

Communications and Marketing Committee Minutes August 19, 2021, 3:00-4:00 PM ET

In attendance: Karla Trautman (Chair-South Dakota State), Steve Loring (Past Chair-New Mexico State), JF Meullenet (Incoming Chair-Arkansas), Elizabeth Gregory North (Mississippi State), Wendie Cohick (Rutgers), Mark Latimore (Fort Valley State), Cynda Clary (Oklahoma State), Faith Peppers (NIFA), Caroline Henney (APLU), Doug Steele (APLU), Andrea Putman (APLU), Ryan McConaghy (Forbes-Tate Partners), Rick Rhodes (NERA), David Leibovitz (NERA)

1. Approval of the agenda
 - **The agenda was approved unanimously.**
2. Approval of minutes, 6/17/2021
 - **The minutes were approved unanimously.**
3. Debrief from Joint COPS (Karla and Doug)
 - Andrea Putman was introduced and CMC updates were presented to all BAA sections.
 - Ag Infrastructure is included in an upcoming budget reconciliation package.
 - Strategic Realignment (proposed consolidation of NIFA budget lines) effort is moving forward.
 - A formal request for CMC standing committee status, with intent to restructure CMC membership composition, was presented to the BAA Policy Board of Directors.
 - National Land-Grant Impacts Database (NIDB, <https://landgrantimpacts.org/>) submitted a formal request to ESCOP and ECOP for subcommittee status under the future CMC. (The NIDB is currently a joint task force of ESS and CES.) Both ESCOP and ECOP approved the request.
4. Forbes/Tate Partners update (FTP; Ryan McConaghy)
 - FTP is preparing to hand off the communications efforts to Andrea Putman as AVP at the end of August
 - September's social media toolkit will include many "back to school" themes and COVID-related themes.
 - Closeout activities of the social media project include an audit of online social media traffic and report on best practices for moving forward.
 - The AgIsAmerica website should be revamped, perhaps including video materials. Use social media as a broadcast platform to drive followers to the home page – AgIsAmerica.
 - FTP recommends continuing to build off the established network of Ag communicators
 - The breadth of BAA activities touching agriculture in different ways was wider than expected – a pleasant surprise to FTP.
 - Karla thanked FTP and Ryan McConaghy for their efforts and their close working relationship with the BAA over the past year.
5. Next immediate CMC moves (Andrea)
 - Andrea will be in close contact with FTP during the final week of their contract.
 - One-on-one meetings between Andrea and all CMC members will be scheduled to discuss the emerging communications plan and become more familiar with the committee.

- APLU is working through resumes for an associate position who will split time between supporting Andrea and supporting Wendy Fink and the Board on Human Sciences. Interviews will be conducted in September.
6. CMC priorities, 2-year plan (attached, Karla and Andrea)
- **CMC members may submit feedback on the 2-year plan proposal to Andrea anytime (aputman@aplu.org, 202-478-6028)**
 - A podcast series could be developed to highlight stories from across the LGU system.
 - Communicators will be asked to generate long-form story ideas and pitch them for use in feature articles.
 - Strengthening partnerships with allied organizations and NIFA is a priority.
 - This does not need to be a 2-year plan, but CMC should agree upon a length of time and discuss the plan at regular intervals.
 - We need to reinvigorate the AgIsAmerica website with original content and drive our established followers in social spaces, to the AgIsAmerica website.
 - Web design (Wordpress) work may require commitment of additional resources. The associate position may help with web design if they have those skills, but we may need assistance from a professional web designer.
 - We could establish a relationship with an LGU to support back-end web design of AgIsAmerica, similar to the established models of TAMU hosting the NIDB and Clemson hosting NIMSS.
7. Closing comments and adjournment
- Monthly CMC meetings will be scheduled moving forward.
 - **The CMC will meet again on Thursday, September 16 at 3:00 pm ET. Email reminders with connection details and supporting documentation will be circulated before the next meeting.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm ET.