

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

Call MINUTES for: 6/23/2020 (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: Bill Brown (SAAESD) Gary Thompson (Active Past Chair, NERA)</p> <p>Delegates: Alton Thompson (ARD) Dyremple Marsh (ARD) Gary Pierzynski (NCRA) Shawn Donkin (NCRA) Sabine O'Hara (NERA) Jon Wraith (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Saied Mostaghimi (SAAESD) Glenda Humiston (WAAESD, Incoming Chair) Chris Pritsos (WAAESD)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED) Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD; Recorder)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Jon Boren (ECOP) Katie Frazier (CARET) Doug Steele (APLU) Eddie Gouge (APLU) Caron Gala (APLU) Jim Richards (CGA) Hunt Shipman (CGA) Maggie Earle (CGA) Vernie Huber (CGA) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Mitch Adams (NIFA) Glen Hoffsis (BVM) Laura Jolly (BHS)</p>
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Participants: Ernie Minton, Laura Jolly, Jon Boren, Vernie Hubert, Rick Rhodes, Gary Pierzynski, Doug Steele, Saied Mostaghimi, Paula Geiger, Alton Thompson, Maggie Earle, Caron Gala, Shawn Donkin, Jon Wraith, Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton (recorder)

Call Agenda/Notes:

1. Welcome and roll call (Ernie and Chris) – Done, see Participants list above.
2. Approval of 5/26 meeting minutes at http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BLC_MIN_-20200526.pdf (Ernie) – Approved as distributed.
3. Approval of today's agenda – (Ernie)
 - Jeff requested the addition of an item to discuss a possible new director-at-large member to the ESCOP Finance Committee.
 - Agenda approved as distributed with the above addition from Jeff.
4. ESCOP COVID-19 Supplemental Proposals and Budget Updates – Ernie, Cornerstone, Jeff
 - \$300M Research Proposal (and \$80M Extension) and Senate Staff Briefing (6/18) – Ernie
 - Caron from APLU set up a call last week for KSU and MSU university government affairs personnel, Ernie Minton and Doug Buhler, and members of Senate Ag Committee staff as a targeted effort to communicate the need for increased Capacity funds to support research and Extension efforts in the wake of COVID-19.

- The call went well and positive feedback was given.
 - Call attendees received a strong message that positive action from the Senate will be leadership-driven and require support from Senate leadership, McConnell and Schumer.
 - Right now, it's important that FY21 appropriation support move forward, as described in the most recent Cornerstone Call to Action (which is at a 40% open rate so far, better than past Calls). Messages that we send are important and it's critical that we act on these Calls in a timely manner. Cornerstone will be having a call next week to further discuss how best to handle Calls to Action.
- Infrastructure Proposal
 - We continue to wait on the appropriate opportunity to act on this.
 - There will be an APLU and CGA meeting this Thursday on this proposal (rescheduled to July 9).
 - Any momentum that can be built now at the state level is important.
 - Data from the five institutions that did not participate in the first iteration has been provided to Sightlines.
 - FFY21 Budget – Mark-up will be during the first part of July, on the floor end of July.
5. APLU update (Doug Steele)
- Doug participated with Rick Rhodes on a call with Forbes-Tate leadership team (our newly hired system marketing firm) on how best to use social media for advocacy efforts. There will be a July 7 meeting to share more on Phase One efforts, as well as what the next 6-8 months will look like.
 - Eric Young and Doug Steele continue to work with Sightlines. The refresh of LGU infrastructure data collection is complete and now includes the institutions missing from the original survey in 2014. Sightlines indicated that they now have the methodology to calculate the economic multiplier that would come as a result of proposed state infrastructure projects.
 - A Capacity Working group was established to look at value of Capacity Funds. Rick Klemme will chair the group and also serve as a central repository for past work on these efforts. Doug/Rick will reach out to AES and EXT to collect any previous messaging we have on this and use it to compile a database for future messaging needs.
 - The APLU Ag Innovation agenda (AIA) is moving forward. The hope is to host one session per region and 1-2 nationally with strong support from LGUs and production agriculture. Looking to have individual universities host these sessions. This is part of the new APLU focus on creating a national voice.
 - Doug thanked all the regional EDs for their work on advancing many national efforts beyond the AIA effort.
6. NIFA update – Paula Geiger with Mitch Adams (NIFA Stakeholder and Congressional Affairs Officer)
- NIFA is still working on updates to POW and REEport as they look at ways to streamline reporting requirements.
 - Regarding COVID-19, NIFA is meeting daily to evaluate policy questions coming in and updating FAQs and related sections of the NIFA website to better share updates and guidance as it comes down from the administration. Please continue to look at these pages and ask questions, as needed. This will help NIFA better clarify and share important information.

