

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

## **Plant Science Research Greenhouse (PSRG) Facility PSRG Executive Committee Meeting September 10, 2025, 10:00 am**

Present: Norman Birge, (College of Natural Science), Linda Hanson (USDA), Jeremy Johnson (FOR), Cody Keilen (Growth Chamber Facility), Roberto Lopez (HRT), David Lowry (PLB) (Interim Co-Chair), Eric Olson (PSM), Chrislyn Particka (PSRG, Director), Erik Runkle (HRT)(Co-Chair), Thomas Sharkey (BMB, PRL)

Absent: Hannah Burrack (ENT), Bjoern Hamberger (BMB), Mary Hausbeck (PSM), Carolyn Malmstrom (PLB)

Erik Runkle called the meeting to order at 10:32 am.

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

*Sneak Peek tours:* Tours of the greenhouses are tentatively planned for October 30 from 1:30 – 4:00 pm. The event is being held to thank the industries that supported state funding for the greenhouse renovations.

*Updates on greenhouse renovation:* Chrislyn reported that the renovation project will finish well ahead of schedule (February 2026 instead of November 2026) because one less greenhouse range is being built (due to value engineering in 2023-24) and earlier demolition of greenhouses 13 and 15 and construction of the new greenhouse 15. The new steam service has been installed and Science Drive will reopen by the end of next week. She also reported that there is some concern regarding the size of the pressure reducing valves on the new steam service, and the evaluation of potential failure consequences is ongoing.

Renovations made using user fee revenue (i.e., outside the scope of the state-funded project) were completed over the summer. This included rebuilding and motorizing the sidewall vents in greenhouses 3, 14, and 21, and replacing the evaporative cooling pad system in greenhouse 21. Bartlett environmental control systems have been ordered for the greenhouses that are still controlled by thermostats (1, 3, 11, 18, and 22), and they will be installed upon arrival.

*EHS site-specific training:* Chrislyn was recently asked to create a document to inform faculty greenhouse users on what they should include in EHS site-specific training in the greenhouses. There is concern about how this is tracked and recorded, given the number of different sites that some programs use. David and Erik informed ABR and CNS leadership about the concerns, and leadership will be discuss this issue with EHS to determine if plans for documentation of site-specific trainings can be modified to reduce workload and more clearly record trainings.

*Specialized/user-owned equipment in greenhouse zones:* The recent failure of an expensive piece of specialized equipment in one greenhouse zone has raised awareness that the PSRG

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does not have a written policy outlining who (the user or the facility) is financially responsible for such equipment. The committee discussed the situation and agreed that Chrislyn, Erik, and David will draft a policy, which the entire committee will then review.

*Greenhouse space:* Chrislyn reported that there are currently a small number of empty greenhouse zones. If users are looking for additional or different greenhouse space, they should complete a space request form.

*3D printing:* Chrislyn shared that horticulture faculty member Mason McNair will be able to use his 3D printers to make new and relatively inexpensive end caps for the old evaporative cooling pad systems. Many of the old systems leak badly from the metal end caps, reducing their functionality. Replacement parts are no longer available from the manufacturer, and having replacement parts custom-made from metal is cost prohibitive. This will enable us to repair all of the leaky systems.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.