



OREGON SWEET CHERRY COMMISSION

Phone: (503) 274-5458

www.osweetcherry.org

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

April 5, 2023

MCAREC

3005 Experiment Station Dr, Hood River, OR 97031

Chairman Stacey Cooper called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Commissioners present included:

Vacant	Sue Root	Kristoff Fowler	JD Walker	Ian Chandler	Wade Root	Jeff Heater	Tony Guisto	Stacey Cooper	Michael Omeg	Kerry Newberry
Handler 1	Handler 2	Producer 1	Producer 2	Producer 3	Producer 4	Producer 5	Producer 6	Producer 7	Producer 8	Public Member
-	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Others present included: Stuart Reitz; *Interim Director Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center*, Randi Alexander-Rolison; *OSCC Administrative Office*, Julie Hoffman; *OSCC Administrative Office*.

MINUTES AND FINANCIAL REPORT

The minutes of the December 14, 2022 meeting were provided to the commission prior to the meeting. Chairman Cooper asked if there were any questions or edits pertaining to the minutes. Being none,

Jeff Heater moved to approve the December 14, 2022 meeting minutes as written. Seconded by Ian Chandler. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

Co-Administrator Julie Hoffman provided a financial statement through March 31, 2023 showing a beginning fund balance of \$576,592.38. Total revenue was \$664,122.45, and expenses totalling \$739,138.48, giving a total revenue and fund balance of \$501,538.85.

Jeff Heater moved to approve the March 31, 2023 financials. Seconded by Tony Guisto. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

ODA Commodity Commission Oversight Manager- Alexander-Rolison reported that ODA has yet to post this open position, leaving the commodity commissions without an oversight manager since December 2022. The OSCC Handbook edited by Kris Anderson is locked in a hard drive that cannot be accessed due to Anderson not remembering the correct login passcode and ODA's IT department not able to retrieve files.

OSCC Website was shared on screen by Alexander-Rolison. Each page was reviewed with feedback provided on changes to be made.

Julie Hoffman announced she will retire June 30, 2023. The Oregon Beef Council will hire a part-time bookkeeper/administrative assistant starting the new fiscal year.

Alexander-Rolison will be moved to a full-time position and remain as admin for OSCC.

Jeff Heater moved to name Randi Alexander-Rolison as Administrator of the Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission. Seconded by Tony Guisto. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

Jeff Heater moved to have Randi Alexander-Rolison added as signer to the Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission bank accounts and remove Julie Hoffman. Seconded by Tony Guisto. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

OSU RESEARCH & EXTENSION REPORT - Stuart Reitz

Reitz shared that the search for a director for MCAREC currently has 19 applicants and 10 interviews scheduled. There will be a time where public comment will be accepted.

Lab renovations continue. The USDA lab is complete and equipment is being installed. The ARS lab work is in progress. The Roof project is on hold until a week of nice weather is in the forecast.

Plans for the main building to have an updated mechanical system and equipment is under review due to the increased cost.

The admin position at MCAREC has been approved and will be posted soon.

NORTHWEST HORTICULTURAL COUNCIL

Randi Alexander-Rolison shared an email from NHC received March 30, 2023;

H-2A I: The NHC is pursuing a congressional repeal of the new 34 hour limitation affecting growers who file as joint employers in the H-2A program. (This 34 hour provision affects growers who file as joint employers with other growers, not with farm labor contractors or as an association. More information can be found [here](#).) Representative Newhouse (R/Washington) is leading this effort in Congress, which has bipartisan appeal since it helps growers without negatively impacting worker benefits.

H-2A II: The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Foreign Labor Certification is holding a webinar for H-2A stakeholders at noon on April 4 regarding the changes made to the Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) by [the new rule](#) published last month. More information regarding this webinar, including information on how to join, can be found [here](#).

H-2A III: The NHC is supporting a congressional effort – led by Senator Jon Ossoff (D/Georgia) in the Senate and Representative GT Thompson (R/Pennsylvania) and Representative Ralph Norman (R/South Carolina) in the House – to repeal the new AEWR rule. The chance of success of this effort is negligible, as the resolution would have to pass both the House and Senate and then be signed by President Biden (whose Administration authored the rule) in order to be made effective. However, it provides an opportunity to continue to educate Congress regarding the problems with the AEWR and the overall need for agricultural workforce reform.

WEST COAST PORT NEGOTIATIONS: Last Friday, the NHC joined a letter to President Biden urging the Administration to work with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association to quickly reach a new labor agreement and avoid any disruptions to port operations. You can view the letter [here](#).

DOL RETALIATION WEBINAR: The DOL will be hosting a webinar entitled “Best Practices to Prevent and Address Workforce Retaliation” at 10:00 a.m. on April 14. More information can be found [here](#). Click [here](#) to register.

PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES: The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Phytosanitary Certificate Issuance & Tracking System (PCIT) will be down for security maintenance from Saturday, April 15, at 7:00 p.m., to Sunday, April 16, at 4:00 a.m. PDT. The system will not be available to issue phytosanitary certificates while the system is down.

CHERRY AND STONE FRUIT EXPORT PROGRAM REGISTRATION: The Northwest Fruit Exporters (NFE) has started the annual registration process for the cherry export programs for Japan and Mexico, the British Columbia stone fruit export program, and the Mexico apricot export program. Registration information was sent individually via email to participants earlier this week. Those still looking for registration information should contact John Zylstra at nfe@nwhort.org.

CHINA CHERRY EXPORT PROGRAM: Shippers seeking to export cherries to China during the 2023 season are required to register as a part of the cherry export program administered by the NFE. The NFE will automatically include shippers who were registered last year on the 2023 list unless removal is requested. New shippers that would like to register for the 2023 season should contact John Zylstra at nfe@nwhort.org by April 7.

Proposed 2023-2024 Budget

Hoffman reviewed the proposed 2023-2024 budget. After discussion resulting in a balanced budget,

Tony Guisto moved to approve the proposed 2023-2024 budget of \$1,253,432.50. Seconded by Jeff Heater. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

Cooper reported that WA state has canker and dieback problems. There is a task force meeting to discuss next steps on April 6, 2023. The consensus from the OSCC was to not financially support any research WA may want to do. Research was completed by Bob Spotts over 20 years ago in OR on these diseases.

There continues to be an open position on the commission, and it has become increasingly more difficult to recruit new candidates. Also, with the lack of ODA oversight, the commission discussed term limits. Currently OAR 669-030-0010, term limits are set at three years. A commissioner can take a year off and reapply if interested.

Ian Chandler moved to amend OAR 669-030-0010, to remove term limits of commissioners in an effort to maintain the required numbers of members to serve. Seconded by Jeff Heater. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

A request for a financial donation to Oregon AgFest was received by the admin office.

Ian Chandler moved to provide \$150 in support of the 2023 Oregon AgFest. Seconded by Jeff Heater. A roll call was taken, and motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME & LOCATION

June 6, 2023 2:00 pm at the conclusion of the pre-harvest tour in the Boardroom of Columbia Gorge Community College.

Chairman Cooper Adjourned the meeting at 11:48 am.

Respectfully Submitted:

Randi Alexander-Rolison
Co-Administrator