

ARKANSAS RICE RESEARCH AND PROMOTION SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING

Minutes

August 16, 2024

9:00 a.m.

The Arkansas Rice Research and Promotion Board (ARRPB) held the Special Called meeting via Zoom only.

Member(s) Present via Zoom: Joe Christian, Jay Coker, David Gairhan, John King, Scott Matthews, Roger Pohlner, Jim Whitaker, Charles Williams

Member(s) Absent: Jeff Rutledge

Chair Jim Whitaker called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests.

Minutes of the August 8, 2024 Rice Research and Promotion Board meeting were presented for review and approval.

Moved by King, seconded by Christian to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

Discussion began with the tabled motion from August 8, 2024 meeting to advance up to \$2 million in crop year 2025 research funding to the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture (UADA). The funds would be held in an interest-bearing account and the interest could be used by UADA for research-related purchases with prior approval of the board.

Chair Whitaker stated Inoussa Zaki and Cynthia Edwards checked into the possibility of moving the check off money into an interest-bearing account for the board and were informed that because the funding is considered special revenue, it could not be done.

Chair Whitaker stated the money can either be left in a treasury account, earning no interest, or could vote to advance research funding to the UADA to be held in an interest-bearing account. Edwards stated there has been a history of the board making these advances to UADA since at least 2002.

Moved by Pohlner, seconded by Christian to reconsider the motion from the last meeting to advance up to \$2 million for crop year 2025 to UADA.

Motion carried.

Chair Whitaker asked Dr. Slaton to provide reports on the interest earned.

Gairhan stated he felt there should be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) about the research funding advancements, to include reports on how much interest is being earned and how it is being spent. Coker agreed. Edwards stated staff would work on a draft MOU to present to the board for review and approval.

Pohlner asked Dr. Slaton to put together some history as to how the funds have been used in the past. Dr. Slaton stated he would work on his request.

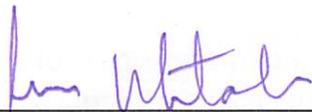
Chair Whitaker agreed that an MOU and some history about the advancement process should be drafted and brought to the board. Edwards asked for clarification about whether advances could be started while the draft documents are being prepared. Chair Whitaker stated that would be acceptable.

Coker also requested to see the announcement that was circulated back in late winter and early spring for submission of proposals to the ARRPB. Edwards stated it would be sent to the board.

Chair Whitaker opened discussion on applying for grants through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Commodity Board program for research projects on topics submitted by the board. Dr. Slaton provided an overview of the NIFA program. After discussion, Chair Whitaker asked board members to submit to Edwards specific research project topics they would like to present to NIFA. Those will be brought before the board for review and discussion prior to NIFA's submission deadline which should be announced soon.

The next quarterly meeting date has been changed from November 4, 2024 to Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 9:00 a.m. at the Arkansas Department of Agriculture in Little Rock, AR.

Meeting adjourned.



Jim Whitaker, Chairman