

# National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board

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REE Advisory Board Office  
South Building Room 3901  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250-2255

Mailing Address:  
STOP 0321  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250-2255  
Telephone: 202-720-3684  
Fax: 202-720-6199

## MEETING MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call

Friday, February 4, 2011 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. EST.

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Jean-Mari Peltier (Chair), Dr. Mary Wagner (Vice Chair), Dr. Carrie Castille, Dr. Nancy Childs, Dr. Nancy Cox, Dr. Steve Daley-Laursen, Dr. Dennis Heldman, and Leo Holt.

**Executive Committee Members Absent:** Terry Wolf

**NAREEE Board Staff:** Robert Burk (Executive Director) and Shirley Morgan Jordan (Program Support Coordinator).

**Others Present:** Carol Keiser-Long and Dr. Walter Armbruster



### I. Roll Call of Executive Committee Members and Attendees, and Previous Meeting Minutes

- Rob Burk conducted a roll call of the Executive Committee as members signed on to the conference call.

### II. Comments and Welcome

- Jean-Mari Peltier provided welcoming remarks to the Board.
- Jean-Mari Peltier expressed some concerns with the federal budget. It is unclear how the continuing resolution and the earmarked funds, especially those absorbed into the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, will impact USDA operations. The Committee discussed the potential impacts of a “roll back” to budget levels from 2008 or 2006.

There was some discussion of whether a meeting should be held to address the budget. It was suggested that this be a part of the March meeting of the Board.

- Dr. Nancy Cox noted that many of the same concerns had been expressed by a number of Agriculture University Deans.
- Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen expressed a willingness to assist in organizing a meeting on this topic.
- Dr. Dennis Heldman indicated that Dr. Woteki should be involved in any budget related discussion.

### **III. Review of the Previous Meeting Minutes**

- A motion was made to approve the Executive Committee Meeting minutes from January 2011.
  - Moved: Leo Holt
  - Second: Dennis HeldmanMotion Passed

### **IV. Comments from the Under Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics**

- Dr. Catherine Wotecki, Under Secretary was unable to attend the Executive Committee Conference Call as she was currently returning from a working trip to Texas.

### **V. Updates on Committee Activities and/or Reports**

#### **Renewable Energy**

- Carol Keiser-Long (Committee Chair) stated that the committee is in the process of planning a conference call to discuss the direction of the committee.
- She noted that she has been invited to attend a Customer/ Stakeholder Research Planning Workshop for the newly established USDA Biomass Research Centers. The workshop will be held at the Renaissance Denver Hotel on March 15-16, 2011. She also noted a speaking engagement in Illinois. She will be attending the May 2<sup>nd</sup> International Biomass Conference in St. Louis.
- She reviewed the Biomass Research and Development Initiatives Technical Advisory Committee meeting. She believes the next meeting of that group would be in May or June. The program will be centered on bio fuel and bio based products in the next NIFA solicitation.
- Jean-Mari Peltier noted that she would like to see the committee cut across REE Agencies and take a good look at how they are working to address renewable energy. Rob Burk noted that the impending release of the REE “White Papers” should provide much of that information.

#### **Specialty Crop Committee**

- Dr. Walter Armbruster (Committee Chair) stated that the Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) report has been distributed to Full Board to review and there were only a few

comments made. Jean-Mari Peltier indicated that she still feels that the document needs another “hard edit.” It will then be ready for final.

- Jean-Mari Peltier questioned whether an effort being led by Tom Bewick was duplicative of the role of the NAREEE SCC? She felt that a call with him was in order. Dr. Walter Armbruster indicated that the effort being led by Tom Bewick was most likely a part of the routine internal peer review process conducted by National Institute of Food and Agriculture.
- He stated that he has been speaking with Michigan State University (MSU) concerning having the SCC Meeting in Michigan. He noted that Dr. Jeff Armstrong is no longer with MSU and has instead moved on to Cal Poly. Dr. Walter Armbruster suggested that the SCC Meeting should be held in April at the latest. Rob Burk noted his concerns with an earlier date due to FACA requirements.
- Dr. Dennis Heldman recommended that Dr. Armbruster try to contact Dr. Steve Pueppke at MSU. He noted that the MSU Agricultural Research Station has been renamed to MSUAgBioResearch.

## **VI. Updates from Work Groups/Subcommittees**

### **Competitive Grants**

- Dr. June Henton (Committee Chair) was unable to attend the meeting. There were no updates concerning the Competitive Grants Subcommittee.

### **March Meeting Planning**

- Dr. Daley-Laursen stated that he and Rob had a meeting with Dr. Ann Bartuska for some ideas on what USDA would be interested in seeing the Board cover at its March meeting.
- Steve Daley-Laursen went over the one page outline on the topic for discussion emailed to everyone prior to the meeting. The outline laid out some possible topics for discussion at the upcoming March meeting.
- There was a discussion related to intra and inter agency collaboration and how they pool their money together.
- Dr. Daley-Laursen asked the committee to call him by phone to get some examples and thoughts so he can pursue the correct number of individuals for a panel and begin drafting.
- Jean-Mari Peltier discussed some of what she would like accomplished at the March meeting of the Board. Jean-Mari Peltier indicated that one of the things we wanted was a round table with stakeholder and industry along with REE mission on how they saw things shaping up on the Farm Bill. She noted that she would like for that to be covered over approximately ½ a day of the meeting.
- Jean-Mari Peltier indicated that Krysta Harden was a potential evening speaker. She has worked on the Hill and represented Soy Bean Groups.
- Jean-Mari Peltier requested for Rob Burk to work with the Communications Office to boil down the October Meeting Report into an “easy to read” document for distribution.

### **Other Discussion**

- There was a discussion on how the Board would like to have their input responded to by Agency Administrators. Rob Burk stated that it was unclear how the Board would like the Agencies to respond to Board input. Dr. Daley-Laursen suggested that this is a question worth posing to Deputy Under Secretary Dr. Ann Bartuska.
- The agency political liaison has been very valuable in the past. Karen Ross who was the Chief of Staff for Secretary Vilsack is now the Department of Food and Agriculture, Secretary of Agriculture in California. Krysta Harden will now serve as the Chief of Staff for Secretary Vilsack.

### **October Meeting Report Status**

- Rob Burk indicated that he had received input from members of the Board on the report and that he was working to develop it into a consensus based document.

### **Relevancy and Adequacy**

- There was no new information to report.

### **VI. Executive Director's Report**

- The committee members approved for future Executive Committee Conference calls to be held at 11 AM EST opposed to 10 AM.
- Rob Burk discussed the USDA AG Outlook Forum on February 24 and 25<sup>th</sup> at the Marriott in Arlington, VA. Jean-Mari Peltier and Rob Burk will be attending. If anyone is interested, Rob Burk asked that the members contact him.
- Rob Burk noted that the spring meeting of the Board will be held on March 30-31, 2011 at the Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel.

***The next Executive Committee conference call will be Friday, March 4, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.***

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Morgan-Jordan

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Jean-Mari Peltier  
Chair

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Rob Burk  
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD:

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Date

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Initials

Chair

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Initials

Executive Director