

**AES/ASC Advisory Committee Meeting
Bernalillo County Extension Office
July 19, 2017**

Minutes

Present: Steve Loring, Assoc. Dir AES; Natalie Goldberg, Interim Associate Dean and Director AES; Dina Chacon-Reitzel, NM Cattle Growers, Santa Fe; Dino Cervantes, Chile Producer, Las Cruces; Bruce Davis, Rancher, Clayton; Roland Sanchez, MD and small rancher/farmer, Belen; Craig Ogden, NM Farm and Livestock Bureau, Loving; Shad Cox, Corona Ranch Superintendent; Steve Guldán, Alcalde ASC Superintendent; Jane Pierce, faculty (Entomologist) Artesia ASC; Shengrui Yao, faculty (Horticulture/Fruit Specialist) Alcalde ASC; Stephanie Walker, faculty (Horticulture/Vegetable Specialist), Main Campus Las Cruces; Clint Loest, faculty Animal and Range Science, Main Campus Las Cruces; Aaron Scott, Farm Manager, Clovis ASC; Dave Lowry, Farm Manager, Leyendecker ASC

Guests: Ella Sanchez; Rolando Flores, Dean of ACES; and Jon Boren. CES Director – Drs. Flores and Boren were present at the beginning of the meeting while Dr. Flores spoke to the group about the mission of this committee.

Absent: Blake Curtis, Seed Producer, Clovis; Jerry Sims, EPPWS Department Head, Las Cruces

Introductions: Everyone introduced themselves to the group

Message from Dean Flores:

- The Dean thanked everyone for attending and participating in the critically important committee.
- The goal of the committee is to evaluate and assess the twelve AES Ag Science Centers that are located across the state.
 - Do we have the appropriate number of centers?
 - Is the structure appropriate to effectively & efficiently meet the mission of the AES and each center?
 - Do the centers have appropriate facilities to meet their needs?
 - Are we addressing the appropriate research priorities for the future (5 – 10 years)?
 - Are the centers adequately funded and appropriately staffed? Funding for the ASC comes from legislative initiatives, grants & contracts, and sales. Our current budget cut is \$800,000. We have to manage with what we have. We are in the black, but funding is tight.
- Internal comprehensive review - Last fall, all departments and the ASCs were asked to complete individual SWOT analyses (identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) – the assessments by the ASCs have been provided as background information for the committee. In the SWOT analyses, common themes emerged - all facilities are in need of significant repairs, have low FTE, low student activity, etc.
 - From the SWOT analysis, it is clear that we need to do a thorough, comprehensive assessment of the AES and the ASCs to ensure that we are doing the right thing for the right reasons, and to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our clientele across the

state. The committee was established to complete this task. Dean Flores is asking for your time and expertise to help conduct this review and make recommendations.

- For a while, people were hearing that we were closing Centers (Clayton and Artesia, were mentioned). We aren't hearing that anymore, but rather we are hearing that we are assessing all of the centers to see what we need to do. If the resulting recommendation from this committee is that we need to close a center, then that is the result and that is what we will do. Clayton was out of commission due to some administrative issues, but they have been resolved and they are getting back to work.
- Dr. Flores has met with all the Advisory Boards of the ASCs and he challenged them to look at what we need to be doing differently
 - How do we integrate better with private industry?
 - How do we integrate better the research, extension and teaching missions?
- Charge for this committee (most critical committee in the last 20 years) – Where are we going with what we have? Are we fulfilling the needs of industry? Do we need to find additional funding resources? Where do we find additional funding sources?
- Don't need a report by September 2017, but we need one by September 2018.
- 2018 GO Bond – \$25 Million (won't be enough, but if we can partner with industry, we can do a lot)
 - Biomedical – allow for studies of different organisms allows greater funding opportunities through grants and contracts
 - Food science/meat science processing facility (potentially managed by private industry)
 - Feed mill in Las Cruces

Background Information and Open Discussion

- I. Information on the mission of the AES and the ASCs, our structure and why the ASCs are located where they are was presented.
 - AES is a System of scientists who work together to address the needs of their local areas, the state, the region and the world (where appropriate and applicable).
 - Understand the similarities and differences in the ASCs
 - What are the common metrics? Where can we evaluate ASCs on common ground (i.e. apples to apples)?
 - What are the differences that need to be considered in evaluating and comparing ASCs.
 - Why do we have so many? This is largely based on the fact that NM is a large state and is diverse in geographic/environmental characteristics. What works in one location is not necessarily going to work in others. Therefore, there is a need to conduct research across diverse environments.
 - All stations, with the exception of Corona, have at least one faculty member, who also has an appointment in a department on campus.
 - Superintendents have dual responsibilities – facilities management for their station and academic research faculty for the subject matter.
- II. Political and Local Support:
 - Each ASC has an Advisory Board made up of local clientele. These boards generally meet once a year. They function differently at different centers, but their overall mission is the help the ASC

staff understand what is needed and ensure that the direction of the center is on track to fulfil the needs of the local constituency.

- They help to determine what is needed in terms of research and extension efforts.
- They need to understand the basics of biological research and how quickly (or slowly) research direction can be changed.
- They assist with political support from their local representatives:
 - Legislative requests document (we will send an electronic copy of this document to everyone).
 - In many cases, Legislators don't understand the difference between CES/AES, or NMDA, or NMSU in general. Success for funding at one center is actually seen as a contribution to the university as a whole - - it affects the overall funding for NMSU.

