**MINUTES**

**LOUISIANA CRAWFISH PROMOTION & RESEARCH BOARD**

**August 21, 2019**

**USGS NATIONAL WETLANDS RESEARCH CENTER**

**700 CAJUNDOME BLVD.**

**LAFAYETTE, LA**

**Call to Order:**

David Savoy called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

**Roll Call:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT** **MEMBERS ABSENT**

David Savoy Wayne Romig

Robert Buller Wylie Jewell

Ralph Babin Jody Meche

Chandra Scarber Kip Lastraps

Bill Pizzolato

Greg Faulk

**Declaration of a Quorum:**

A quorum was declared with 6 members present and 4 members absent.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the May 15th, 2019 Board meeting were read.

**MOTION BY**: Ralph Babin seconded by Bill Pizzolato to approve the minutes from the May 15th, 2019 Board meeting. Motion Carried.

**Collections & Financial Report:**

David Savoy called on Ron Harrell to present the collections and financial reports. He reported to the Board the current condition of accounts.

**MOTION BY:** Bill Pizzolato seconded by Ralph Babin for Ron Harrell to look into interest rate options at Whitney Bank. Motion Carried.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin seconded by Robert Buller to accept the financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

**Promotion & Research:**

Dr. Alan Barhorst introduced Mr. Dallas Mitchell a graduate student worker with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He gave an update of the automated crawfish-peeling machine. The key phases are: Development of iterative learning controller using machine vision feedback, detailed analysis of forces during shell splitting/cutting, development of impedance controller for shell splitting/cutting, refinement of system prototypes and extensive testing. Experimental procedures are being conducted on the prototype. Continued progress is being made on the machine vision algorithm development. In the next quarter the refinement of current subsystem design, designing/testing new crusher geometries for Design 1, actuating rubber rollers for Design 2, analysis of forces necessary for peeling, further subsystem development, fabrication, and testing, conveyor/shaker table, actuation of orientation mechanism and compliant grippers for head removal.

Mrs. Jennifer Marsh, Louisiana Radio Network, gave an update on the 2019 radio campaign. The Board discussed the different options to take for a 2020 radio campaign.

**MOTION BY:** Greg Faulk seconded by Chandra Scarber to approve a 2020 radio campaign with Louisiana Radio Network. Motion Carried. Jennifer will attend the November meeting to work out the specifics of what this project will entail.

Dr. John Hawke, LSU AgCenter, gave an update on White Spot Syndrome. There are many basic questions that need be investigated to address this disease and its potential impacts. They currently lack the answers required to formulate recommendations and management strategies for the industry. There is a critical need to educate producers in what to look for and how to report the virus.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin seconded by Bill Pizzolato to send a letter on behalf of Farm Bureau and the Crawfish Board to the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to request assistance in securing funding for research on the White Spot Syndrome Virus in Louisiana. Motion Carried.

Currently there is no funding to study white spot syndrome. Funds requested and budget justification for this proposal would depend on the number of objectives chosen by the Board. Dr. Hawke gave the Board a list of research objectives to rank the level of importance. It was decided that the AgCenter would number this list to rank the level of importance and attend the next meeting with a proposal.

Mr. Patrick Fields, Fields Group, gave a report on the March, April and May 2019 Louisiana Crawfish Board TV spots. The Board decided to ask Patrick to attend the next Board meeting to discuss a proposal for 2020 TV advertisements and other promotional opportunities.

Next discussed was the 2020 out-of-state billboard campaign. The Board is interested in running another campaign and will decide on the locations and amounts at the next meeting.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin seconded by Chandra Scarber to send in the grant application to the Louisiana Department of Ag and Forestry for $30,000.00 to go towards the 2020 out-of-state billboard campaign. Motion Carried.

Dr. Rogers Leonard, LSU AgCenter, introduced Dr. Evelyn Watts, Seafood Extension Specialist LSU AgCenter and Louisiana Sea Grant. Dr. Watts developed a proposal to improve the packaging and shipping of live crawfish. The main objective is to find an optimum chilling method, storage and transportation temperatures for the best quality of live crawfish and to create a quarantine and regulation requirement map for live crawfish marketing. The Board was asked to give ideas for future project proposals with the LSU AgCenter.

Dr. Chandra Theegala, LSU AgCenter, discussed the development of a mechanical crawfish harvesting arm. The outcome from this multi-year proposal will be the development of a robotic arm that can identify and locate the trap, pick-up and harvest crawfish, rebait the trap and reset the trap. This overall project is analogous to a garbage pick-up truck with a human driver and a robotic arm for picking, emptying, and resetting the bins.

Dr. Robert Reigh, LSU AgCenter, discussed the development of a cold-water crawfish bait. He is taking more of a molecular approach to the development process. Step 1 of the investigation would be to collect water samples after the bait has been in the water for around 24 hours. The next step would be to identify the various compounds located in the water environment to figure out what the attractants are.

**No public comment**

The date for the next Board meeting will be Wednesday, November 6th, 2019 at 1:00 P.M. at the USGS National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette.

**MOTION BY:** Ralph Babin and seconded by Chandra Scarber to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.