



**2020 ESS Business Meeting DRAFT Minutes**  
**October 1, 2020**

Agenda Item	Topic and Presenter(s)
1.0	<p><b>Call to Order</b> – Moses T. Kairo, ESS Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of Agenda</li> <li>• Moses Kairo suggested moving the NIFA discussion up to item 2.0               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>The agenda with suggested modification was approved by acclamation.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Approval of Minutes (September 25, 2019)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>The ESS September 25, 2019 minutes were approved by acclamation.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Changing of the Guard – Gary Thompson               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gary discussed the early handoff of the ESCOP Chair role from George Hopper to Moses Kairo. Moses Kairo was thanked for assuming the role of ESCOP Chair early upon George’s retirement.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ESS Investment Account (TD Wealth)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moses Kairo and Doug Steele signed off on a policy for investment of the ESS funds being held in the TD Wealth account.</li> <li>○ The ESS Finance Committee will serve as a subcommittee of the Budget and Legislative Committee.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ESS Awards for Excellence in Leadership – Resolution               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moses Kairo congratulated each of the 2020 ESS Leadership award winners:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (SAAESD) Robert Godfrey, Associate Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station and Professor of Animal Science, University of the Virgin Islands</li> <li>▪ (NCRA) Mark Linit, <i>retired</i> Senior Associate Dean for Research and Extension and Director of the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station</li> <li>▪ (WAAESD) Steven Loring, Associate Director, New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station</li> <li>▪ (ARD) Alfred L. Parks, Interim Executive Associate Director of the Cooperative Agricultural Research Center and Professor of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, College of Agriculture and Human Sciences, Prairie View A&amp;M University</li> <li>▪ (NERA) Adel Shirmohammadi, <i>former</i> Associate Dean for Research and Associate Director of Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station and Professor, Department of Environmental Science and Technology</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• 2021 ESS Chair Election – Western Region               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mark McGuire (Idaho/WAAESD Chair) formally announced the nomination of Chris Pritsos (UNR/WAAESD) to serve as next ESCOP Chair beginning in 2021.</li> <li>○ <b>The nomination was accepted by unanimous consent. Chris Pritsos will serve as ESCOP Chair-Elect over the next year.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• BLC Chair</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Moses Kairo recognized Ernie Minton (Kansas State) for his service in an extended term as BLC Chair. Glenda Humiston (California) will rotate into the BLC Chair position.</b></li> </ul>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>NIFA Update on System Responses (Parag Chitnis)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NIFA has a small staff (~20) located at the USDA Headquarters in DC</li> <li>• Most NIFA staff (~300 positions) will be in Kansas City at 805 Pennsylvania Ave as of November 2, 2020</li> <li>• NIFA is hiring: ~5 new hires every two weeks, 18 new National Program Leaders, two successful recruitment events (Missouri and K-State)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NIFA Transition – New Division Directors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New Science Division Directors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Kevin Kephart for Agricultural Engineering and Economics</li> <li>–Peter Motavalli for Education and MSI programs</li> <li>–Mark Carter for Foods Science and Nutrition</li> <li>–Suzanne Stluka for Family and Consumer Sciences and 4H</li> <li>–Deb Hamernik for Animal Production and Health</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Other Division Directors and Office Directors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Faith Peppers, Communications</li> <li>–Drenda Williams, Equal Opportunity</li> <li>–Kate Fink, Legislative and Stakeholders Affairs</li> <li>–Katina Hanson, Policy and Oversight Division</li> <li>–Calvin Mitchell, Awards Management Division</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NIFA Staff is working from home. 80 new hires were hired and on-boarded remotely.</li> <li>• NIFA has granted nearly \$14M for rapid response to help universities find scientific solutions amid COVID-19</li> <li>• NIFA is undergoing Project Café (Collaboratively Achieving Functional Excellence) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2019: ESS-CES Joint meeting discussed reimagining NIFA</li> <li>○ Adel Shirmohammadi led a group of NIFA staff members to analyze comments about reimagining NIFA</li> <li>○ High level takeaways from stakeholder feedback: frustration with IT systems and overlapping reporting processes, disconnect between NIFA staff and LGU partners, unsatisfied with communication about all aspects of NIFA</li> <li>○ Some actions already taken: deadlines for proposal submission, panel summary quality, virtual panels best practices, training NIFA staff, award information to the selected awardees</li> <li>○ The Project CAFÉ dashboard will be made available for Directors to track progress on response to comments about reimagining NIFA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• FY2021 NIFA Outlook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NIFA Budget: \$1.8B</li> <li>○ &gt;65 programs (budget lines)</li> <li>○ ~2100 awards expected</li> <li>○ Notable new programs: Research Equipment Grants (\$5M), 1890 Centers of Excellence (\$14M), 1890 Scholarship (\$10M), Ag Genome program (\$1M)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NIFA acknowledges that stakeholder feedback is an important driver of science priorities. Directors are encouraged to engage, communicate, and invited to email Parag Chitnis directly.</li> </ul>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>NRSP Review Committee – Doug Buhler and Jeff Jacobsen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The NRSP RC presented four motions which are up for voting by the 1862 AES membership:</li> </ul>

