

NEED TELECONFERENCE | NOVEMBER 13, 2013

Rick Rhodes, Chair, Presiding

Minutes recorded by Dan Lerner, Chair-Elect/Secretary

Roll Call (Those present for the teleconference are in red)

CT: Mike O'Neill
DC: Sabine Ohare, Bill Hare
DE: Michelle Rodgers, Albert Essel
ME: John Rebar
MD: Dan Kugler, Henry Brooks
MA: Patricia Vittum, Nancy Garrabrants, Bob Schrader
NH: John Pike, Lisa Townson, Ken LaValley
NJ: Larry Katz, Mary Jane Willis
NY: Helene Dillard
PA: Dennis Calvin, William Kleiner
RI: Rick Rhodes
WV: Steve Bonanno, Ami Smith
VT: Doug Lantagne, Dan Lerner

NIFA Liaison: Hiram Larew
Executive Director: Linda Kay Benning

NEED Discussion Items

1) Linda Kay to Dennis: reminder, we need a new ECOP member to replace Doug Lantagne.

2) Executive Director Search:

Rick: On November 4 the committee met at the BWI Sheraton. They interviewed Nancy Bull, the one candidate whom the committee had determined met the qualifications. There were four applications in all.

Michelle: Committee had consensus, Nancy is an acceptable candidate. We talked a lot about the position – that NE is a region in need of finding itself. This candidate has internal knowledge and knowledge of the system. She may be a good person to lead us forward as a region. She won't take us far-reaching into the future, necessarily, but one never knows. She can help us find value in performing as a region.

Mike: Nancy brings an immense knowledge of “what has been” and knows the region in that context. She has been a lot of help to Mike. She can be that transition person for us, navigate the next few years. Not totally sure that she brings a new and transformative vision to Extension; she

can help us have the conversation we need to have, as a region. For what we need right now, she's great.

Larry: Agree with comments heard so far. She is interested and open-minded about exploring new ideas, expanding our explorations into non-traditional avenues. There is a "oneness" to these ideas that is good. She gets the unique aspects of the NE and that is a plus.

Dan Kugler: Knows Nancy from NIFA. Asset – over and above other remarks – she is comfortable working with higher levels, even more than we're at so far.

Rick: Opens the floor for all comments. Asks for approval or not by the end of this meeting.

Doug: Knows Nancy from way back and asks, "why does she want the position?"

Mike: Nancy has been in leadership roles far above Directors of Extension. I think she wants to continue to help create change in the region. She wants to contribute a great deal to our region. She is running a department now, Allied Health Science at UConn. She is trying to challenge herself, we aren't that easy to work with! She can make us more effective.

Dennis: Asks for clarification: is she stepping away from her role as a Dept. Head?

Mike: I can't speak to that part of it.

Michelle: She did say her role is coming to a close, a time to make some changes.

Mike: Right, she is the interim Dept. Head.

Michelle: It's a changing point in her career.

Doug: Is her passion for Extension coming back, or is this just something she can do – i.e., just the next job?

Rick: We did ask that, why are you interested, how does it fit? Nancy has deployed her IT and public engagement skills at UConn in the Provost's office. She wants to continue to develop her role in public engagement and deployment of resources for the public good. Her experience in the northeast is a real strength. She is in a position to help us as a region figure out what we would like to do together as a system.

Mike: Nancy never lost her passion for Extension. She is still well-known in CT, she is well-loved there. She has a real passion for helping people. This is a new way to expand that challenge, make it work at a broader level.

Doug: I fully support Nancy, she brings organizational skills and passion. Not surprised that she is still known in CT, just wanted a sense of where she is in her own mindset.

Dennis: With regard to her current employment -- is she ready to move to a half-time situation or will she find another 50% thing to do?

Michelle: In the interview we chose not to explore what all that means. We focused on this position and fit for this position.

Dennis: Fair enough. She knows it's a 50% position.

Mike: Dennis, just so you know... as a university we are committed to full-time employment for Nancy at UConn no matter what. That will be into the foreseeable future.

Bill: She is an excellent choice. She has a background with ECOP also. She was a good mentor to me. She is a great choice.

Linda Kay: The Western region, the Southern region etc, have ED's who were former Extension Directors. One advantage that Nancy has is that she has done other things at a higher level at her institution than these other folks have. That is an asset; that is a very unique quality.

Michelle: There have been a number of folks in this role who have been successful.

Rick: What is the pleasure of the Directors?

Doug: Is there a motion on the table?

Rick: We have a recommendation from the committee to offer the ED position to Nancy. I suggest a 3 year contract with annual reviews. We will develop a plan of work to focus on helping the northeast region identify a focus and a purpose for the region.

ACTION:

Doug moved for a roll call vote. Dennis seconded the motion.

Unanimous approval of the motion.

>Rick will offer the position to Nancy.

3) Other Items

Rick: I have some other bits and pieces. I was at APLU in D.C. – a really good meeting. At the dinner, Linda Kay was recognized by the region. This is another opportunity to say thank you for her excellent service to the region. “It's been great AND it's not over.” Thank you Linda Kay!!

Linda Kay: Please share my willingness to help Nancy with the transition between ED's.

Rick: A reminder to provide input for the Excellence in Extension database. We got called out as a region. In the coming year, I have some items for us to consider as a region. I will send out an email for all to see and reflect upon.

Also, when we met as a committee to discuss Nancy, we also met to discuss the world's problems (and solve them). I will pose a rhetorical question: shall we meet on a more frequent fly-in basis? That could limit the number of conference calls. We could set an agenda to work as a system, as opposed to a group of loosely confederated organizations.

Michelle: How do I process expenses for the candidate? Doug, how do you need those so that we can get it reimbursed?

Doug: Cindy will send along UVM's requirements.

Linda Kay: We can do it through my budget, it's simpler (Doug agrees).

Michelle: Nancy will send receipts, etc. to Linda Kay.

There ensued some jesting about who would cover the BWI bar bill, and soon after Directors began to sign off.

Call concluded at 8:35.