

**Meeting Minutes
Nebraska Wheat Board
December 15, 2008
Holiday Inn Conference Center, Kearney, NE**

Board Members Present

Dan Hughes, Venango – Chairperson
Chris Cullan, Hemingford
Larry Flohr, Chappell
Von Johnson, Cambridge
Rick Larson, Potter
Brent Robertson, Elsie
Delferd Schlake, Blue Springs

Ex-Officio Member Present

Dan Duncan, UNL

Guests

Mike Sullivan – Past President NWGA
Ron & Shirley Suppes, US Wheat Assoc
Shawn Sullivan
John Thaemert, NAWG
Jennifer Latzke, *High Plains Journal*
Mike Keenan
Stetson Shreve
Roger Berry, A-FAN
Dave Shelton, Wheat Marketing Center
Dr. Weldon Sleight, NCTA

Staff Present

Royce Schaneman, Executive Director
Zoe Olson, Public Information Officer
Cody Dvorak, Intern

The State of Nebraska open meetings law was made available.

Chairperson Hughes called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Roll call was taken with board members reporting that planting conditions were ideal and there was good moisture for planting.

Guests were welcomed.

Hughes requested that board goals have appropriate time and requested this item be moved to the end of the meeting time. Hughes requested focused goals for the board to address. **Larson moved to approve the agenda as amended. Flohr seconded. Voice vote motion passed.**

Cullan moved to approve the minutes. Johnson seconded. Voice vote motion passed.

The financial report was presented by Schaneman. **Schlake moved to accept the financial report. Robertson seconded. Roll call vote: Schlake-yes, Larson-yes, Robertson-yes, Flohr-yes, Cullan-yes, Hughes-yes, Johnson-yes. Motion passed.**

The Nebraska Wheat Growers report was given by MSullivan. Sullivan presented for Scott Osler who is at an auction selling some restaurant equipment. NWGA is pursuing the purchase of a mobile baking lab similar to Oklahoma's and will use the lab for outreach and promotion of wheat producers in Nebraska. Memberships are coming in. Olson attended the McCook Farm and Ranch Show in November. Osler, MSullivan and Olson attended the joint NAWG/US Wheat meeting in Dallas. Sullivan reported that NAWG is working on insurance issues and carbon credits. He reported that NAWG is working with a company that is well-versed on the issue of carbon sequestration and carbon credits. Osler, SSullivan, MSullivan and Olson will attend the NAWG/US Wheat meeting in DC in February. MSullivan noted that Jennifer Spurget had left NAWG and that a search was on to replace her. MSullivan called attention to the new recipe cards that have been included in the Ag Classic registration bags and that NWGA is increasing its presence at wheat industry events. He stated that the board is more optimistic than in years past about the future of the association.

Ron Suppes asked about if NAWG had voiced any concern about wind farm leases versus carbon credits. MSullivan was not aware of the issue being addressed at NAWG.

Hughes asked about the McCook Farm and Ranch Show. Olson reported that this was the first year of the show. It was very well set up and vendor friendly. Since the corn crop was so late in harvesting, attendance was not as good as had been hoped; however, she noted most vendors she spoke with planned on attending next year.

Cullan reported on his recent US Wheat Associates trip to Southeast Asia. He thanked the board for allowing him the opportunity and encouraged other board members to take advantage of opportunity the next time NWB is invited to participate in a US Wheat Associates trip.

Schlake reported that the main topic for the wheat quality committee at the US Wheat Associates meeting in Dallas was what buyers and millers are looking for—the focus is on the end user. Flohr reported that he was impressed by the DNA genome wheat mapping presentation to enable a GMO 5-year plan realization as well as the nitrogen efficiency presentation that took place during the joint meeting with NAWG in Dallas. Hughes reported the long range planning committee is trying to coordinate meeting schedules between US Wheat and NAWG and that the next two winter meeting are booked through 2010 in DC. He also noted that the co-location of the two organizations is not going to happen. Hughes reported the hard white winter wheat (HWW) incentive passed in the farm bill but there is no funding appropriated. He also reported that South Dakota is exploring commodity credit payments for storage of HWW. Hughes reported that after a lengthy discussion of WTO, DOHA appears to be dead at this time.

Schlake submitted a report on the PGI meeting that followed the US Wheat meeting in Dallas and asked for response from NWB what direction PGI should take. Hughes suggested following the Portland model and believes Mark Hodges will do a great job. Cullan noted that Hodges' relationships in the industry are invaluable and asked about the PGI funding situation. Schlake noted Kansas has not funded as its budget is tight and not in sync with PGI's fiscal year of January to December and asked Schaneman for input. Schaneman reported that Hodges officially retires from the Oklahoma Wheat Commission at year end and that Hodges has the same vision of a gulf operation similar to Portland's. He noted that if all member states fund as previously committed the plans for regional marketing should be great. Schlake stated Hodges has already introduced PGI to Cuba since there is no longer a conflict of interest. Schaneman reported the MOU is still an issue. He thanked Kansas for holding the promissory note on the mills and reported that payment is difficult because of all the entities involved; some late parties are clouding the issue but believes we are getting close to finalizing. Nebraska cannot pay unless there is value in the contract. Hughes asked who is replacing Hodges and Schaneman noted Oklahoma is running an ad. Cullan asked Suppes if he had an idea of when Kansas would fund PGI. Suppes believes they are close to funding. Schaneman noted there is a funding proposal from PGI later in the agenda. The next meeting is January 21 in Oklahoma City. Olson reported that PGI expressed interest in having a meeting in conjunction with NWB.

