



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL VETERINARIANS

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October 8, 2015

### NAFV Representatives' Call

Monday 10/08/2015

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM EST

#### Attendees

Dr. Linda Schlater

Dr. Rod Meier

Dr. Thomas Vermeersch

Dr. Roberta Morales

Dr. Ronald Brock

Ms. Mariana Barros

### Introduction

While waiting for Dr. Michael Gilsdorf and everyone to join the call, there were few on the phone & Ms. Barros spoke about the need for recruiting of new members. In September 2015, NAFV had to withdraw money from their cash reserves in order to cover all the monthly expenses. Those who were on the phone expressed interest in having recruitment materials sent to them so they may distribute to colleagues in and around their district.

Dr. Gilsdorf welcomed and thanked everyone for being on the call. The group went around and introduced themselves. He then opened up the floor for discussion.

**Action Item:** Mariana will send out letters to NAFV Reps along with a list of non-members divided by districts.

### Student Hiring Issue

**Submitted comment:** *“Student hiring with the Pathways Program: We used to be able to recruit students locally for summer positions. Students are looking to line up summer jobs in Jan during semester break. The pathways announcements are generic; they need to be more descriptive. Students tell us they’d not applied if they knew it was a lab; they want to be in the field. Some supervisors never did get to hire a student. The recruitment announcement was cut and pasted from something so old it mentioned the hog cholera program. By the time our HR gets all the paperwork and clearance done, we’ve missed a couple of weeks of time the student*

*was free and could be working.”*

**Discussion: DLS:** “I have already submitted this comment to HR when they sent us a survey. This problem is well known among management and I’m not sure that we would get anything other than ‘*Yes, I’m aware of it, and we are taking care of it.*’ if we were to take it forward.

**DMG:** I was in a meeting discussing veterinary issues earlier in the day with many including Dr. Greg Parham & Dr. Jere Dick, where they talked about the pathways program and other student programs. Dr. Dick said that they would be re-instilling the PVPC program and hiring 12 students under it. They will also be admitting 10-12 students into the Saul T. Wilson scholar program. He will look into this some more and get back to the group with any findings.

**Action Item:** Dr. Gilsdorf will be bringing up the student Pathways program and getting back to the group with any updates.

### **VMO’s Feeling Undervalued**

**Submitted comment:** “*Many VMO’s feel undervalued. They would like to see more GS-13 positions in the Agency.*”

**Discussion: DMG:** Recently spoke with Dr. Jack Shere regarding this topic and he said that they are indeed looking into upgrading several positions within APHIS, though we have no details on this yet.

### **Position Description**

**Comment:** “*NAFV would like to review the new position descriptions for VMO’s in the Agency.*”

**Discussion: DMG:** In the last couple of months, we had a problem with some phrases that we believed were added to the VMO position description when they modified them, however since then, we have found out that the phrase of concern was actually added 7 years ago. We will need to go back and review this whole situation.

**Referred Phrase:** “*Incumbent may serve on details to both foreign and domestic locations to perform similar duties.*”

**Action Item:** DMG discussed this issue with Dr Jere Dick and he confirmed that the agency has not changed its position on this issue which was agreed to with NAFV in 2013. The agency agreed that it will not force current (hired prior to 2013) veterinary employees to work outside the country to staff inspection facilities. Employee hired after that time have a phrase included in the hiring announcement that informs them that they agree to be detailed on foreign assignments.

### **Converting Position Descriptions to Managers in APHIS**

**Comment:** “*Converting PD’s for veterinarians in APHIS to make them managers.*” This is an issue that NAFV needs to work on.

**Discussion:** The reason we are focusing on this topic is so that folks can get reimbursement for half of their liability insurance.

### **Credit for Webinars**

**Discussion: DTV:** When we talk about credit for webinars, are we wanting this for licensing purposes? (the answer was yes) If so, this is an issue that really should be handled by the state VMA's. Credits for licensing vary on a state by state case, thus bringing this issue up to the Washington level doesn't make any sense.

**DMG:** Agree with what Dr. Vermeersch is saying, however, the other concern with webinars, especially coming from FSIS vets, is that PHV's are expected to watch a high volume of webinars and can only do so during work hours. Adding this on top of their work is not only inconvenient, but many times impossible. This topic will be visited again.

**Action Item:** Dr. Tom Vermeersch will be sending his comments on the issues submitted via email. DMG will share necessary comments with the group.

### **Holding more frequent calls with Reps**

**DMG:** We need to have more frequent calls as a group (preferably with everyone attending) as we move forward and prepare to have a consultation in early 2016. Some immediate areas of concern will be discussed with administrators in the next couple weeks. Dr. Gilsdorf is set to meet with Jere Dick and John Clifford to discuss these issues and will be sending the group an update on what they are.

**Action Item:** DMG will send the group a list of topics that he will be discussing with administrators in the next couple weeks.

**Action Item:** Set up monthly calls with Reps. In preparation for these calls, Dr. Gilsdorf has asked that everyone look through the appropriate comments submitted for their agencies and submit their comments on these topics along with the order of their priorities.

**\*It was decided that the calls should be scheduled at a standing date every month and calls should be held separately for each agency until the topics have been narrowed down. (ie: Every third Thursday each month)**

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Mariana will send out letters to NAFV Reps along with a list of non-members divided by districts.
2. Dr. Gilsdorf will be bringing up the student Pathways program and getting back to the group with any updates.
3. DMG will come back with an update on the position description misunderstanding.
4. Dr. Vermeersch will be sending his comments on the topics submitted via email. DMG will share with the group.
5. DMG will send the group a list of topics that he will be discussing with administrators in the next couple weeks.
6. Set up monthly calls with Reps.

7. All Reps are to look through the submissions and submit their comments to Mariana and DMG.
8. Mariana will send out a contact sheet to the group.
9. DRB would like to receive comments from the group about the true overtime document he will be sending to the group.