

ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC): <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>

Call MINUTES for: 10/22/2019 (4th Tuesday monthly)

4 pm ET, via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/257727621> or 1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 257 727 621)

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: Ernie Minton (NCRA) Past Chair: Gary Thompson (NERA)</p> <p>Delegates: Alton Thompson (ARD) Dyremple Marsh (ARD) Dave Benfield (NCRA) Shawn Donkin (NCRA) Sabine O'Hara (NERA) Jon Wraith (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Saied Mostaghimi (SAAESD) Glenda Humiston (WAAESD) Chris Pritsos (WAAESD)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED) Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD; Recorder)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Jon Boren (ECOP) Rebecca Walth (CARET) Doug Steele (APLU) Eddie Gouge (APLU) Jim Richards (CGA) Hunt Shipman (CGA) Vernie Huber (CGA) Maggie Earle (CGA) Josh Stull (NIFA) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Glen Hoffsis (BVM) Vacant (BHS)</p>
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Participants: Ernie Minton, Jon Wraith, Doug Steele, Maggie Earle, Shawn Donkin, Rick Rhodes, Saied Mostaghimi, Steve Lommel, Josh Stull, Paula Geiger, Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton (recorder)

Action Items:

- Please send ideas for having more proactive, strategic BLC call discussions to Jeff, Ernie, Chris.
- Jeff will contact Bret Hess to determine the timeline for identifying the incoming BLC chair from the W region and two WAAESD delegates. DONE.

Call Minutes:

1. Welcome and roll call – Ernie and Chris
 - a. Done, see participants list above.
2. Approval of 9/24 meeting minutes – Ernie
 - a. Approved as distributed.
3. Approval of today's agenda – Ernie
 - a. Approved as distributed.
4. APLU update – Doug Steele
 - a. Doug and others at APLU are busy building the agenda for the annual meeting in November. The outgoing ECOP/ESCOP chairs discussed starting advocacy efforts sooner, so Doug met with Cornerstone (CGA) and the BAC to discuss a proactive approach for this effort. Doug is

also working with CGA to develop a process, so that we also have priorities in place in time for the next Farm Bill.

- b. At the Nashville meeting, the joint BLC group discussed the need to message out the importance and ROI of Capacity funds. Discussion included working with TEconomy and states that already have a good method of quantifying Capacity ROI.
 - c. The Commission on Food, Environment, and Renewable Resources (CFERR) has been discussing how to make their commission meetings more valuable, perhaps with a focus on climate. Similarly, Sally Rockey sent out a FFAR teaser regarding making a move that would include climate efforts, but LGUs were not included. This is a good example of why we need to get ahead of such efforts, lead from the front, and be nimbler instead of being left behind.
 - d. Doug had a phone call yesterday with Scott Angle regarding USDA-NIFA's presence at the Annual APLU meeting. Both Scott Angle and Scott Hutchins will attend the APLU Annual Meeting. Scott indicated that he is now ready to hear back from us on ways we might better partner with NIFA in a more targeted way, to also include the 1890s and 1994s. Doug will look at the Annual Meeting agenda and create time for this conversation with leadership in San Diego, so that we can better build a framework for communication and feedback. Perhaps this would be set up as an ad hoc committee, set up initially during the beginning of the Annual Meeting. Doug will find the time and people to make this session happen.
 - e. Question from Shawn Donkin: What's the best wording to use for climate change efforts, should it be focused on resilience or the study of climate change? It's important to work closely with FFAR (and other ag groups) on common and effective/non-controversial language for maximum success in the climate area. Best to frame the language around adaptability/changes in practices rather than the validity of the science.
 - f. Jeff and Rick mentioned that research ED conversations have been occurring around NIFA processes and multistate project and OTT funding approval steps that may be falling through the cracks and adversely affecting state budgets. Also, state budget officers aren't sure who they can contact about concerns right now, as their past NIFA contacts are gone. EDs would like time to consistently aggregate these issues from states to regions/nation and then periodically discuss with NIFA on how we can help with these concerns. Doug Steele acknowledged these concerns and also mentioned that now is the time we can re-imagine NIFA and help make it work better for all of us.
5. Cornerstone report – Maggie Earle, Vernie Huber
 - a. Appropriations update – The Senate is set this week to consider the FY20 Ag Appropriations bill, which is part of the larger HR3055 package. Unclear if any appropriations will be approved this year and it's expected that at least a short term CR will still be needed, if not one for a full year.
 - b. Regarding the SCRI match waiver, there's a preference by Chairman Roberts to not raise it on the Senate Ag Appropriations bill as an amendment such as in the House and CR, but instead wait to have it addressed in conference.
 - c. Maggie Earle mentioned that during the call time, the Senate voted to invoke cloture.
 6. NIFA update – Paula Geiger, Josh Stull
 - a. NIFA continues to post job vacancies on their website and is holding a career expo on 11/6 in KC, announced in 10/6 NIFA update.
 - b. Please call Josh or Paula if stakeholders are having trouble reaching people and they'll direct them to where they need to go. Josh is now acting Communications Director and will work more closely with stakeholders in this capacity, as well.

