

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Plant Science Research Greenhouse (PSRG) Facility PSRG Executive Committee Meeting April 23, 2025, 2:00 pm

Present: Norman Birge, (College of Natural Science), Hannah Burrack (ENT), Tom Goodwill (sitting in for Linda Hanson, USDA), Bjoern Hamberger (BMB), Mary Hausbeck (PSM), Jeremy Johnson (FOR), Cody Keilen (Growth Chamber Facility), Roberto Lopez (HRT), Carolyn Malmstrom (PLB), Eric Olson (PSM), Chrislyn Particka (PSRG, Director), Erik Runkle (HRT)(Co-Chair), Thomas Sharkey (BMB, PRL)(Co-Chair)
Absent: David Lowry (PLB)

Erik Runkle called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm

A summary of the discussion about each agenda item is included below, as well as a few roundtable topics:

Updates on greenhouse renovation: Chrislyn reported that the work is progressing along the expected construction timeline. Greenhouse staff moved into the new headhouse and most areas are ready to be used. Shelving for the plant photography room is delayed. Two of the five new greenhouses (house 6 with nine zones and house 19 with five zones) have been completed. The new greenhouses are performing really well. Houses 16 and 20 were completely renovated over the summer.

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The frame of new House 8 (with nine zones) is being built this week and glass installation should start next week; it should be finished in August. The old headhouse will be demolished over the summer and the new House 7 (with five zones) will be built in its place. House 7 should be finished in January. After House 7 is finished, Houses 13 and 15 will be demolished, and the new House 13 (with five zones) will be built. It should be finished in November 2026.

During this summer, as part of a separate project that is funded from user fees, new sidewall vents will be installed in greenhouses 3, 14, and 21, as the current vents are broken beyond repair. The evaporative cooling pad system in greenhouse 21 will also be replaced.

Space request forms: Erik introduced the topic of potential reluctance by users to complete the new space request forms. There was discussion of how to proceed if some users do not complete forms. Chrislyn will send a reminder email next week to faculty that have not completed forms, and another one in May.

Tom Sharkey retirement: Tom will be retiring at the end of June, meaning that there will be a new co-chair of the committee. There was some discussion about how the new chair would be selected or appointed.

New greenhouse WPS site specific training: Chrislyn asked the committee to help spread the word about the need for all greenhouse users to complete WPS site-specific training due to the move to the new headhouse. Classes are held twice a day through May 30. Registration instructions are in emails that have been sent to the greenhouse listserv.

WPS guidelines: Chrislyn opened a discussion of the new WPS guidelines that was recently circulated by AgBioResearch. The guidelines state that experimental use pesticides that do not have an “Agricultural Use Requirements” box on the label are exempt from WPS requirements. This caused some concern, given that if applications are not recorded in the greenhouse application log, or “grim face man” signs are not posted on the door per WPS requirements, greenhouse staff and users could be exposed to pesticides. The committee determined that greenhouse users that apply pesticides as part of their research will continue to follow the current protocols of recording applications and posting “grim face man” signs following pesticide applications.

Roundtable discussion

Tom Goodwill mentioned that the USDA is collecting quotes to potentially reglaze the USDA-owned greenhouses depending on funding.

Carolyn asked if there were any updates on the greenhouses (the new phytotron) that will be on the roof of the new Plant and Environmental Science building. Cody shared some information about that. Use of the phytotron will not be limited to occupants of the new building.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm. Some committee members toured the new headhouse with Chrislyn.