

Nebraska Wheat Board June Budget Meeting
West Central Research & Extension Center – North Platte, NE
Tuesday, June 03, 2025
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Board Members Present

Kent Lorens
Tyson Narjes
Mary Eisenzimmer
Doug Hashman
Mark Spurgin
Monte Murkle
Jared Sayer

Staff Present

Royce Schaneman
Samantha Oborny
Jadyn Heckenlively

Others Present

Randon Peters – NWGA
Ryland Peters – Nebraska Wheat Ambassador
Martha Mamo – UNL
Cody Creech – UNL
Ashton Boehm (via Zoom) – Nebraska Wheat Ambassador
Jeff Bradshaw (via Zoom) – UNL
Jon Vanderford – KOLN TV
Jack Bartlett – NTV News

Proceedings

Chairman Lorens called the meeting to order at 8:11 AM

Nebraska Wheat Ambassador Presentation

Olivia Vanderford began the meeting with a year in review presentation about her ambassadorship with the NWB.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken and crop reports were given, and guests were introduced and welcomed. Conditions are variable and board members express concerns of abandoned acres and drought. The southeast region has noticed some promising acres, but moisture is needed.

Review and Adopt Agenda

Narjes moved to approve the agenda as presented, Spurgin seconded. Voice vote, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Hashman moved to approve the minutes as presented, Murkle seconded. Voice vote, motion carried.

Approval of Financials

Sayer moved to approve the financial reports as presented, Eisenzimmer seconded. Roll call vote:

Murkle – yes, Narjes – yes, Spurgin – yes, Hashman – yes, Eisenzimmer – yes, Sayer – yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

Excise Tax Compliance Reports

No reports given. Schaneman reported that there the auditor position to complete these reports is currently not filled. A letter was sent on behalf of the board to ensure that the NWB is not paying for these services in the contract with NDA if these services are not being provided while position is being filled.

Discussion for Statute Update

There has been discussion on modernizing areas of the current NWB statute. Board members wanted to add this topic to the next meeting agenda to discuss further.

Domestic & International Marketing

US Wheat Associates – There have been no recent meetings with USW and no recent committee reports.

Food Aide – Kent Lorens reported that the Food for Peace bill has passed the House and is currently in the Senate. USW staff, Peter Lauderman, has moved on to work with USDA.

Wheat Marketing Center – Mary Eisenzimmer was unable to attend the recent meeting in March. She wanted to note that WMC will be hosting Idaho legislative representatives in June, as NWB had discussed organizing a similar trip for Nebraska representatives. Schaneman added that this year South Dakota joined the Nebraska tour at WMC and he was approached by South Dakota Executive Director stating that they plan to implement their own tour. Schaneman also stated that Kansas would like to be included in the tours as well to consider becoming a member of WMC. The board members stated that if we have available spots for upcoming tours, we should encourage these other states to attend to experience what the WMC is doing for the wheat industry.

Wheat Foods Council – Kent Lorens reported that the president of WFC has resigned. Their summer meeting will be held in two weeks in Minneapolis and there will be a lot of discussion about the future of the group. There is a possibility they may expand the group with industry leaders as well.

Plains Grains Inc. – Schaneman reported that due to staffing changes within the Quality Lab, there is a possibility that this could affect the survey. However, as of now the survey should be completed on time.

Wheat Quality Council – Schaneman recently attended the WQC annual HRW wheat tour. He stated that it was a successful tour and that Kansas looks to have a decent wheat crop this year. As they made their way north, it was apparent that it was significantly drier.

Home Baking Association – Kent Lorens reported that he has recently attended a few zoom calls with the group. Their annual meeting will be in Fort Collins, CO.

Coalition for Grain Fiber – Tyson Narjes reported that the group is focusing on the fundraising efforts and working with other wheat commissions to get the group progressing in the right direction.

USW Board Team – Mark Spurgin recently attended a USW board team that traveled to Egypt, Morocco, and Portugal in May. He shared a presentation with the board regarding his trip and the efforts made for these markets.

Senator Ricketts Roundtable – Doug Hashman attended the roundtable in Scottsbluff. He stated that it was a successful roundtable and Senator Ricketts was engaging with representatives and asking questions. Senator Ricketts wanted to hear if growers have experienced any changes regarding the tariffs being placed.

