



March Board Meeting, 3/16/2026, 10:00 am

1. Welcome

- a. Thao Schlichte – present
- b. Bambi Press – present
- c. Ellen Ciarimboli – absent
- d. Michelle Clausen Rosendahl - present
- e. Jim Dickson – present
- f. Michelle Boyd – absent
- g. Merri Cross - present

2. Board seat nomination and election process – **Thao**

- a. Review list of current nominees and their attendance at meetings
 - i. Merri shared the attendance sheet with nominee names, bios, and their attendance record going back to 2022.
 - ii. Vote on the nominees
 1. Merri forgot to include Thao in the attendance sheet and due to the complexity of finding her attendance record, Thao recommended the Board vote by email. The Board recalls Thao only missed one General meeting due to maternity leave, so the Board agreed to accept the attendance sheet as is, with Thao missing one meeting.
 - a. **Merri will update the sheet with Thao's attendance record and email to the Board with the meeting minutes. DONE**
 2. Bambi had a question about nominations. The Governance Guidelines omits mention of state agencies from the Member at Large nominee section. Michelle CR said she remembers the stricter requirements prior to the final edit and thinks this omission is an oversight or an error. Bambi agreed that the wording doesn't exclude state employees from being a Member at Large: ***"The three Members at Large will represent the general Task Force membership, including representatives from federal agencies, academia, industry, local public health contracting agencies, trade and commodity organizations, and the general***

- public*". Kyli Beaulieu and Thao Schlichte could potentially be excluded if the wording is strictly interpreted.
3. Thao asked the Board for consensus on their interpretation of the language for the Member at Large. Each Board member present agreed that the language as stated does not restrict state employees from serving as a Member at Large, due to the word "including".
 4. Jim made a motion to accept the slate of nominees, Bambi seconded; all members voted Aye and accepted the slate.
- b. Vote to approve the ballot
- i. Merri shared the ballot.
 - ii. After a recommendation from Bambi, Merri will ensure members attempting to vote by absentee ballot that cannot access the Google survey will be sent in a different format by email.
 - iii. Michelle CR made a motion to accept the ballot, Bambi seconded the motion; the Board approved the ballot.
 - iv. The ballot is now published and ready for voting.
- c. Secretary asked for assistance on drafting the email with the slate of names
- i. The Word doc with names and bios will be attached to the email – Merri shared the doc during this meeting.
 1. Jim asked what to do if someone has to leave the in-person meeting before the election takes place? Bambi replied what about voting at the beginning of the meeting to avoid this. Michelle CR said to then do the counting while the rest of the meeting takes place and announce the results at the end of the meeting. Thao agreed.
 2. Merri suggested to move that discussion to the part of this meeting where the agenda will be finalized.
 - ii. Merri screenshared the email draft.
 - iii. Email includes:
 1. Details on the election (in-person voting and virtual polls)
 2. Details regarding nominations accepted during the meeting, from in-person and virtual attendees.
 - a. Include the fact that they cannot vote during the meeting AND by absentee ballot (no double dipping)
 3. Their right to request an absentee ballot if not attending the meeting in person



4. Due date to receive absentee ballots (4/14/26) – include the wording from the Governance Guidelines on “to be received no later than 2 weeks prior to the election”
 5. Details regarding combining the absentee ballots with the in-person and virtual votes to determine the winners.
- iv. Bambi agreed with the Secretary the email draft appears wordy and suggested bolding sections to draw attention to the important sections.
 - v. The Board agreed the email captures everything required.
 - vi. **Email to be sent on 3/17/26 after other documents are updated. DONE**
- d. Floor nominations
- i. Merri screenshared the spreadsheet with attendance records of all Task Force members. Those nominated on the floor can have their attendance verified by the Secretary, to aid in approval of the nominations by the Advisory Board.
 1. The spreadsheet will also be used to track votes – to be updated after this Board meeting.
 - a. Merri has created a voting tally spreadsheet
 - b. Bambi suggested paper ballots for in-person votes, so no errors would be possible. **Merri will create paper ballots.**
 - c. Bambi asked what if the same person gets the higher number of votes for both Board Chair/Board Vice Chair. There is nothing in the guidelines that addresses this. What is the plan if this happens? Bambi said it makes sense for the person to be elected for the seat of the higher position of which they were elected.
 - d. Bambi said, in the case of a tie vote, would we need to redo the election? The Board consensus is that is not ideal. The Guidelines do not address tie votes – Merri suggested a revote between the tied names. Jim said a runoff election is possible but we want to be fair in the election.
 - i. Everyone agreed to keep the process simple and just do the revote with all the members present during the meeting if it is required.
- e. Open up further discussion on the nomination/election process at the April 28 meeting.
- i. If there are no floor nominations, virtual voting will take place via three polls set up in Zoom in advance.



