

California Department of Food & Agriculture

Minutes

of the Meeting of the Pierce's Disease and Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Board
and Pierce's Disease Advisory Task Force

Held on Monday, December 19, 2022.

Location:

Web-conference and Teleconference

PD/GWSS BOARD

Members Present: Jeff Bitter, William Drayton, Rich Hammond, Randy Heinzen,
Trey Irwin, Aaron Lange, Seth Schwebs, David Teuschler

Members Absent: Greg Coleman, Bill Hammond, John "JD" Harkey, Kendall Hoxsey-
Onysko, Jim Ledbetter, Steve McIntyre, Dominic Rossini

PD ADVISORY TASK FORCE

Members Present: Ruben Arroyo, Chris Bowland, Tracy Cleveland, Glenn Fankhauser,
Kristin Lowe, Martin Mochizuki, Todd Sanders, Beth Stone-Smith, Judy Zaninovich

Members Absent: Chris Bowland, Alyssa Houtby

OTHER ATTENDEES

Rodrigo Almeida, Noelle Cremers, Joseph Damiano, Leah Gayagas, Mark
Harrington, Matthew Kaiser, Rodrigo Krugner, Giancarlo LaGiusa, Mark McLoughlin,
David Morgan, Warren Nichols, Stacie Oswald, Michelle Pham, Ted Reiger, Maher Al
Rwahnih, Nicole Shorter, Myrna Villegas

CALL TO ORDER

PD/GWSS Board Chairperson William Drayton and PD Advisory Task Force Chairperson
Judy Zaninovich called the joint meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Matthew Kaiser conducted the roll call for the PD/GWSS Board (Board) and the PD
Advisory Task Force (Task Force). Quorums were present for both the Board and the
Task Force.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

William Drayton and Judy Zaninovich thanked members for joining the meeting. Joseph
Damiano, the new Statewide Coordinator for the Pierce's Disease Control Program,
briefly introduced himself to the Board and Task Force members and expressed his
excitement to work with this cooperative program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments at this time.

PD/GWSS BOARD BUDGET REVIEW

Matthew Kaiser provided a brief overview of revenue and expenditures for Fiscal Year

(FY) 21/22 and FY 22/23. Kaiser reminded the Board that \$500,000 was set aside for each of FY 22/23 and FY 23/24 for the National Academy of Sciences Review during the June 2022 Board Meeting, and was included in projected expenditures. The program is anticipating \$5.3 million in expenditures this year leaving a net balance of \$9.8 million carried over to FY 23-24.

No further questions were asked at this time.

National Academy of Sciences Review

Kristin Lowe provided a brief summary regarding the recent proposal from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). This review would include a thorough critique of the Board's Request for Proposal (RFP) practices, proposal selection process, and a scientific review of current research on grapevine viruses including red blotch and leafroll type 3. Close to two decades ago, the Board established a similar agreement with the NAS to conduct a review of Pierce's disease research and the Board's research program, which helped guide the program since then and also improve processes used by the Board during the grant solicitation process. Lowe stated that the reason for bringing this before the Board in a special meeting was because the project would need to be started very soon in order to meet critical timelines associated with the Board's annual RFP review process if the proposal was approved. While the goals of such a project had been discussed at the past several meetings, a formal proposal was only recently received. Lowe stated she was happy with the current NAS proposal as it addresses many issues related to grapevine viruses and industry needs.

Jeff Bitter expressed concern about the approximately \$900,000 price tag associated with the NAS proposal and asked for additional information regarding its value as well as how red blotch and leafroll type 3 were chosen instead of other viruses. Lowe responded that the previous review 20 years ago was smaller in scope, addressing just PD and its vectors, but contained a variety of expert recommendations that were later implemented by the Board. She reiterated that outside oversight is needed as a means of reviewing the Board's existing practices and charting a path forward to address the unique challenges that grapevine viruses present. Red blotch and leafroll 3 were chosen as critical diseases with the fewest existing tools to address. Including all grapevine viruses, or all Board-designated pests and diseases, would have led to the project taking much longer to complete and at greater cost, possibly with less focused outcomes.

Aaron Lange asked Lowe about her opinion on the quality of the proposal and if there was anything missing that Lowe felt needed to be added. Lowe responded that she was very pleased with what NAS had submitted and was optimistic regarding the specific objectives the proposal was attempting to address. Lowe stated that reviews like this one provide much needed consensus for fairness, transparency, and scientific effectiveness of the board's grant solicitation process. Matthew Kaiser followed up by explaining the previous NAS project conducted two decades ago cost \$500,000 over approximately eighteen months. Beth Stone-Smith stated that the previous NAS project provided the Board a great deal of focus for its research funding process as well as guidance to the program as a whole, highlighting unique relationships between government, industry, and academia in the program. Lange asked what percentage this \$900K audit will cost when compared to the total grant funds dispersed over the last 10 years to which William Drayton responded that the Board has approved over \$52.5 million in grant solicitations over the life of the program and so this audit represents less than 2% of the overall total research cost. Kaiser stated that overall funding for research projects averages around \$2.5 million per year. Lange asked if there were any responses or comments from Board or Task Force members who could not be present today for the meeting. Drayton responded

that Steve McIntyre could not be present today but had expressed enthusiastic support for this initiative and its potential implementation. Bitter stated that a review by the NAS had been discussed at prior meetings before the proposal was received and that no adamant opposition had been voiced.

Chairperson William Drayton asked the Board for a motion to approve the National Academy of Sciences proposal entitled "Assistance to the CDFA PD/GWSS Board on Grapevine Viruses and Grapevine Disease Research" at \$926,880 over two years.

- It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed by the Board to recommend approving the National Academy of Sciences proposal entitled "Assistance to the CDFA PD/GWSS Board on Grapevine Viruses and Grapevine Disease Research" at \$926,880 over two years..

Details of Board Vote

Motion: Jeff Bitter Second: Seth Schwebs

In Favor: Bitter, Drayton, Rich Hammond, Heinzen, Irwin, Lange, Schwebs, Teuschler

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Coleman, Bill Hammond, Harkey, Hoxsey-Onysko, Ledbetter, McIntyre, Rossini

OTHER ITEMS

Statewide Coordinator Joseph Damiano and Environmental Program Manager Michelle Pham reported that they went to the CDFA E-Fund Committee to request an allocation \$1.2 million for fiscal year's 22/23 and 23/24 to reimburse Solano County for the costs for the GWSS eradication project in the Vacaville area. The E-Fund Committee approved the request, and their recommendation was being routed to Secretary Ross for approval. Damiano suggested this item be discussed further at the next PD/GWSS Board and Task Force meeting.

CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

Matthew Kaiser reminded everyone that the next PD/GWSS Board and Task Force Meeting is Thursday, January 26th at 1:00 at the CDFA Auditorium. This meeting will be in-person, but remote viewing options will also be available. Board Chairperson William Drayton and Task Force Chairperson Judy Zaninovich adjourned the meeting at 1:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted on January 17th, 2023, by
Giancarlo LaGiusa, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Pierce's Disease Control Program
California Department of Food and Agriculture