III. Review Funding:

- A handout provided on the funding for each of the ASCs (except for Leyendecker and Fabian Garcia) have been provided as background information for the committee
 - Leyendecker and Fabian Garcia, the two facilities near the main campus, are different from the stations in many ways. These facilities provide a location for the main campus faculty to conduct research. The funding for these two facilities combined is \$42,998 - \$14,000 for FG and \$28,998 for Leyendecker. The amount doesn't even pay the electric bill for these facilities.
- Over the last 20 years or more, the University has not been able to add any additional resources to the ASCs. New funding has come from local legislative initiatives.
- Hatch funding – “capacity funds” or “formula funds” – Federal funds provided to each state for work related to Agricultural research. Comes as a block grant to AES Director who distributes them. NIFA must approve the “Hatch” projects that are funded. Hatch funds have been flat for 20 – 25 years, but inflation reduces the efficiency of those funds.
- Counties provide approximately 1/3 of the funding for the Cooperative Extension Service at the County level, but they do not help with funding AES activities or the ASCs.
- Commercial partnerships?
 - Cotton incorporated used to provide significant resources, but this has diminished over the years.
 - Many other companies provide feed, seed or other supplies
- AFRI Competitive Funds – programs competitively funded through submitted research/extension/education proposals. National science panels review proposals and determine the funding distribution. These programs are highly competitive and the success rate for proposals is generally low
- Regional grant opportunities exist through Western regional IPM and Western SARE. Others?
- Cost of facilities – repairs and constructions – involvement of NMSU F & S adds costs and time to all efforts. Efforts of the stations often stalls due to F & S interpretations of rules. This is a significant issue for the ASCs

IV. Branding:

- People do not understand the difference between the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES/ASC/Research) and Cooperative Extension Service (CES) or the relationship to ACES and NMSU.
- Some members of the committee thought we should consider a new branding initiative that would highlight research and extension. Natalie mentioned that Dean Flores has established a new branding initiative for the college that is designed to help people understand that each of these entities is a part of the College of ACES at NMSU.

How do we proceed / fulfill our mission on this committee? Open Discussion

- We need to look at the value of the ASCs to producers, legislators, community members, etc.
- We have to understand the need first to know if the needs are being met.
 - Run down facilities – how do we fix them? Is there other funding (historical restoration, other?).
 - This is not unique to NMSU – this is occurring all over the country. Huge problem nationwide.
 - A massive study has been done at the national level of each of the Land-Grant Institutions (“sightlines” – document can be shared).
 - There may be value in closing and reopening a new location (rented, used, or other) rather than dumping more funding into aging facilities. Stop putting Band-Aids on facilities.
- We need to promote the good things that each of the centers are doing and the impact that they have on the community at large (not just the ag producers).
 - Dr. Sanchez noted that the impact statements on the Artesia ASC SWOT document are very impressive – these statement alone should be reason enough for that ASC to exist. But he questioned how this information is communicated to the clientele and the community at large
 - There was a question about our webpages and publications. Is the information there? Is it up to date? How easy is it to search and find what you are looking for?
- We need to assess and understand the role of the ASCs on training a workforce for the future.
 - What is the ASCs’ role in distance education? It is currently non-existent, but the faculty at the centers are willing to assist in these areas. We need to understand what is the need out in the state? Is there enough demand from people who can’t physically relocate to a college campus?

How do we move forward? Open Discussion

- What do we need to measure/compare/determine if we are meeting needs? How do we measure station’s effectiveness?
- Future structure? How do we improve the facilities without throwing good money at bad? If we close a station, how many resources are truly made available to AES or ACES.
 - Three key areas of concern:
- Facilities needs – how do we maintain and improve the facilities? Is our structure appropriate for our needs?
- Research needs – what are the research needs of the future?
- Funding needs – How to maximize the funding we have and develop additional funding sources?

- **Desired Action:** Tour of ASCs desirable if it can be worked out logistically – combine with face-to-face meetings. Have Advisory Board members present to help this committee understand their interests and needs.

Action Items/Information Needs for the Committee:

1. **Need more information on research needs: Ask faculty for the top three research needs in their area of expertise.**
2. **What have other states done? Have others dealt with similar issues and how we can learn from them?**
 - a) **Steve and Natalie can contact other AES Directors to determine what they are doing in these types of assessments.**
 - b) **Sightlines – document on infrastructure nationwide – Steve will find it and distribute to the group.**
3. **Need a real estate appraisal for the ASCs – what is the value of each of them? To be realistic, the net sum needs to be \$0.**
 - a) **Break down of what NMSU owns and doesn't own, what can we do and what can't we do?**
4. **One-page white papers from each center on their sustainability over the next 5 – 10 years? What do they need to be able to continue meeting the needs of their clientele over those years?**

Steve and Natalie will get this information to the group by Sept. 15. We will hold our next face-to-face meeting October 12 at noon at the Corona Ranch (lunch will be provided). The goals of this meeting will be to establish subcommittees and define work assignments.

Overall Timeline –this has changed a bit from the original plan – we don't have as urgent a deadline as we once did. We need to make sure that we are able to do it right, in an expedient manner – very aware of people's time.

The committee feels this is an ominous task (overwhelming). They are not opposed to face-to-face meetings, stating there is value to the synergy of meeting together. The committee agreed that establishing smaller subcommittees would be helpful in dealing with the overwhelming nature of the task. Subcommittees will be more effective in making significant progress. Subcommittees can report to the larger group at agreed upon whole committee meetings.

The committee also realizes that they are representing larger groups and they will need to involve others at some point. At what point do we need to involve others? The task is huge!

Next ASC Advisory Committee Meeting - October 12 at the Corona Ranch – 12:00 – 5:00 PM - Lunch provided.