

**ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC): <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>
 January 2023 Meeting Notes- **Members & Liaisons**
 Tuesday, January 24, 2023 - 3pm (CT)/4pm (ET)**

Attendees: Anton Bekkerman, Gary Pierzynski, Vernon Jones, Jason Henderson, Doug Steele, Bridget Krieger, Scott Senseman, Sreekala Bajwa, Jeanette Thurston, Jennifer Tippetts, Matt Wilson, Paula Greiger, Glenda Humiston, Katie Frazier, Chris Hamilton, Gary Thompson and Cindy Morley

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: Anton Bekkerman (NERA) Past Chair: Glenda Humiston (WAAESD) Incoming Chair: Steve Lommel (SAAESD)</p> <p>Members: Alton Thompson (ARD) Vernon Jones (ARD) Gary Pierzynski (NCRA) Marty Draper (NCRA) Puneet Srivastava (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Scott Senseman (SAAESD) Sreekala Bajwa (WAAESD) Shawn Donkin (WAAESD)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Jason Henderson (ECOP) Katie Frazier (CARET) Doug Steele (APLU) Caron Gala (APLU) Elizabeth Stulberg (Lewis-Burke, Advocacy) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Laura Jolly (BHS)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Gary Thompson (SAAESD ED) Cindy Morley (SAAESD)</p>
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Meeting Agenda:

1. Welcome and introductions – Anton
2. Approval of the 12/13 meeting notes (see: http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/BLC_MIN_-20221213.pdf)
 - Approved as distributed by consensus
3. Approval of Today’s Agenda – Anton
 - Approved as distributed by consensus
4. FY24 AFRI Request - Anton
 - Background - the BLC overall strategy is to request 14% increases for Hatch and AFRI above the FY2023 appropriations
 - Ongoing FY24 requests to the BAC were originally based on a ~14% increase from FY22 allocations, resulting in: Hatch = \$300M and AFRI = \$500M.
 - FY23 Omnibus appropriations: Hatch = \$265M and AFRI = \$455M
 - Proposed FY24 requests to the BAC based on 14% of the FY23 appropriated amount would increase the AFRI request from \$500M to \$520M.
 - At the BAC meeting (1/24/23) Anton requested that the AFRI number be increased by \$20M for a total of \$520M.
 - Discussion

- Bridget – New intelligence in the past 48 hours from discussions with hill staffers suggest that “FY24 is going to be brutal” and that flat funding across the board would be considered good. Given the recent history of modest AFRI increases combined with our new requests for RFA, we should keep the AFRI request at \$500M.
- Doug – Expressed concern that Hatch could be impacted if we request \$520M for AFRI. He thinks they can hold the \$500M among the coalitions. He does not expect the presidents PBR to come out until March. We need to put our best advocacy plan together based on the needs of our sections. We cannot advocate for the RFA, Hatch and AFRI (increases) all in the same year. There is encouraging news for including RFA in the Farm Bill if we can identify champions. We want to support ESS, but \$520M is not a good strategy and will distract from areas where we can do better. They are also looking at putting money in the RFA. The \$2M was an encouraging start and now we can work to get more. Going forward we are looking at mandatory funding in the Farm Bill and ways to make in-roads on Ag Infrastructure.
- Gary T. - Any information on the AFRI ask from allied organizations other than the AFRI coalition?
- Bridget - NCFAR will typically go with the community ask and AFRI Coalition is currently meeting.
- **Anton - Do we stay with long-term strategy of 14% increase (\$520M) or go with the \$500M ask that is currently in the BAC appropriations worksheet? Doug needs recommendation before the Policy Board of Directors meeting next week.**
 - Sreekala - could we move this to \$500M but bump up Hatch ask?
 - Glenda - Everyone is hearing the same messaging from their government relations office. Even though we are the one advocating for this, we should keep the bigger picture in mind. Our intelligence says this is not a good idea and we should listen. We can't control what the AFRI coalition does.
 - Scott - How do we document the importance that we all need a major infrastructure infusion? We keep asking but we don't really hold anyone to it. Infrastructure is the more important piece.
 - Vernon - What is the best strategy for winning?
 - Doug - \$500M is a \$45M increase for AFRI as it is.
 - Anton - Moving forward, we need to consider having a consistent approach.
 - Gary P. - How is \$20M (the amount of increase from the current \$500M to \$520M) detrimental, when \$500M in the RFA is not detrimental?
 - Bridget - The \$500M for RFA comes from the Gordian Report annual need of \$550M. Our ask needs to be high enough to impress upon them the NEED for infrastructure but not too high. Washington will have to fund capacity first. Also need to think outside the box on other revenue generating places for RFA.

Motion for recommendation to the BAC: Gary P. moves that we accept the BAC request as presented. Seconded by Scott Senseman. Passes unanimously.

5. Finance Committee- Gary T.

- A draft proposal has been made to change and broaden the charge of the “Finance Committee” from a BLC subcommittee to a ESS standing committee. Our financial arrangements are becoming more complex with examples given. Because the Finance

Committee is a BLC subcommittee it is appropriate to notify the BLC and entertain discussion before moving taking next steps.

- Anton - It seems like the right move. It doesn't really fit in the mission of the BLC.
- Glenda never understood why it was part of the BLC.

Hearing no objections, we will notify the ESS chair to move forward with the draft proposal creating the Finance Committee as a committee apart from the BLC.

6. Ag Research Infrastructure (ARI) Committee- Gary T.

- This is an ESS Chair's ad-hoc committee like the BAA ARIA committee from a few years ago. The primary goal of this committee is to develop long-range strategies for funding the ag infrastructure initiative. Meant to compliment the work of the BLC.
- How does the infrastructure committees work intersect with the BLC? We don't want two groups doing the same work, but having more people think about infrastructure is a good thing.
- Anton- Is Gary T a good liaison or should a member serve as a liaison instead?

Gary T. recommends Steve Lommel as Liaison because he serves on both the BLC and is participating in the ARI group.

7. APLU Update – Doug

- Biggest update was above. CARET/AHS meeting link is out. Making plans for summer meeting scheduled for July 18-20. There will be a new administrator and director orientation at that meeting. More information will come out in FANR Focus.
- Plans to connect more with Administrative Heads, so he should be getting information out to that group soon. They are trying to think strategically about university leadership and advocacy.

8. LBA Advocacy Update – Bridget Krieger

- Farm Bill and appropriations must pass. Any deals regarding the debt ceiling are TBD. Final Committee rosters should be out by the end of the month, and LBA will plan targeted outreach.
- Anton - What about \$8B Advocacy effort in the farm bill
- Bridget - This is a larger conversation about seeking mandatory funding. BAA/ESS has made no secret that we have an \$11B+ infrastructure need and would like to see \$5B dedicated to the Research Facilities Act as mandatory funding. We must be prepared if the opportunity arises and expect outreach going forward.
- Anton - this is a very encouraging approach with putting mandatory funding into the farm bill.

9. Liaison Reports

- NIFA update – Paula
 - Working hard to implement the FY2023 appropriations so look for the RFA's coming out. FY2024 is also being worked on.
 - Gave updates on leadership positions.
- ECOP report – Jason
 - No updates currently, ECOP BLC meets next month.
- BHS report – Laura
 - Not present.

10. Other business

- Next meeting is just the Directors. March will be the next full meeting with liaison updates. In the interim, if liaisons have items that need to be discussed feel free to send to Gary and Anton.