- Approve the updated NRSP Guidelines as distributed and dated 8/24/2020
- Support the renewal of NRSP4 as written at the proposed funding level of \$481,182 per year for FFY2021 through FFY2025
- Reject the renewal of NRSP6 as submitted, resulting in one final year of funding at \$135,000 for FFY2021.
- Support the renewal of NRSP9 as written at the proposed funding levels (\$199k for FFYs 2021, 2022, and 2025; \$219k for FFY2023; \$249k for FFY2024)
- NRSP voting was conducted electronically. Results are displayed below:
  - Updated Guidelines (Recommendation to approve)
    - Approve: 39, Disapprove: 0, Abstain: 1
  - NRSP4 Renewal (Recommendation to approve)
    - Approve: 36, Disapprove: 2, Abstain: 2
  - NRSP6 Renewal (Recommendation to reject)
    - Approve: 37, Disapprove: 3, Abstain: 0
  - NRSP9 Renewal (Recommendation to approve)
    - Approve: 36, Disapprove: 3, Abstain: 1

ESS Budget Discussion – Moses T. Kairo and Alton Thompson

- Moses Kairo thanked Jeff Jacobsen for his help in preparation for this budget discussion.
- ESS Financials (informational only)

## ESS FINANCIALS

➤ 2019 All CMC assessments paid	
➤ 2020 CMC assessments paid to date (65 of 77, \$17,321 open)	
➤ Account Reserves (inception to CY2019)	\$ 719,277
-TD Wealth Investment	(\$ 600,000)
-Infrastructure (Sightlines/Gordian)	(\$ 27,000)
Carryover Cash Reserve (end CY2019)	\$ 92,277

(as of 9/14/2020)

4.0

- Annual ESS Budget (for discussion and approval by simple majority)
  - In CY2020, \$35,333 was spent on the new CMC contract with Forbes-Tate Partners
  - The former contract with kglobal was terminated earlier in the year
  - ESS anticipates a carry-forward of \$124,678 from CY2020 into 2021.
- Moses Kairo presented the CY2021 Budget proposal, to be voted upon by simple majority
  - A slide illustrating the CY2021 proposal is enclosed.

## ANNUAL ESS BUDGET (CY2020 and CY2021)

CARRYOVER CASH RESERVES (end CY2019)		\$92,277	\$92,277 ( )
INCOME	CY2020 BUDGET	CY2020 ACTUAL	CY2021 PROPOSED
CY2020 CMC Assessment	\$200,000	\$182,679	(Discussion)
EXPENSES			
CMC (Forbes Tate CY2020)	\$133,333	\$35,333	--
Promotion (Ag on Hill, SoAR, Chair travel)	\$10,000	0	\$10,000
Diversity Catalyst (award, travel)	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$4,000
Training	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$15,000
Meeting Support (Joint COPs, ESS)	\$10,000	\$586	\$10,000
Website	\$2,000	0	\$1,000
National Impact Database (TAMU hosted)	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500
National Impact Database Writing (travel)	\$5,000	\$2,582	\$5,000
NC-FAR Membership	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Printing (APLU, other)	\$15,000	0	\$10,000
NRSP Stakeholder (travel)	\$1,500	0	\$1,500
<b>NET BALANCE</b>		<b>+\$124,678+</b>	<b>\$22,277 (+)</b>