Schaneman reported he was contacted by and organic wheat producer, Dave Hutchinson who had contacted the Department of Ag and wanted to market organic wheat internationally and was pointed in the direction of domestic markets. Schaneman noted that once he receives further information from Hutchinson he will forward it to US Wheat Associates. Hughes asked about the status of the container study. Jay O'Neal has informed us that Pat's project should be under budget and suggested speaking with him at while at the Ag Classic. Suppes wanted to know how Hutchinson would load near Kimball. Cullan responded he would load on the short line at Sidney.

Hughes asked the members to engage in a process of combining goals. Cullan liked the idea of planting seed through internships and scholarships with an eye toward possible US Wheat retirements in the future. Thiemert reported that NAWG has an internship position. Sullivan noted that NCTA offers intern credit and Suppes said he would look into an internship with US Wheat and report back to the board. Schlake would like to expand the information on research projects; Hughes asked Duncan about a UNL research database. Larson pointed to the jointed goat grass project started in 1994 which was a collaboration of a research model. Larson also noted his discussion with Glenn Weaver regarding the need for white wheat and questioned whether there was the possibility of a premium for producers.

Duncan reported that the wheat research plots may be in jeopardy due to the state fair park move and the need to move the horse racing track. Duncan announced the proposal of a biotechnology Western

Highplains Experimental Agricultural Testing “WHEAT” station for a federal earmark that would allow money for equipment. Land has been donated for a GMO testing site in the western area of the state for dryland crops. This would be a regulated GMO site and will provide for working with food science as well as for novel regulated foods testing. Duncan noted that shipping regulated materials across state lines involves intensive paperwork – that within the state the process is more easily facilitated.

Schaneman called attention the letter of support for Wegulo’s research; a letter of support for the wheat research plots and the thank-you cards received since the last meeting. Olson thanked the board for their remembrance and condolences at the loss of her father. Schaneman reported that the accounting clerk position is being reclassified and expected to post the new job position later in the week with a possible hire in January. Olson demonstrated the new website photo gallery. Schaneman noted there is a new iframing DTN content proposal in the works but no decision is needed at this time and will be addressed at the next meeting.

Schaneman noted the need for a motion from the board to contribute to NAYI/NAYC for working at the baking lab at the State Fair. Dvorak spoke on the subject of funding for the organization. **Cullan moved to fund NAYI/NAYC in the amount of \$1200 for their efforts at the State Fair. Flohr seconded. Roll call vote: Robertson-yes, Hughes-yes, Flohr-yes, Schlake-yes, Larson-yes, Cullan-yes, Johnson-yes. Motion passed.** Dvorak thanked the board for their support on behalf of NAYI/NAYC.

Schaneman asked the board for approval of text message capabilities for his phone. **Hughes moved to add \$5.99/month for text message capabilities on Schaneman’s phone. Johnson seconded. Roll call vote: Schlake-yes, Cullan-yes, Robertson-yes, Hughes-yes, Johnson-yes, Flohr-yes, Larson-no. Motion passed.**

Dvorak distributed initial drafts of a transportation map for Nebraska crop movement and asked that board members forward comments and suggestions to him. Dvorak shared his progress on a wheat high school curriculum project that will serve as his internship project. Dvorak distributed updated handbooks to the board for their reading and comments.

Olson reported that there are 15 participants for the Wheat Marketing Center Wheat Export Tour in Portland, OR January 5-8, 2009. A list of participants is in the meeting book.

The board took a break for lunch “on your own” at 12:00 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

Larson presented a publication of a University project on Jointed Goat Grass. The conclusion of the project will be held March 11, 2009 in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Rick will attend. There will be a follow-up on other invasive species.

Schaneman directed the board’s attention to a genome-sequencing funding proposal. Cullan expressed concern that there should be a progress report – that the group was not responsive before funding stopped. Flohr suggested following the normal sequence of readings to see if other states contribute. Suppes noted that Kansas has funded this project. **Larson moved to suspend the rules with regard to a first reading and waive second reading on this funding proposal in order to fund \$7500 on the genome sequencing project at this time. Flohr seconded. Roll call vote: Johnson-yes, Hughes-yes, Robertson-yes, Larson-yes, Flohr-yes, Cullan-yes, Schlake-yes. Motion passed.**

Dr. Weldon Sleight, Dean of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture presented a proposal and asked for support of the 100-acre/beginning farmer program. It is a program to help young adults return to the farm. The program’s goal is to graduate 250 students and 40 businesses/year as a minimum. Sleight asked for an endorsement and/or dollars for the 100-acre program. The deadline is December 31, 2008 and the money is due in three years. A commitment of funds is due to the legislature in January which necessitates the short deadline. Hughes suggested the board take time to digest the information and will return to the topic later in the meeting.