- ii. If there ARE floor nominations, virtual voting will take place via direct messaging to Brian (he would tally the votes on a voting spreadsheet Merri will create, and he would not announce who voted for whom)
 - 1. Merri will need to include instructions on how to direct message Brian, to be read by Michelle Boyd while she facilitates the voting.
- iii. Thao would add the nominated names to the presentation slides which will be on the screen
- iv. Merri will format the paper ballots to include write-in votes for floor nominations.
- v. Bambi asked if there is a text option to add names for floor nominations in the polls, but there is no option with Zoom as it is set up for DIAL employees.

3. Spring General Meeting Details – Thao/Merri

a. Small Ag Business Panel

i. Speakers

- 1. Hannah Hansen – confirmed as main presenter
- 2. Dr. Heather Hallen-Adams – confirmed as second presenter
- 3. Janis Hochstetler and Kurt Rueber – confirmed as Q&A presenters discussing regs and hot topics as found in Iowa

ii. Request Dr. Dickson as moderator

- 1. Jim has agreed to be the moderator.

iii. Suggestions for Q&A

- 1. Recommend each panelist come prepared with a list of novel foods or recent “hot topics” they are dealing with

iv. Discussion on length of time and format

- 1. Recommend 20 minutes for each presenter (1 hour, 20 minutes) then an additional 20 minutes for Q&A, or does the Board have a better idea?
- 2. The Board agreed with the time limit so there is some structure. Jim suggested Merri let them all know he will moderate and if they have questions they can reach out to Jim.

- 3. Merri will send an email in the next week to the panelists describing all of the details and request they send their slides to Merri and Thao.

b. Virtual set-up

- i. Merri and Thao will discuss progress on meeting logistics



1. Thao will be the only one screensharing in the room. She will share the slides. Virtual presenters would share their own slides through the Zoom meeting UNLESS we require them to send their slides to Thao and she would advance them.
 - a. What is the Board's preference?
 - b. Bambi said to require all presenters to send their slides to Thao so there is only one person advancing the slides. Jim agreed this will keep things operating smoothly.
 - c. **This will be discussed in the emails.**
 - c. Order of the meeting (floor nominations/voting first, or speakers first)
 - i. The Board discussed this earlier in the meeting and would like to have the voting first, then presentations, then announce the results at the end of the meeting.
 - d. Review draft agenda [**Merri will screenshare**]
 - i. Jim suggested when the nominees introduce themselves, the facilitator should announce they are limited to 2 minutes. Thao said create a slide that says what they can say (why they want a position on the board, their experience, etc.) and the time limit.
 1. **Merri will add a slide with all this information to the presentation deck.**
 - ii. Merri added comments to the current draft that has a suggested flow of nominations then election then break then ag panel then updates then announce election.
 1. **Merri will update the draft agenda. The Board has agreed on the changes in the agenda.**
 2. **The agenda will be sent with the meeting invite in the next couple weeks.**
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4. Agenda items for April Board meeting (4/20/26, 11 am) – **Thao**
 - a. Summarize how many absentee ballots requested/submitted
 - b. Approve meeting evaluation (which includes feedback on nomination and election process)
 - c. Tasks to complete to get ready for the new Board (adding new members to FoodSHIELD, what other suggestions for tasks?)
 - d. Set date for the May Board meeting, to be held 2-3 weeks after the General meeting (discuss results of attendee evaluation, introduction of new Board members)



- e. Are there other items to add to the agenda?
 - i. Thao asked to add any last-minute logistics or issues to discuss at the next meeting.

5. Open Discussion - None

Meeting adjourned 11:02 pm

Merri Cross, DIAL Task Force Advisory Board Secretary