- c. There will be an updated organization chart in this week's NIFA stakeholder report or you can just google NIFA org chart, since it's already posted on the website (<https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifaorgchart>).
 - d. Joint APLU/USDA-NIFA release on Ag Research Awards was issued today (10/22).
 - e. When looking for open NIFA jobs, here's a timesaving tip: Go to <https://nifa.usda.gov/career-opportunities> and scroll down to the USA jobs link. This will take you directly to current NIFA opening, so there's no need to do the USA jobs search.
 - f. The permanent NIFA location in KC is still unknown; Josh is not aware of a timeline for announcing the location.
7. ECOP report – Jon Boren
- a. None given, not on call.
8. Discussion and Input Topics:
- a. Processes and Actions for Earlier Advocacy of ESS Priorities (see attachment from Joint ESCOP/ECOP Meeting on 9/24)
 - i. EDs and past BLC leadership worked backwards from existing meetings and developed the possible list of dates and meetings as potential times to start earlier advocacy discussions and efforts.
 - ii. We need to think about the best, most systematic way to put these efforts in place, while working with CGA and other ag groups. When we meet at Joint COPs in July, that will likely be a good time to consider 2022 priorities. It's probably 6 months out before we fully identify this process.
 - iii. APLU is working closely with NIFA on their Congressionally mandated budget line consolidation and strategic realignment. Ideally, we want to have fewer NIFA lines for easier advocacy, but at the same time, protect all. There has been discussion around consolidating some lines into Capacity, but that could be problematic because these funds go to the states and states' directors would decide how those funds are spent. Trust would be critical if this type of consolidation were to occur, so we all need to work closely with NIFA and other partners.
 - iv. Is the One Ask approach how we want to proceed for another year?
 - v. Right now we need BLCs to:
 - 1. Help clearly identify the ROI of capacity and why these funds are important, not just what we do with them.
 - 2. Help us when we need to prioritize lines. For instance, if we receive more money, what will we do with it?
 - vi. Ernie mentioned that the meetings last January with other stakeholder groups were very helpful with their strategic realignment efforts. This could have value for additional advocacy efforts and should be continued in the future.
 - vii. Director reactions:
 - 1. The fewer requests the better. How do we determine a consolidation process even just within our own director groups? Even that will be challenging.
 - 2. Also, what's to prevent our elected officials from adding lines back in?
 - b. Strategies for Strategic/Futuristic BLC Calls
 - i. What are some opportunities for BLC to be more proactive, going forward? How can we also be more innovative?
 - ii. **Action: Please send your thoughts on energizing and making BLC call more strategic and proactive to Jeff, Ernie, Chris.**
9. Incoming BLC Chair Selection – Ernie Minton, Jeff Jacobsen

- a. Next BLC chair is scheduled to come from the W region and would rotate in as chair after the 2020 Fall ESS meeting.
- b. **Action: Jeff will contact Bret Hess to determine the timeline for identifying the incoming BLC chair from the W region. DONE**

10. Other business, as needed

Call adjourned at 4:57 pm ET.