Robertson reported on the Wheat Foods Council Urban Wheat Field in New York City attended by Robertson, his wife Amy, Schaneman and Olson. Robertson believes the event was a positive experience with minor issues and should be continued in some fashion in the future. Schaneman noted that member states are planning similar projects and hopes to bring something like this to Nebraska—perhaps at the state fair. Olson shared additional photos of the event.

The mobile baking lab proposal for now as NWGA is pursuing the project.

The PGI Management contract was presented not to exceed \$30,000 – can be changed to quarterly billing – NWB will be covering 15% of the total contract. **Cullan moved to suspend the rules and waive second reading in order to fund PGI for the management contract not to exceed \$12,000 for FY 80-09. Schlake seconded. Roll call vote: Johnson-yes, Hughes-yes, Schlake-yes, Larson-yes, Flohr-yes, Cullan-yes, Robertson-yes. Motion passed.**

Schaneman called attention to requests from the Governor’s budget office and the Legislative budget office to explain the NWB budget and the responses sent. Schaneman noted the board will need to move some unobligated funds to account for some items.

John Thaemert, past-president of the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) thanked the board for inviting him and noted that NAWG is looking for more states to join as wheat is grown everywhere. GMO is a necessary reality needed for profitability. Technology will be the American farmer’s advantage as it has been in the past. If we don’t get past the acceptance part we will be taken over by developing countries growing wheat. Syngenta is developing a fusarium resistant trait while Monsanto has drought tolerance that is not readily adapted in wheat. There is progress in cooperation of Canada, Australia and the US – Australia is interested in GMO and wants to make sure we don’t sabotage GMO in any other country. In Australia wheat is king and they are very protective of their wheat acres.

Jennifer Latzke of the *High Plains Journal* thanked the board for the opportunity to participate in the 2008 US Wheat Associates Latin American tour and presented her report on the experience.

Ron Suppes, past Chair of US Wheat Associates reported on his experiences during the US Wheat Associates informational gathering trip to Kazakhstan, Russia and the Ukraine.

Dave Shelton of the Wheat Marketing Center (WMC) thanked the board for its support of the WMC and reported on current activities.

Roger Berry of A-FAN (Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska) gave an update on producer assistance activities of the organization.

Schaneman reported that he obtained clarification regarding the NCTA proposal. NWB can fund any project that has an educational/promotional/marketing benefit return on investment for the producer. Duncan explained the pledge letter needed to be received by December 31, 2008 to meet the legislative imposed deadline. When asked if a producer had to be a graduate of the program to qualify for loans, Sleight said they only needed to be working in the curriculum. Sleight explained he was asking for an endorsement of the 100-acre program and/or funding of the education facility building program. Sleight offered that the board could contribute to the purchase of agronomy lab equipment. MSullivan voiced support to improve technology in agronomy. MSullivan believes it is provided benefit to incoming farmers. Robertson questioned if any NCTA students are working on internships at North Platte? He believes internships improve undergraduate research. Cullan liked the idea of supporting agriculture education. **Cullan moved to suspend the rules and waive second reading in order to fund NCTA in the amount of \$30,000 at the rate of \$10,000/year for three years to purchase equipment for the education center at NCTA and to endorse the 100-acre farm program. Johnson seconded. Roll call vote: Hughes-yes, Larson-yes, Schlake-yes, Flohr-yes, Johnson-yes, Robertson-yes, Cullan-yes. Motion passed.**

Hughes asked that all members prioritize the goals discussed for discussion at the next meeting.

Robertson moved to amend the budget to move \$7,500 for genome sequencing, \$30,000 for NCTA and \$3,000 for office equipment from unobligated funds. Flohr seconded. Roll call vote: Flohr-yes, Larson-yes, Johnson-yes, Robertson-yes, Schlake-yes, Cullan-yes, Hughes-yes. Motion passed.

The next meeting is tentatively set for March 16 or 17 in Lincoln.

Schaneman asked if the members had problems with receiving the meeting materials on line prior to receiving hard copies at the meeting. This has been an experimental cost saving measure. The members expressed preference to receiving the hard copies through the mail in advance of the meeting.

Olson asked for any bio updates for the website be forwarded to her by the end of January.

MSullivan invited the NWB and guests to dinner at the Alley Rose restaurant hosted by the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association.

Robertson moved to adjourn. Johnson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Zoe Olson

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