



West Central Michigan Horticultural Research, Inc.

Board Meeting 1/29/20

Board Members:

Andy Riley
Mike VanAgtmael
Art Lister
David Rennhack - Absent
Caleb Coulter
Richard Raffaelli
Gerrit Herrygers
Doug Buhler - Via Phone Conference

Non-Voting Attendees:

Patricia Parsons - Administrator

Location: PFI

Start/Finish: Call to Order 6:02pm / Motion to Close 7:36pm

Attendance Called: Attendance taken 1 absence – David Rennhack / Motion Approving Attendance 6:03pm

Agenda Approved: Board Confirmation email received of 1/29/20 meeting agenda and accepted. / Motion to approve Agenda 6:04pm

Previous Meeting Recap: Board Confirmation email received of 12/5/19 meeting minutes and accepted. / Motion to approve minutes 6:05pm

Topics of Discussion & Old Business:

1. Station Manager
 - A. Jim Kells - coordinating management of site
 - B. Lane Stotler – on the ground at site (July 4-20th will be assigned to PFI tasks)
 - C. John Bakker part time
 - D. Budget for full time Manager
2. Crop & Land Design
 - A. Andy & Dave walked property
 - B. Evaluated Property (Peach trees need to be removed)
 - C. Young peach , plum, and tart cherries
 - D. \$4000-\$5000 to clear trees and destroy
 - E. Recommendation to Board to hire out to manually work land for tree & root removal
 - F. How many trees are left in quadrants
 - G. Spring ground not ready for planting
 - H. Dave update committee on tree removal
 - I. Meeting with MSU does board need to bring anything (Input property layout)
 - J. Who is on the committee (Researchers, Faculty, Extension, Pathologist Soil, Horticulturalist) – 11 people total including Jim Kells
3. Fundraising Totals
 - A. Reviewed fundraising totals.
 - B. Approval of funds total.
 - C. Donor's list reviewed.

New Business:

1. MDARD Specialty Crop Grant
 - A. Deadline to submit Feb 27 Ask is for \$100,000
 1. Dr. Kells recommends 2 people write the grant proposal – 1 from MSU on campus & 1 from station.
 - B. Focus request to infrastructure, deer fence, wind machine, irrigation, wells.
 - C. Does not payout until Sept.



- D. Experiments for 2021
- E. Grant proposal to target Apples (must be fenced) to a secondary well (Irrigation)
- F. John Neville site plan & for quote on fencing

2. Blueberry Potential

- A. March 17th – BB group special meeting
- B. Trevor Nichols to present about the station
- C. Researcher Agree to come up for BB
- D. Proposal to BB Group of \$140,000 and 20% annual operating cost buy in and in turn 3 acres would be dedicated to BB planting (Pay over 2yrs)
- E. Motion giving Richard authority to present to the BB group with the exact proposal that was given to the Asparagus group with an increase dollar amount of \$140,000 (Pay over 2yrs) and 20% annual operating cost and in turn 3 acres would be dedicated to BB planting .

3. Carrots & Young Farmers Group

- A. Seven growers currently grow carrots
- B. Efforts to be conducted to raise \$20,000 from carrot growers and station will set aside 2 acres that is rotational for carrots
- C. Discussion on setting aside 1-2 acres for Young Farmers Program
- D. Motion for support to set aside 2 acres for carrots or other crop and 1 acre for Young Farmers Program

4. Building Bids

- A. Final draft will change
- B. Donation of walk in coolers & CA pods a \$55,000 value
- C. Will need to add another 540 sq. ft.
- D. At this point cost will be \$87/sq ft – finished
- E. Stovall quote \$705,000 and Pioneer quote \$789,000 - \$810,000
- F. Contactors evaluated for project 11/21 contractors are from Oceana County – 19/21 were in Tri-County Area
- G. Motion to move forward with Richard to sign contact with Stovall Construction for \$730,000 with 5% being contingency to start building mid-march and finish Sept 12, 2020.

5. Spray Building

- A. Size of the building
- B. Design of 40 x 64 barn with 2 garage doors
- C. Jim Busch, Tim & Dave to submit in Feb to USDA
- D. Funding has to be used within 3 years
- E. Apply for 2 – 500 gal tanks
- F. Motion for approval for Tim to apply for a 64 x 40 ft spray building with garage doors and all the other initiatives the USDA allows

Follow Up/Updates:

1. Richard – Michigan Horticultural Society
 - A. Presenting to group
 - B. Asking for \$150,000
2. Richard – Fremont Foundation Grant
 - A. Assigned Patricia to apply for grant
3. Andy – Grower outside of region liquidating equipment – Getting out of farming
 - A. Motion of approval for Andy to spend \$40,000 to buy equipment from this grower
4. Mike – Gillison wants to donate a new sprayer
 - A. First part of Feb need a decision either Plan A or Plan B
 - B. Plan A – Give sprayer that meets specs
 - C. Plan B – Get a standard sprayer to use this year then next year decide what’s best for the farm



5. Richard – Updates

- A. Moving dirt (Breaking Ground) on building March 2020
- B. Final End of year taxes are with CPA
- C. Line push from under the road estimated at \$20,000 for internet

Motions Voted On:

1. Motion of Approval – Motion to Approve for Richard to present to the BB group with the exact proposal that was given to the Asparagus group with an increase dollar amount of \$140,000 (Pay over 2yrs) and 20% annual operating cost and in turn 3 acres would be dedicated to BB planting .

Moved: Art – Support: Mike – 7 yes votes – passed 6:46pm

2. Motion of Support – Motion for support to set aside 2 acres for carrots or other crop and 1 acre for Young Farmers Program

Moved: Richard – Support: Gerrit – 7 yes votes – passed 6:58pm

3. Motion to move Forward – Motion to move forward with Richard to sign contact with Stovall Construction for \$730,000 with 5% being contingency to start building mid-march and finish Sept 12, 2020.

Moved: Gerrit – Support: Mike – 7 yes votes – passed 7:08pm

4. Motion of Approval – Motion for approval for Tim to apply for a 64 x 40 ft spray building with garage doors and all the other initiatives the USDA allows

Moved: Richard – Support: Caleb – 7 yes votes – passed 7:19pm

5. Motion of Approval – Motion of approval for Andy to spend \$40,000 to buy equipment from this grower

Moved: Gerrit – Support: Mike – 7 yes votes – passed 7:27pm

6. Motion to Adjourn

Moved: Richard – Support: Gerrit – 7 yes votes – passed 7:36pm