(as of 9/14/2020)

- **Moses Kairo introduced a motion to vote on the budget as presented. The motion was seconded and voting was opened up electronically.**
  - **Approve the \$70,000 budget request**
  - **Do not approve the \$70,000 budget request**
  - **Abstain from voting on the \$70,000 budget request**
  - **The ESS Budget was approved: 46 votes to approve, 1 vote to disapprove.**
- **ESS Assessments (for discussion and possible future action)**
  - CMC Assessment is the current on-going assessment at \$200,000.
    - The assessment and reserves have been used for more than CMC efforts, i.e., the ESS Annual Budget for Operations.
    - Over time, legacy actions created and additional partners (AHS, ECOP) increased ESS Cash reserves as the CMC assessment continued.
  - Possible future VOTE: Change the name “CMC” Assessment to “ESS Annual” Assessment
  - COVID-19 Impacts on state budgets are severe and on-going
    - ESS cash reserves have created the investment opportunity, nationally approved, with TD Wealth Management starting with \$600,000 – the investment \$ itself (1.03% fee) and investment interest could be used to balance future budgets
    - Cash at end of CY2019 was \$92,277 and the projected >\$120k additional cash at the end of CY2020 could cover future expenses.
  - Possible future VOTE: 1.) Do not change the assessment amount, 2.) Decrease the annual assessment to \$100,000, or 3.) Suspend the annual assessment for CY2021
  - Per ESS Rules of Operation, changing assessments requires a 2/3 majority for adoption
- **Question and Discussion on ESS Assessments**
  - David Ragsdale: With an investment balance of >\$600,000 and an annual budget of \$200,000 in a normal year but less the last year and going forward. An organization such as ESS should not have more than 1 year's total assessment in cash in hand. Why don't we use the investments, not just the interest, until reserves are closer to \$200,000. Suspend the assessment until that balance is achieved.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Matt Wilson: Recommendation to change the assessment name to ESS Annual Assessment, to better reflect what it is.</li> <li>○ Glenda Humiston: There is a great temptation to suspend an assessment, but getting it started again would be difficult. Proposal to reduce assessment for \$100k for the next calendar year. One reason to keep a healthy reserve is that we anticipate the economy and resultant budget cuts next year to be far worse than this year. If we suspend then, we can still operate with funds available as may be needed for a few years.</li> <li>○ Mark McGuire: Are there penalties for tapping into the investment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No penalties for withdrawal other than differences in purchase of securities and their sale. Fees on the account are 1.03% annually.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Support for Option 2 (reduction, proposed at \$100k by Glenda Humiston): Darrell Donahue, Chris Pritsos, John Talbott, John Ritten, Mark Hutton, Shirley Hymon-Parker, Bob Godfrey, Milan Shipka, Steve Loring, Scot Hulbert</li> <li>• Support for Option 3 (suspension of assessment in CY2021): Keith Owens, Leslie Parise</li> <li>• <b>Moses Kairo will reflect on this discussion and determine the best way to move forward with an electronic vote on the ESS Assessment over the next month.</b></li> </ul>
5.0	<p>CMC – Steve Loring (Chair, CMC), Ryan McConaghy (Forbes-Tate Partners) and Rick Rhodes (Executive Vice-Chair, CMC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FTP conducted a broad membership survey to determine what the BAA community wanted from a communications and marketing plan</li> <li>• The FTP mandate has been to provide a structure and best practices for the BAA to carry out a final plan over the next year.</li> <li>• Major objective: Assist BAA to be successful in securing federal resources to support critical extension and research efforts. Influence stakeholders through advocacy communications and highlight institutional success stories. Specifically communicate how federal dollars allow institutions to contribute to advances in agriculture.</li> <li>• FTP made recommendations on both internal (BAA) and external communications. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Setting up a strong internal network where all parties knows their roles and responsibilities is essential.</li> <li>○ Experiment Stations, under the proposed FTP framework, would be bidirectional ambassadors – the “what” you do and the breakthroughs made are important, but the faculty and students, the people behind the work are important to highlight.