

North Carolina Policy Collaboratory Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes March 14, 2017 South Building, Chapel Hill, NC

Advisory Board members in attendance were: Al Segars, Jaye Cable, Greg Characklis, Reggie Holley, Jeff Hughes, Mark Little, Rick Luettich and Brad Ives.

Guests in attendance were: Mikayla Armstrong, Kasia Grzebyk, Jim Hawhee (DEQ) Lisa Sorg (NC PolicyWatch) Jen Schmitz (Triangle J COG), Sherry MacQueen (League of Women Voters) and Jane Hortelano (League of Women Voters).

Other UNC and Collaboratory staff in attendance were: Emily Harnish, Kate Luck, Allison Reid, Sam Veraldi, Steve Wall and Jeff Warren.

Chair Al Segars began the meeting at 10:10 by welcoming members and guests and with short introductions of all those in attendance.

Segars reminded members of the UNC Conflict of Interest Policy and noted that members have been notifying him and the Board of potential conflicts related to the funding of projects. Segars asked that if there was question at all about potential conflicts for members to err on the side of disclosing. The Board approved the minutes from the January 20, 2017 Advisory Board meeting.

Triangle Alliance for Environmental Policy

Two UNC-Chapel Hill graduate students, Mikayla Armstrong and Kasia Grzebyk, presented to the Board about a new organization they have formed with students from NC State and Duke University. The organization, Triangle Alliance for Environmental Policy, is intended to get graduate students more involved with policy and develop ways to share and promote graduate research.

The organization is hosting a workshop for graduate students on March 30 to provide an overview of the legislative process in North Carolina. Rick Luettich expressed his support for the value of students working in the science field to engage in the policy-making process, including potential careers as legislative aides at the federal and state levels. Mark Little offered his insights as a past legislative fellow on Capitol Hill and the potential opportunities for graduate students. Greg Characklis asked about the background of the group and how it evolved into its current form. Grzebyk responded that as an Emerging Leaders in Science and Society (ELISS) fellow she saw a need for this type of policy engagement among students.

Brad Ives concluded the discussion by noting that what this group was trying to accomplish with graduate students is consistent with the Collaboratory's efforts with faculty.

Director' Report

Ives began the director's report by introducing Mark Little, the Director of the UNC Kenan Institute as a new Board member. Ives stated that Little's long time work and experience in working with communities in eastern North Carolina would bring a valuable perspective to the Board.

Ives introduced the Collaboratory's new Research Director, Jeff Warren. Ives stated that Warren would have a key role in working with legislators to identify projects for the Collaboratory. Warren said that he

was excited by the opportunity the Collaboratory represents and looked forward to working with all of the Board members. Luetlich suggested that the regular meetings held by the Vice Chancellor for Research would be a good opportunity for Warren to get up to speed on current research.

Ives discussed the plans to work with the legislature to extend the time frame for the matching funds available to the Collaboratory. He also outlined a potential energy storage study being considered by the legislature that could provide additional funds to the Collaboratory and be utilized for the matching funds. Segars asked about the process for extending the match and Jaye Cable followed up with an inquiry as to whether the match was a one-time item. Jeff Hughes expressed the need to clarify the matching funds issues going forward.

Project Updates

Steve Wall provided an update on several of the Collaboratory projects. First, Wall outlined progress on the UNC Nutrient Study, which includes the installation of monitoring equipment in Jordan Lake and a couple of sensors in the watershed. Wall also said researchers are working with EPA and the managers of the Chesapeake Bay program to identify and evaluate current nutrient mitigation strategies. Wall noted the study team was already looking ahead to 2017-18 by identifying research gaps, establishing the educational component of the study and identifying a new technical lead for the study. Luetlich discussed the importance of sharing the research with interested parties. Wall concurred and stated there were several outreach efforts underway with stakeholder groups and the public.

Wall noted that many of the key parties in the Aquaculture Study would be in Raleigh next week for a two day coastal conference, which includes a couple of UNC faculty on the agenda.

Wall provided an update on the Hurricane Matthew Disaster Recovery and Resilience Initiative. The Collaboratory funds have been used in conjunction with other state and federal funds to make this an almost \$1 million project. Gavin Smith is working on engaging with other universities, such as East Carolina, UNC-Pembroke, and NC State, and integrating them into the work of this project. The Joint Field Office (JFO) is up and running and provides a space for university staff and students to interact with federal and state agency staff. The Board discussed the possibility of holding a meeting at the JFO to hear updates on the project.

Budget Update

Sam Veraldi provided the Board with a budget update, which included a handout showing how Collaboratory funds had been allocated for 2016-17, including the funding of six projects. Veraldi noted that there is close to \$60,000 that has not been allocated but can be carried forward to next fiscal year. Segars asked about that process and Veraldi responded that his team was working with the UNC budget office to make sure that was within the range of funds that could be carried forward.

Ives noted that next year with the full staffing of the Collaboratory there would be close to \$690,000 in project funds for fiscal year 2017-18. Hughes highlighted the benefit of making the funding timelines match up so that researchers could utilize students in the summer.

Segars asked about the likely cost of the energy storage study and whether there were likely other studies that would end up drawing on Collaboratory funds. Ives emphasized the need to work with the legislature to avoid unfunded mandates.

Reggie Holley inquired about the guidelines or restrictions on the Collaboratory's ability to seek outside donations. Ives responded referenced the university's Conflict of Interest Policy and the guidance it provides.

Cable inquired about the availability of the budget for capstone projects related to Jordan Lake. Wall affirmed the intent was to move forward with a class for the fall. Hughes suggested the potential for a wide variety of capstones and student projects.

2017-18 Proposed Spending Plan

Segars transitioned the discussion to a more detailed look at the type of Request for Proposals process that could be utilized for the next fiscal year. Segars asked the Board to comment on the range of projects and proposals that should be considered.

Luetlich outlined the possible options which could include a very broad approach. Segars suggested the need to stay within the range of expertise of the Board members. Cable referenced the funding of the wildfire project and asked whether funding a study on the related economic impacts would be consistent with the Collaboratory's mission. Ives stated that economic impacts is clearly within the Collaboratory's scope and members agreed.

Holley inquired about the ramifications of industry underwriting a study and whether that would bias the research. Ives responded that the researchers would need to be insulated from influence to ensure the integrity of their work. Segars stated that the Board's role could be to validate the research in accordance with the academic rigor guidelines established by the Board. Hughes noted that university contracts and agreements put safeguards in place to ensure the research is not influenced in any manner.

Luetlich suggested consideration of projects that encompass both human impacts on natural resources as well as the consequences of environmental hazards. Characklis suggested that while the RFP process offered an opportunity to consider reactive projects, that it should also include more proactive and forward looking topics.

The Board next considered the eligibility of principal investigators and whether it should be open to all faculty across the UNC system. Consensus was reached that it should be limited to UNC-Chapel Hill lead researchers given the newness of the program. Hughes suggested incentivizing collaboration with other UNC system faculty as a criteria for ranking, which was affirmed by the Board as a smart approach. Board members also suggested the funding awards should be in the range of \$100,000.

The topic of the role of the Advisory Board in proposal review was discussed. Segars raised concerns about creating another step in the process and an additional committee. Luetlich expressed support for some outside input during the review process.

The board noted several factors about the timeline that works best for the academic calendar. Little suggested a Letter of Intent option to help streamline the process. Luetlich and Cable stressed the importance of allowing researchers to begin work as soon as possible. Similar comments were echoed by other board members.

Holley asked that staff develop a plan for consideration by the Board at upcoming meetings.

Segars thanked board members for their assistance and adjourned the meeting at 11:58.