Ag Day with Governor Pillen & Director of Agriculture Sherry Vinton – Monte Murkle and Royce Schaneman attended an ag day in Omaha with Nebraska governor and director of agriculture. They toured the Rotella bakery and discussed the importance of wheat in Nebraska. Participants had the opportunity to sit with the owners and operators of the bakery.

Ex-officio Reports

University of Nebraska-Lincoln – Dr. Martha Mammo gave an update on recent updates regarding the university.

NDA – No reports given.

Nebraska Wheat Growers Association Report

Vice President Randon Peters and Executive Secretary Jady Heckenlively reported on recent events relating the NWGA. Schaneman informed the board on recent items in the state legislator that were monitored. Peters and Heckenlively updated on recent events with NAWG regarding staff changes and the potential for funding requests. Heckenlively informed the board that NWGA moved to offer two \$500 scholarships to high school seniors pursuing an agricultural degree. The plan is for this to replace the Nebraska wheat ambassador scholarship and have an internship through the NWB with those funds.

Nebraska Wheat Board Administrative/Office Report

Executive Director Report – Royce Schaneman

- State Auditor Report – Schaneman gave the board an overview and further explanation of each of the findings within the recent auditor report. The board discussed each finding and addressed ways to resolve these and prevent them from becoming an issue in the future.

Spurgin moved to turn the purchasing card back on for food, Narjes seconded.

Narjes – yes, Murkle – yes, Hashman – yes, Sayer – yes, Eisenzimmer – yes, Spurgin – yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

- NU Horizon Genetics Employee – Schaneman informed the board that NHG has contracted with Nathan Mueller to become the Executive Director.
- Summer Meeting Attendance – Kent Lorens and Mark Spurgin are planning to attend.
- Pay for Lobbyist – There is an opportunity to pay for a lobbyist in the attempt to get USAID under USDA.
- August Trade Teams – The NWB will be hosting two trade teams in August. A team from the Philippines August 3 – 5, and a team from Chile August 27 – 28. There will also be an ag tourism group from Australia in late July that will take a farm visit at Mark Knobel's.
- Invitation to Secretary of State Trade Team – Egypt & Israel October 26th – November 8th

Apparel Order

The NWB members and staff updated their apparel for meetings and events to represent the NWB professionally.

Harvest Meals

The staff expressed interest in providing harvest meals this year. Board members were encouraged to let staff know once they have an idea of when harvest could begin in their area.

Presentation of 2024-2025 Nebraska Wheat Ambassadors

Nebraska Wheat Ambassadors, Ashton Boehm and Ryland Peters presented to the board a year in review of their ambassadorship and what they accomplished.

Budget Adjustments

Narjes moved to move \$5,000 into International Marketing, \$2,500 into Domestic Marketing, and \$1,000 in the Ambassador program, all from Unobligated, Sayer seconded.

Roll call vote:

Hashman – yes, Sayer – yes, Eisenzimmer - yes, Spurgin – yes, Murkle – yes, Narjes – yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

First Reading Funding Proposals

Murkle moved to waive the two reading process for proposals submitted after the February meeting, Narjes seconded. Voice vote, motion carried.

Spurgin moved to go into Executive Session for personnel discussion at 4:06 PM, Eisenzimmer seconded . Voice vote, motion carried. Roll call

Lorens declared us out of exec session at 5:11 with no actions

Eisenzimmer moved to approve a 4% increase to the Executive Director and the increases for other staff as presented, Spurgin seconded. Roll call vote:

Sayer – yes, Eisenzimmer – yes, Spurgin – yes, Murkle – yes, Narjes – yes, Hashman – yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

Second Reading & Budget Approval

Eisenzimmer moved to approve, the budget, Sayer seconded. Roll call vote:

Eisenzimmer – yes, Spurgin – yes, Murkle – yes, Narjes – yes, Hashman – yes, Sayer – yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

Murkle moved to ratify the motion from the last meeting designating Royce as NWGA executive director, Sayer seconded. Roll call vote:

Spurgin – yes, Murkle – yes, Narjes – yes, Hashman – yes, Sayer – yes, Eisenzimmer – yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

Calendar & Travel Approval

Tentative next meeting date: Tuesday, August 26th at Rotella's in Omaha

Narjes moved to approve the calendar as presented, Sayer seconded. Roll call vote:

Sayer - yes, Murkle - yes, Spurgin - yes, Eisenzimmer - yes, Narjes - yes, Hashman - yes, Lorens – yes. **Motion carried.**

Adjournment

Murkle moved to adjourn at 5:34 PM, Narjes second. Voice vote, motion carried.