

WEST VIRGINIA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL February 12, 2019

A meeting of the West Virginia Science and Research Council was held on February 12, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. Attendance was as follows:

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Carolyn Long
Dr. Jan Taylor
Dr. Fred King
Dr. John Maher
Jack Carpenter
Dr. Earl Scime
Dr. Laura Gibson
Anne Barth

OTHERS

Annette Carpenter
Angela Sundstrom
Dr. Brandi Etehadieh
Dr. Jack Smith
Dr. Ami Smith

Review of NSF EPSCoR RII white papers Presented by Jan Taylor

As a follow-up to the previous meeting held in November, a discussion was held concerning the top 3 white papers and a 2nd round of external reviews. Ratings were close for #1 and 2: Hu and Nasrabadi but both had issues according to reviewers

Dr. King asked non-WVU participants for their feedback.

Dr. Maher wanted a subsequent call with reviewers or someone who can speak with reviewers to answer questions. Dr. King agreed. From TIG's (The Implementation Group) point of view, of the top 2 proposals, which one is most easily fixable to be competitive?

Dr. Gibson was concerned that according to the reviewers, none of the proposals were competitive; the concerns did not seem lightweight. Dr. Maher stated that the concerns were normal at this early stage.

Dr. King asked from Marshall University's prospective, is either proposal a better fit? Dr. Maher stated that Marshall has a strong chemistry department but not a lot of chemical engineering; they could fit with shale gas if they can figure out a way to adapt it. In regards to big data, they have lots of capability so they could work with it too. Dr. Maher asked the rest of the group for their preference.

Dr. Gibson thought that the shale gas proposal ranked slightly higher above the data science from her read and could be crafted more easily.

Dr. Scime declined to comment because of a conflict of interest.

As the project director, Dr. Taylor is unable to vote but she made the group aware that Dr. Hu has a Research Challenge Grant with the Division of Science and Research and she has found his work impressive thus far. NSF isn't against applied work but it must have underlying basic science.

Mr. Carpenter thought that the natural gas might be stronger as it relates to West Virginia; he saw a less obvious connection with the other proposal. Ms. Barth agreed with Mr. Carpenter as did Dr. Norton (via Dr. Maher).

After listening to the group, Dr. King asked if Dr. Taylor should contact TIG and move forward with the shale gas proposal. Dr. Taylor stated that they needed a way to include West Virginia State University (WVSU). Dr. Ami Smith was present to represent WVSU and said they are building their chemical engineering program and would very much like to be a part of this project.

Ms. Long asked for a motion to further explore the shale gas proposal with TIG and to see if the reviewers see any fatal flaws. Motion carried.

Dr. Taylor stated that she would contact TIG immediately to set up a time to speak with the group. Mr. Carpenter asked if the entire Council would be included and Dr. Taylor thought that at a minimum, the 3 major institutions should be involved but all would be invited to participate.

NEXT MEETING

After meeting with TIG, if there are no fatal flaws with the shale gas proposal, Dr. Taylor will report back to the entire committee via email and no additional meetings with the Council will be needed. In the event that there are major concerns, the Council will reconvene to decide the next step. The next regular meeting should take place in June.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.