015

2:00-4:00pm

Nebraska East Union, Bluestem Room

Present: Jiri Adamec, Julie Albrecht, Angela Pannier, Ann Fenton, Thomas Hunt, Randy Pryor

Excused: Ellen Paparozzi

Joined at 3:00pm: Vice Chancellor Green, Jessie Brophy (Event Planner), Zaneta Hahn (recorder)

All Hands Feedback

Dr. Green reported to the committee that the All Hands meeting on January 22 had average attendance. Many people watch online, and many watch it archived as well. There was no particular feedback to report. Julie asked if Dr. Green had any information on Chancellor Perlman's future plans. Perlman has been Chancellor for 15 years. Julie congratulated Dr. Green on the accolade from the Governor in the state of the state address recently. He shared that the Governor studied Nebraska agriculture very carefully during his campaign and heard Dr. Green speak several times. It is nice to see that he is engaged in agriculture as a highest priority in Nebraska. Governor Ricketts also came and spoke with the Engler students last week on campus.

Roads Scholar Tour

Dr. Green asked the committee if they would like to offer the tour again. In the past it has been offered every other year. This would make it every year, or it could be offered in the fall. The group agreed that it is too late to schedule a tour for spring. If they would like to do one later in the summer ahead of the school year, this needs to be decided before spring break. Zaneta will place it on the agenda for the March meeting. Tom mentioned that he thinks VIP days at NEREC are on August 6. Dr. Green suggested that perhaps a shorter version of the tour focused on central to the eastern part of the state would be appropriate.

Eastern NE Extension Restructure

The committee shared that some confusion is circulating about the possible restructure of the eastern part of the state in extension and research. Some think that restructuring decisions have already been made. Dr. Green shared on Jan 1 he received the follow-up task report he referred to at the last Liaison Committee meeting. In the report they recommend moving forward thinking about restructuring the research centers – centered on making ARDC more of a research and extension center hub (like PHREC and WCREC) for eastern Nebraska with spokes out to the Haskell Ag Lab in the northeast and the South Central Ag Lab in Clay Center. Financial modeling of this structural change is now required to evaluate the recommendation. There is also discussion about the current district structure (southeast and

northeast). There is some assumption that there may be movement toward one district for the eastern part of the state, but the decision has not been made. Ann shared that several faculty told her the restructure was a “done deal”. Dr. Green shared that the initial recommendations received in the task force’s work thus far are pointing in that direction, but he does not have all of the information required to make the decision at this time. The deans are now working with a sub-task force group (including leaders of affected departments and units) to complete the financial modeling of the recommendations, with a deadline for their report to the Vice Chancellor of July 1. If the modeling provides a strong case for moving forward with changes, then we would go through a period in the remainder of 2015 engaging our stakeholders (both inside IANR and externally) to receive feedback. Additionally, if the changes require any change in land ownership, approval of the Board of Regents and the state of Nebraska would be required. At the earliest we would be through the full vetting process by early 2016. Randy shared that some of the angst may be amongst the support staff. Tom agreed that there has been no communication with the staff at the Haskell Ag Lab, and with gradual attrition of faculty lines there over time this is a concern for long-term sustainability of the HAL. Dr. Green appreciated that the original task force report and discussion of it since last spring has likely resulted in some of this uncertainty in our faculty and staff, particularly in eastern Nebraska. For that reason, he and deans Hibberd and Clutter are now planning a series of “town hall” sessions with out-state faculty and staff. These will include all four districts (Panhandle on Feb 24, West Central on Feb 25 are already scheduled). The sessions of the eastern portion of the state are now being planned to interface as many of our team in the northeast and southeast districts as possible and are hoped to occur over the next 60 days. This will allow a full update on the status and process moving forward and allow faculty and staff to ask questions and express any concerns.

Committee for Policy on Appointment and Promotion

The Liaison Committee charged the nominating committee with selecting nominations. The nominating committee might not be functioning at a very high level. Is the Committee for Policy on Appointment and Promotion even needed? The guidelines have not been updated since 2001, and some of the terminology in the current guidelines are very out of date. Dr. Green agreed that there is a need to look at the function and role of this committee. He will take this to the Deans Council. The promotion and tenure guidelines have been under discussion, so this is timely. Questions to ask: What does this committee do? Are they required in the bylaws?

NY Times Article

Angie shared that many have received calls about the recent article that appeared in the NY Times on USMARC. Dr. Green mentioned that he has a long personal history with USMARC. He was a national program leader at USDA-ARS with budgetary oversight of the majority of the research work at US MARC 10 years ago as well as did his Ph.D. research at US MARC in the 1980’s. He has no question that the article is a gross misrepresentation of the research there, and that the article’s author has a clear agenda that is anti-animal agriculture and science. It is a depiction of a 30-year period of time in the largest research program of its kind in the world involving 30,000 animals at any one time, focusing on isolated instances taken out of context,

some of which have no record at USDA-ARS. UNL-IANR is in touch with USDA as they respond to the allegations in the article to protect the research center, people, and animals housed there and currently engaged in highly important and critical animal science, food safety, and animal health research. There is considerable concern about the safety of the animals and the employees there as USDA goes through an evaluation of the animal care policies and procedures questioned in the article, while at the same time the article is being sensationally promoted in various media channels by HSUS, PETA, and other activist groups. Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack has appointed an investigative external review team of internationally known veterinarians and animal scientists. They are charged with reviewing the program and submitting a report within 60 days. US MARC, as a federal research facility, operates their own animal care program and IACUC. While UNL is not the focus of the article, as a partner with US MARC for its entire 50 year history, we are standing by USDA-ARS in a supportive role as we remain confident that the true story will emerge from the external review team through its work as they evaluate the facts. Dr. Green and Dean Clutter, along with USDA agency leadership, met with the employees at US MARC on January 23rd (and Dr. Green met with them again with the Undersecretary Woteki and ARS Administrator Jacobs-Young on February 13th) to re-assure them of the agency's support for their work and the process in responding to the NYT allegations. Security and protection of people, animals, and facilities are a primary focus during this evaluation process.

Dalbey-Halleck Farm

The committee asked if the 'virgin land' at the Dalbey-Halleck site would be preserved with the sale. Dr. Green reported that the cattle have been sold. It will no longer be a research site. How to transfer the land is being evaluated. In that process they are looking to preserve the one section considered to be native prairie.

Parking for off-campus faculty

The REC members reported that the A lot passes they use have become more and more restricted. The lots they can park in continue to become fewer and farther away from the East Union. Dr. Green indicated that this is a question for VC Chris Jackson. He will look into the issue to try to find a solution.

Cost of NIC

The committee agreed that NIC has a great space for conferences, but the price really limits use. This could be barrier for more people utilizing the space. Dr. Green suggested IANR could perhaps negotiate with the alumni association to buy a discounted rate for entities through IANR. He will look into this option.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.

Recorder: Zaneta Hahn

Distributed electronically to the IANR Liaison Committee for review: 2/18/2015

Distributed electronically to the IANR Faculty: 2/23/2015

Upcoming Meetings:

Mon, March 16, 2015, 2:30-4:30pm (Dr. Green joins at 3:30pm)

Tues, April 14, 2015, 9:00-11:00am (Dr. Green joins at 10:00am)