

Citrus Research and Field Trial (CRAFT) Foundation, Inc.
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
April 29, 2021

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Citrus Research and Field Trial (CRAFT) Foundation, Inc. was held on Thursday, April 29, 2021 at CRAFT headquarters in Bartow, FL as well as via Zoom web conferencing. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. Chairman Glenn Beck called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Board members present were Glenn Beck, Tom Mitchell, Phillip Rucks, Steve Smith and Dr. Trevor Smith. Also participating were Kristen Carlson, Mike Sparks and Tamara Wood.

Also present was Andrew Meadows.

Presentation and Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the March 30, 2021 Board of Directors meeting were provided to members via email prior to the meeting. **Mr. Mitchell moved to approve the minutes as presented. Dr. Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

Update on CRAFT Funding Status: Mr. Sparks presented an update on funding for the CRAFT Foundation and the CRAFT program, explaining that there are three primary sources of funding that each have different oversight and restrictions, in addition to the growers' share of costs. Those three sources include USDA-MAC, CHRP and State revenue. He explained that the USDA-MAC funding for 2021 has been allocated to California and Texas for CRAFT or CRAFT-like programs, following two years of Florida receiving the majority of available funds from that program. The 2022 application process will be back open to all states, including Florida. Ms. Carlson asked if CRAFT should submit an application for 2021 in case the other states' projects are unable to utilize all of the existing funds. Mr. Sparks recommended that CRAFT be ready to apply if requested by USDA-MAC administrators, but not to apply at this time. Mr. Beck asked if anyone from California or Texas had reached out to CRAFT staff for information on how this program is run or the application process. Ms. Carlson stated that she has shared "CRAFT in a Box" information with Texas Citrus Mutual, and that both TCM and California Citrus Mutual have joined Zoom presentations in the past.

Mr. Sparks also noted that Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz brought up citrus greening and the importance of the Florida citrus industry during a House Appropriations Committee meeting with USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack recently. Secretary Vilsack also reaffirmed his support of the citrus industry and his agency's commitment to finding answers in the fight against citrus greening.

Florida Citrus Mutual continues to work on securing funds for additional cycles of CRAFT as well as the continued maintenance of existing projects. The 2021-22 Florida State Budget includes \$5 million to be administered through the Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) for large-scale field trials. The budget is still awaiting the Governor's signature. Additionally, CRAFT would be required to submit a proposal to CRDF following an RFP. Mr. Sparks noted that Senator Ben Albritton was instrumental in securing these funds.

Mr. Mitchell opened discussion regarding the potential use of future funds to expand the scope of CRAFT to include strategies that may not be as "proven" as those used in Cycles I and II. Ms. Carlson noted that the current proviso language for the \$5 million in State funds does not limit research to citrus greening nor is it tied to USDA grants, allowing for some flexibility. Dr. Smith cautioned that the CRAFT program has been developed and successful as "grower-driven" rather than "research-driven" and that there are other funding sources for basic research. Mr. Rucks also cautioned against giving the incorrect impression that citrus greening is not as significant as it truly is by deviating from research focused in that area. Ms. Carlson pointed out that many pests, diseases and other issues were regarded as underlying stressors that stand to worsen the effects of citrus greening.

Presentation of Quarterly Reports: Quarterly and Semi-Annual Reports required by funding partners were shared with the Board via email prior to the meeting. Ms. Carlson explained that CRAFT staff currently provides progress reports to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), CRDF and USDA-MAC to account for funds utilized in the operation and execution of the program.

Mr. Mitchell inquired about communication between CRAFT staff and participants, and the USDA-ARS-PDI Data Portal team. Ms. Carlson reported that CRAFT staff has weekly meetings and regular contact with the members of the PDI team.

Preparation for Annual Meeting: Ms. Carlson presented a proposed amendment to the By-Laws to be adopted at the Annual Meeting. Board members were presented with a copy of the proposed changes prior to the meeting.

Additionally, Ms. Carlson explained that a Nominating Committee should be appointed by Chairman Beck for the nomination of officers to be elected at the June Annual Meeting. Mr. Beck appointed all members of the Board to the Nominating Committee.

Ms. Carlson informed the Board that two members' terms are set to expire in June - Mr. Smith and Mr. Updike. Both members have indicated their willingness to continue to serve. Following a nomination from the Board, Commissioner Nikki Fried will either confirm or override the appointments. **Mr. Mitchell moved to nominate Mr. John Updike, Jr. and Mr. Steve Smith to serve another term on the CRAFT Board of Directors. Mr. Rucks seconded the motion which passed unanimously. [Both nominees have since been approved by Commissioner Fried]**

Report from Technical Working Group and Request for Approval of Contracts: Ms. Carlson presented 2 projects to the Board of Directors for consideration following recommendations of approval from the Technical Working Group. Those projects included:

- Group Two:
 - 094S
 - 110S

Following presentation of the designs, the Board requested additional details related to the inputs proposed for comparison on CRAFT_2020_110S. **Mr. Mitchell moved to approved CRAFT_2020_094S as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rucks and passed unanimously.**

Communications Outreach: Ms. Wood presented an update on communications and outreach efforts related to Cycle I and Cycle II participants. A letter was sent via email to Cycle I and currently approved Cycle II participants reminding them of ways that they can assist with the CRAFT program, including: working with FDACS and Aerobotics, as well as CRAFT Auditors, whenever they need to visit the project site; reaching out to staff with any proposed changes to projects; and reaching out to staff or USDA-ARS-PDI staff with any questions related to data entry. In addition, a checklist was sent to participants to ensure they are meeting all milestones in order to receive payments.

Staff is beginning to plan a workshop, similar to those held in 2020. It is anticipated that it will be a two-part workshop with the first part focusing on reporting of data for current participants, and the second part focusing on what may be considered for Cycle III and the application process for that portion of the program. More details on that workshop will be presented at a later meeting.

Ms. Carlson will also be presenting an overview and update of the program during the 2021 Citrus Show on May 13.

Discussion Regarding Succession Planning: Chairman Beck began discussion regarding the search for a new Executive Director by referring to previous discussion related to an agency taking over management rather than an individual. He stated that, personally, he would prefer that the management of the Foundation remain independent from other established agencies. Mr. Mitchell agreed with that position, noting that an independent Executive Director and staff allows for more flexibility in decision making and action. Mr. Beck questioned whether the Board preferred a public call for applications be issued, or a more concentrated search be conducted. It was determined that due to the nature of the position, a more concentrated search would be most effective. Ms. Carlson noted that she had already reached out to a handful of potential candidates to determine their interest in the position. Dr. Smith also noted that he would act as a liaison between CRAFT and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' legal counsel if needed, should Ms. Carlson's successor not have a legal background. Chairman Beck asked staff to generate a list of interested and qualified candidates and present that to the Board for potential interviews.

New Business: Mr. Sparks asked how soon a RFP for large-scale field trials would be available from CRDF for 2021-22 funding, under the assumption that the Governor does not veto the budgeted \$5 million. Ms. Carlson stated that she had spoken to Rick Dantzler and that the development of the RFP was underway and once the CRDF board approved the RFP, CRDF could be in a position to present and sign a contract with whoever submits a successful proposal as early as July.

Seeing no further business, Mr. Beck adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Tamara C. Wood, Secretary.