

Administrative
Council for
Extension and Experiment Station Research
Meeting

Friday, November 3, 2023
1:30-3:00 p.m.
130 Burruss Hall Conference Room

Participants: Brennan Shepard, Paul Winistorfer, Randy Heflin, Dan Givens, Tim Hodge, Cyril Clarke, Don Taylor, Steve Kleiber, Jeff Earley, Mary Burrows, Ken Miller, Mike Gutter, Lauren Augustine, and Caroline Buscaglia

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions (Cyril Clarke)

2. Discussion Items

a.) Approval of Meeting Minutes (Cyril Clarke)

The October meeting minutes were distributed electronically with the agenda. The council reviewed and approved the August minutes.

b.) 229 Central Savings Plan (Mary Burrows and Mike Gutter)

Mary Burrows, director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station (AES), and Mike Gutter, director of the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), shared planned uses of Agency 229 central savings for AES and VCE, respectively. The council approved the proposed plans.

Steve Kleiber, assistant dean of finance and administration in the College of Agriculture and Life Studies (CALs), also shared a plan for the use of undesignated Agency 229 operation and maintenance funds. The council approved the proposed plan.

3. Unit Updates

a.) Virginia Cooperative Extension

Mike Gutter provided an update on recently completed district conferences with extension agents and searches for vacant positions across the Commonwealth.

The council also briefly discussed the status of student internship programs within the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

b.) Agricultural Experiment Station

Mary Burrows provided update on a recently held meeting with experiment station directors, farm managers and administrators in Blacksburg, who received presentations on a variety of topics, including Agency 229 programming, academic programs, CALs Global initiatives, communications, finance, advancement, facilities, and civil rights.

Mary also shared information from her meetings with graduate students who are stationed at various Agricultural Research and Extension Centers across the Commonwealth, and graduate program coordinators and directors. Student concerns involved issues related to housing, university fees, access to graduate student resources (including mental health and financial wellness) and the desire to create more engagement opportunities with campus departments and other university students.

c.) Deans

Dan Givens, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, provided an update on the completion of the indoor equine arena in Leesburg and searches for vacant positions. Dan also shared news of the Virginia Tech Animal Laboratory Services (ViTALS) being selected to be one of five animal diagnostic labs in the nation to receive a federally funded position designed to collaborate with the other selected labs and enable a more rapid recognition and response to any new and emergent diseases.

Mary Burrows provided an update on searches for vacant positions in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Paul Winistorfer, dean of the College of Natural Resources and Environment, shared that college representatives would be visiting Virginia State University on December 18th to strengthen collaborations with the university. Paul also shared information from a recent National Society of American Forestry meeting held in Sacramento, CA; information on the status of the search for extension specialist in the Department of Sustainable Biomaterials; and, about the installation of a conditioning chamber in the Brooks Center that was desperately needed.

d.) Budget and Finance

Tim Hodge, associate vice president for Budgeting and Financial Planning, provided a status update on the state's current budget development process.

e.) OVPRI

Randy Heflin, senior associate vice president for Research and Innovation, reported on the recent filling of the senior research development coordinator position by Dr. Eleanor Nelson. Randy also reported that university research expenditures increased by approximately 15% for the second consecutive year.

f.) Government and Community Relations

Caroline Buscaglia and Lauren Augustine provided updates on Agency 229 related issues and processes in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the federal government, respectively.