- NIFA is awaiting FY2021 Congressional Action while also working to prepare the FY2022 budget request for the Secretary of Ag, which will go to OMB in September.
 - Personnel Updates:
 - Drenda Williams, hired from NCRS is now part of the EOS staff. She is handling Civil Rights and other issues for grantees.
 - Scott Angle will stay on with NIFA for a few more weeks. He and Parag Chitnis are working closely and attending meetings together to allow for a smooth transition.
 - Faith Peppers, new Communications Director from UGA.
 - Matt Faulkner, new Deputy Director of Grants and Financial Management
 - Three new division directors have been hired: John McCarter, Food Safety; Kevin Kephart, Institute of Food Production and Sustainability; Peter Matavelli, Community and Education. Three more new division director hires to come over the next few weeks, along with new NPLs.
 - Still seeking to fill the deputy director positions in the science institutes.
 - NIFA org chart being updated as often as possible, but right now is not as current as it should be.
 - Alton indicated that a Dr. Maharani from Pine Bluff is a new NPL with Minority Serving Institutions.
 - Ernie suggested that it will be important to keep new people up on BAA structure and how NIFA works with us. Paula will make sure that they touch based on this issue with the new employees, going forward.
7. ECOP report – Jon Boren
- ECOP Budget and Legislative Committee met on June 9 to provide the CLP with Extension opportunities and suggestions for the next Farm Bill. These included SNAP-Ed, rural economic development, and rural broadband.
 - Jon thanked Doug for pulling together the working group for messaging the value of Capacity programs.
8. BHS report – Laura Jolly
- BHS members have been connecting through “coffee break” topics. The next one will be on race relations, through the ECOP developed, “Coming Together for Racial Understanding” program.
9. Future BLC Calls and Fall ESS Face to Face Updates – Ernie, Jeff
- The next scheduled BLC call is the week after Joint COPs. Ernie proposed we cancel the BLC call in favor of the committee connecting via the Joint COPs ESCOP meeting.
 - The August BLC call will occur as scheduled, for now.
 - Our next meeting after August is scheduled to be the face to face during the Fall ESS meeting. The ESS meeting planning team is querying regions to see how many will be able to travel and attend in person. More to come as the information is collected.
10. Other business, as needed
- Jeff provided background information on the \$600,000 of ESCOP funds currently held at APLU and the evolution of the ESCOP Finance Committee, which serves to interface between TD Wealth and ESCOP. Jeff then put forth a request for a BLC director to serve on the ESCOP Finance Committee, filling the At-Large BLC member. It was noted that additional vacancies will occur with Deb Hamernik and Gary Thompson moving to different positions outside of AES directorship. Saied volunteered and Rick seconded

Saied for this role. Ernie will remain on the Finance Committee into the new FFY as the Past BLC Chair.

- Caron informed the group that tomorrow there will be a “marker bill” introduced in the House related to the \$380M NIFA request, listed as a USDA research request. (A marker bill is a piece of legislation introduced in Congress that's not actually intended to pass as a standalone bill, but rather is intended for discussion and possible inclusion in a larger bill.)
 - Doug Steele will share information on the marker bill directly with the BLC.
 - This marker bill will include a combination of COVID-19 supplemental funding along with FFY2021 appropriations.
 - Please note that this is NOT an FY21 increase request, it's specific to COVID-19 research for FY20.
 - The most useful thing to do right now is continue to focus on Cornerstone's current FFY2021 appropriations Call to Action and please wait for more information before acting on this new information. A reminder of the previously requested \$380M wouldn't hurt when mentioning FFY21 appropriations, either.
 - Senate mark ups start next week, with July 6 for House. Cornerstone will send info on all of this as it proceeds.
- Rick Rhodes informed the group that Jon Wraith will be replaced by NERA when he leaves the University of NH. Rick thanked Jon for his service on BLC. Jon indicated that he will stay on the BLC for two more months as the UNH Dean and Director position is filled.

Call adjourned at 4:59 pm ET.