</li> <li>○ The team managing the communications plan needs to have a clear understanding of the latest, greatest work across the Land-grant family.</li> <li>○ The communications team needs to be kept up to date. Have clear, consistently open channels of communication. Designate one primary contact per Experiment Station to interact with communications managers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>ESS (along with CES and AHS) is asked to commit \$100k per year for two years (total \$300k/year) to contribute to and participate in the communications and marketing project. Along with the two-year commitment would come 1.5 dedicated FTEs to be housed at APLU. (Around \$212k in salary and benefits would support the 1.5 FTEs.)</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question: the “Ag is America” content has spent too much time preaching to the choir. Most of our voters and elected officials are urban. We need the messaging to speak to far more than traditional ag issues in ways that will resonate with those audiences: food security, nutrition, ecosystem services. Will this new effort be more along those lines? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The messages coming from Ag is America don’t have to be strictly rural and ag focused. We have a 12k follower base on Ag is America which is strong and would be difficult to rebuild under a new handle.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Question: The CMC has requested \$100k from ESCOP. What’s the best way for ESS to process that request? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Given the conversation on the ESS Assessment, the commitment to the communications and marketing plan is something we would put forward for a vote alongside a proposed Assessment vote.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Question: What are the specific metrics to be implemented to document the impacts of this communications and marketing effort? Return on investment is of particular importance amid budget cuts during COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Protecting and measuring increases to budget lines within the “One ask” is critical</li> <li>○ Social media results: engagement with online content, hits and clickthrough on websites, nationally broadcasted messages</li> <li>○ Exposure and engagement metrics will determine if strategy and need to be changed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Question: How will state communications be leveraged in this effort, as all politics are local? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A lot of the value add is going to be in leveraging the successes across the system. To do so we need one message that is consistent enough to break through, but large enough to include the entire system. Local issues can be embedded into this messaging.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>FTP has a constantly monitored inbox to answer questions or receive feedback on the project: <a href="mailto:aplu_baa@forbes-tate.com">aplu_baa@forbes-tate.com</a></b></li> </ul>
6.0	<p>BLC and Finance Committee Report/BAC - Ernie Minton and Jeff Jacobsen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pertinent BLC information is outlined in the enclosed agenda brief.</li> <li>• Ernie Minton thanked the committee and was appreciative of the support the committee received during his time as BLC Chair.</li> </ul>
7.0	<p>APLU Update - Doug Steele</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On behalf of APLU and the BAA, Doug Steele thanked the Experiment Station Section for their efforts</li> <li>• On Communications and marketing: it is critical to amplify our voice. We miss regular opportunities (monthly) to execute a targeted messaging plan. If we do this right and have the right people on board we can succeed.</li> <li>• At the BAA general session in November, Forbes-Tate will move the proposed draft forward for approval.</li> <li>• A distinction was made between advocacy (the responsibility of Cornerstone) and advocacy messaging, which is the responsibility of FTP and the communications plan.</li> <li>• NIFA External Partnership Committee – being put together and reviewed by the Policy Board of Directors, with representation from all sections and committees within the BAA.</li> <li>• APLU Annual Meeting will be held virtually in November. ESS is invited to attend all BAA sessions along with the APLU awards ceremony.</li> <li>• CARET and Administrative Heads Section are holding discussions on how we can better work with the CARET network and maximize our results in the process.</li> <li>• CARET-AHS is proposing a virtual fly-in to discuss advocacy messaging and strengthening the national network which hires individual universities.</li> </ul>



