

**PENNSYLVANIA POTATO RESEARCH PROGRAM BOARD MEETING**

**Minutes of February 2, 2023**

**Hershey Lodge and Convention Center**

**Cocoa Suite #6**

**325 University Drive**

**Hershey, PA 17033**

Public notice of the February 2, 2023 Pennsylvania Potato Research Program Board Meeting was given as stipulated by the Sunshine Law.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mark Troyer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. Board members in attendance (in addition to Mr. Troyer) included Nolan Masser, Vice Chair; Jonathan Blass, Secretary/Treasurer; Bryan Bender; Keith Masser (via video); Valery Robbins; Joseph Farabaugh.

Absent were Mark Farabaugh and James Benshoff.

Also attending were Patrick Andrews, Chief of Market Development; Holly Zarefoss, Administrative Assistant for Commodities; Lindsay Young, Senior Manager, McConly and Asbury Accountants; Jenny Groff, Clerical Assistant.

Nathan Tallman, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Cooperative Potato Growers, Dr. Xinshun Qu and Michael Peck, Researchers, PSU; and Robert Leiby, agronomist, Pennsylvania Cooperative Potato Growers, were also present.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**RESOLUTION 2023.01-APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Presented by: Valery Robbins

Seconded by: Joseph Farabaugh

Passed: Unanimously

To approve Minutes of the July 14, 2022 meeting.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Lindsay Young, McConly and Asbury Accountants, referred Board members to the A/P Aging QuickZoom Aging Summary Report, Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2022, Profit and Loss Statement.

## **POTATO ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Jenny Groff, clerical assistant, referred members to the Potato Assessment Report as of January 17, 2023 noting that \$36,650.16 was collected from 55 producers, out of which \$28,740.16 was banked. Four delinquents remain for 2022. Further statistics were provided.

Mr. Andrews introduced Jenny Groff as the new clerical assistant for Commodities. Ms. Groff provided a brief history of her personal and educational background.

### **RESOLUTION 2023.02-APPROVAL OF FINANCIALS**

Presented by: Jonathan Blass

Seconded by: Nolan Masser

Passed: Unanimously

Motion to approve the Financial Reports as presented.

## **PRESENTATION**

Dr. Xinshun Qu and Michael Peck, Researchers, Penn State University, presented before the Board for discussion of their Pennsylvania Regional Potato Germplasm Evaluation Program. Dr. Qu indicated that Mr. Peck officially retired in December and that the position has not yet been filled but there is an offer.

Dr. Qu indicated the program focuses on the types and quantities of varieties and potato disease management. He noted this year's proposal is similar to what was proposed last year. Trial potato varieties discussed included the Brodie and Mackinaw.

Mr. Peck discussed storage of the Mackinaw potato and commented about the switch in the plant spacing this year. Board members had questions.

Members had discussion with regard to Penn State's financial proposal in the amount of \$44,000. Mr. Andrews noted the Board should consider the \$7,920 that was not on the statement. He suggested including the pool of available funds and priorities that the Board is interested in in future RFPs. Members had further discussion regarding funding.

Ms. Young returned to the meeting to discuss Budget vs. Actual information. She indicated the amount budgeted for research is \$40,000. Ms. Young stated approximately \$1,800 is left for accounting, legal, Board and court reporting expenditures. Mr. Andrews calculated \$49,372 of free and clear money available. Mr. Masser suggested allocating \$36,000 which would leave \$13,000 for next year. Members had further discussion regarding the matter.

### **RESOLUTION 2023.03-APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL**

Presented by: Nolan Masser

Seconded by: Jonathan Blass

There was discussion regarding funding from other sources including the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program and discussing with legislators regarding the possibility of more money in the state budget. Mr. Andrews talked about the shrinking peach industry, and commented on the other fruit and vegetable industries. Members had discussion regarding Penn State's commitment to the potato research program. Mr. Masser noted that the balance of its funding would come from the ag research extension program. He opined the Board has a good case to continue increasing funding for potatoes and that the university is going to continue to be a "good mechanism and conduit" to help facilitate that. He called for the question.

Passed: Unanimously

Motion to approve funding for Penn State's Germplasm proposal in the amount of \$36,000.

There was discussion regarding an amended referendum for an increase in funding. Mr. Andrews calculated that 4,566 acres total from all growers times \$2 an acre would result in approximately \$10,000. There were further comments by Board members regarding a referendum.

#### **RESOLUTION 2023.04-APPROVAL OF AMENDED REFERENDUM**

Presented by: Keith Masser

Seconded by: Jonathan Blass

There was further discussion regarding the resolution.

Passed: Unanimously

Motion to approve a referendum amendment to increase the assessment from \$8 to \$10 and that the matter be addressed promptly.

The referendum process was referred to.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

It was noted that terms expiring this year included James Benshoff, Nolan Masser, Jonathan Blass and Mark Troyer. Nolan Masser, Jonathan Blass and Mark Troyer agreed to stay on another term. Mr. Benshoff was not present at the meeting. Mr. Andrews explained a nomination form would be provided to the nominees, followed by a letter accepting the nomination. Members were requested to submit other nominations.

#### **SET NEXT MEETING DATE**

Members reviewed available dates. The next meeting would be held virtually on Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**RESOLUTION 2023.05-ADJOURNMENT**

Presented by: Bryan Bender

Seconded by: Jonathan Blass

Passed: Unanimously

To adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 a.m.



Erica Correia

February 2, 2023

