

RURAL VETERINARY INCENTIVE PROGRAM COMMITTEE
2105 Kramer Lane
Austin, Texas 78758

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
May 17, 2022 10:00 A.M.

The Rural Veterinary Incentive Program Committee met for a regularly scheduled meeting on May 17, 2022, at the Texas Animal Health Commission located at 2105 Kramer Lane, Austin, Texas 78758. Andy Schwartz, DVM, Presiding Officer and Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Committee Members present were: Guy Loneragan, DVM, Dean of the Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine; John August, DVM, Dean of the Texas A&M University School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences; Steven Golla, DVM, designee of Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine with a mixed animal practice; John Clader, DVM, designee of Texas A&M University School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences with a mixed animal practice; Courtney Pace, DVM, designee of Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine with a large animal practice; Charles Graham, DVM, designee of Texas A&M University School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences with a large animal practice; and Ali Broyles, DVM, appointed Commissioner of the Texas Animal Health Commission.

Agenda Item 3, Introduction of Committee Members, Administrative Staff, and other Participants. Committee Members and Administrative Staff introduced themselves, and Dr. Schwartz noted that a quorum was present.

Agenda Item 4, Rural Veterinary Incentive Program history, purpose, mission, and plans. Mary Luedeker, General Counsel of the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) presented the Program's history, purpose, and mission to the Committee with the goal of coming to a consensus on the Committee's plans to implement the Program.

Agenda Item 5, Program administration and activity between the Committee, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), component agencies and universities. Mary Luedeker presented details and answered questions about TAHC's Program administration and THECB's Program account administration, as well as the role of the Committee and University systems in the Program.

Agenda Item 6, State and federal statutes, rules, and regulations related to the Program, including Tex. Educ. Code, Ch. 56 & 61; 7 U.S.C. Section 3151a; 42 U.S.C Sections 802, 2 CFR Part 200, 31 CFR Part 35, Tex. S.B. 8, 87th, 3d Called Sess. (2021) and TAHC, THECB, or university activity. Mary Luedeker presented details and answered questions about the state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations related to the Program, focusing on the obligation and expenditure deadlines for the funds. A question regarding the use of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to pay student tuition was raised, but the requirement of a year of service for a year of tuition prevents use of the SLFRF funds to pay student tuition costs incurred prior to a student graduating from the veterinary school.

Agenda Item 7, Rulemaking Plans. The Committee discussed the criteria to determine whether an applicant is an eligible participant as the Committee considers reasonable. Various questions were raised and discussed concerning the location of the applicant's residence versus the applicant's business location, the number of hours the recipient will work, and what eligibility criteria the Committee wanted to prioritize. The Committee also discussed the qualification of a community or political subdivision in a rural county to qualify as a student sponsor under Texas Education Code Section 56.105. Finally, the Committee discussed the agreements of financial support between a rural sponsor and an eligible student and the need to establish other procedures necessary to administer the program.

Agenda Item 8, Proposed Rules to Publish in the Texas Register. Mary Luedeker guided the discussion of the proposed rules the Committee would publish in the Texas Register before being passed and added to the Texas Administrative Code. The rules discussed included the Program's authority and purpose, TAHC's administration of the Program, definitions for terms used in the Program's rules, dissemination of information regarding the Program, eligibility criteria for the applicants and recipients of the Program funds, the application review, evaluation, and selection process including the denial of an application, further discussion regarding rural community sponsors, eligible lenders and education loans, the amount of repayment assistance, any conditions of award, the disbursement of loan repayment assistance, breach of contract, and rules regarding the satisfaction of practice obligations. There was discussion regarding the promissory notes the recipients would sign and who could or would hold the promissory notes, and it was determined that the promissory notes would be held by the university systems.

Agenda Item 9, Public Comment. There was no public comment at the Committee Meeting.

Agenda Item 10, Future meetings: agenda items, dates, and other arrangements. The Committee discussed the process to schedule future meeting dates and agreed that the Committee Members would be polled for best available dates in the future.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.