## Resolutions (Retirements/New Positions)

Be it resolved, the Experiment Station Section thanks those administrators who have left or retired from their positions in FY 2020 and we hereby extend our congratulations to:

- Association of 1890 Research Directors (ARD)
  - Delbert Foster, South Carolina State University
  - Christopher Mathis, South Carolina State University
  - Govind Kannan, Fort Valley State University
- Southern Region (SAAESD)
  - George Hopper, Mississippi State University
  - Joe West, University of Georgia Tifton Campus
  - Rogers Leonard, Louisiana State University
  - Sherry Larkin, University of Florida
  - Gary Thompson, Executive Director, Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
  - Eric Young, Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
- North Central Region (NCRA)
  - Debora (Deb) Hamernik, University of Nebraska
- Northeastern Region (NERA)
  - Fred Servello, Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station, University of Maine
  - Adel Shirmohammadi, Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Maryland
  - Jon Wraith, New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station, University of New Hampshire
  - Gary Thompson, Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station, Penn State University
  - Brad Hillman, New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, Rutgers University
  - Ted Andreadis, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station – New Haven
  - Carol Thornber, Rhode Island Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Rhode Island
  - Ken Blemings, West Virginia Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, West Virginia University
  - Sabine O'Hara, The University of the District of Columbia
  - Thomas Vogelmann, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Vermont
- Western Region (WAAESD)
  - Ajay Menon, Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station, Colorado State University
  - James Pritchett, Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station, Colorado State University
  - Anton Bekkerman, Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, Montana State University
  - Mary Burrows, Montana Agricultural Experiment Station. Montana State University
  - Natalie Goldberg, New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station, New Mexico State University

8.0

## Resolution to Host Institution and Region

- Gary Thompson read a resolution of thanks and recognition to Moses Kairo (ESCOP Chair, UMES), Alton Thompson (ESCOP Executive Vice-

	Chair, ARD), and the 2020 ESS Planning Committee for their development of an outstanding program on Inclusive Excellence.
10.0	<p>2021 Meeting Announcement – Chris Pritsos and Bret Hess, Hosts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chris Pritsos <a href="#">presented a video</a> to announce the 2021 Experiment Station Section meeting, hosted by University of Nevada Reno, to be held at Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows, September 26 – October 1, 2021.</li> </ul>
11.0	<p>Final Remarks and Adjourn – Moses T. Kairo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESCOP Priorities for 2020-21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Support increased appropriations for USDA-NIFA to enhance capacity funding for research, Extension and education and fully-fund the AFRI competitive grants program</li> <li>○ Support strategic realignment of NIFA funding lines</li> <li>○ Develop new funding opportunities to address Critical Infrastructure for Colleges of Agriculture at Land-grant Universities</li> <li>○ Assess the CMC’s Strategic Communications Roadmap Plan, and subsequently adopt and implement a strategic plan for communications and marketing</li> <li>○ Strengthen strategic partnerships with traditional and nontraditional entities</li> <li>○ Implement regional research among universities/institutions to address the USDA Science Blueprint</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Chair’s Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fully integrate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as an essential component of all our programs.</li> <li>○ Improve collaborations across 1862, 1890 and 1994 land grant colleges and universities and among federal agencies and allied groups.</li> <li>○ Support supplemental funding for Critical Infrastructure for Colleges of Agriculture at Land-grant Universities.</li> <li>○ Support COVID-19 related supplemental funding for food and agricultural research relief and recovery.</li> <li>○ Strengthen partnership and engagement efforts with NIFA, including: Project CAFÉ’ (Collaboratively Achieving Functional Excellence), the Research Working Group, and other items that may arise.</li> <li>○ Improve the organizational readiness and strategic capacity to deal with the next major crisis.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Moses thanked the team of Executive Directors and particularly Alton Thompson, the ESCOP Executive Vice-Chair, for their support.</li> </ul>
	The meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm EDT.