

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

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MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call

Friday, June 8, 2012, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST.

Executive Committee Members Present: Jean-Mari Peltier (Chair), Dr Steven Hamburg (Vice Chair), Dr. Nancy Childs, Dr. Charles Boyer, Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen, Dr. Milo Shult, Leo Holt, Dr. Mary Wagner, and Dr. Catherine Woteki (Ex Officio, USDA REE Under Secretary).

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dr. Carrie Castille.

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

Others Present: Carol Keiser-Long, and Dr. Ann Bartuska (USDA REE Deputy Under Secretary).



I. Roll Call of Executive Committee Members and Other Attendees

Rob Burk recorded attendance as the Executive Committee members and guests signed on to the conference call.

II. Comments and Welcome

Jean-Mari Peltier welcomed everyone on the conference call. The Committee approved the meeting agenda by unanimous consent.

III. Comments from the USDA REE Under Secretary

Jean-Mari Peltier asked REE Under Secretary Dr. Catherine Woteki if there was any differences in the Senate version of the Farm Bill as it relates to the NAREEE Advisory Board. Dr. Woteki indicated that the USDA was watching it closely, but had no new NAREEE related changes to report at that time.

Jean-Mari Peltier questioned whether there were any appropriations issues that the Board should be aware of. Dr. Woteki discussed a number of topics that were relevant to REE and on which REE staff would be ready to address any questions on. Jean-Mari indicated that should anything arise of concern that the Executive Committee would be ready and willing to assist the Department.

IV. Updates from the Standing Committees Activities and/or Reports

Citrus Disease Research and Development Advisory Committee (CDRDAC)

Rob Burk provided an update on the activity of the CDRDAC. The group will meet in Riverside, California on July 18-19.

Jean-Mari Peltier questioned the distribution of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) grants, and how the \$9 million in citrus specific funding would be distributed and over how many years. Dr. Ann Bartuska indicated that the funds were to be distributed over 3 years as part of SCRI. Dr. Bartuska discussed interaction with the Citrus Health Research Program (CHRP). Jean-Mari noted that the public private funding/interaction on research as being done by the citrus industry was similar to the model outlined in the NAREEE report on public and private research cooperatives.

Renewable Energy Committee (REC)

Carol Keiser-Long noted that a rough draft of the committee's annual report had been drafted. The committee will be meeting in July in conjunction with the Department of Energy Biomass 2012 conference.

Specialty Crop Committee (SCC)

Jean-Mari Peltier indicated that the SCC had met on June 4th. The committee will be holding a listening session in the near future. She noted that there was a fair amount of interest from the committee in having a meeting outside of Washington. Jean-Mari noted that there were a number of House Representatives whose districts would benefit from field hearings. The committee had discussed holding a hearing in the congressional district of Congressman Kevin McCarthy.

Jean-Mari Peltier stated that the committee was late in getting organized but that it was moving aggressively. She noted that the committee is also looking at a number of recent reports. Jean-Mari noted the work of the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, the SCRI External Review, and stated that they would look at SCRI and determine whether it should be based on merit or competitive. She felt that the panel review process of SCRI identifies good science but not the

primary concerns of the industry. She discussed the charge of the committee as being fairly broad and that includes aspects related to macroeconomics which a member of the committee questioned whether that would include crop insurance. Dr. Ann Bartuska questioned why the committee would be looking at risk management as it is out of the purview of REE. Jean-Mari Peltier referred to the congressional language establishing the committee and noted that she thought that it had been included in their charge by Congress. Jean-Mari stated that the committee had discussed this point and determined that crop insurance was the only applicable topic to address the analysis of “macroeconomics.” Jean-Mari also noted that the charge to the SCC was in need of updating by Congress. Dr. Bartuska stated that perhaps it would be best served to frame this as a question to ERS for study, and Jean-Mari agreed. Jean-Mari requested for the Deputy Under Secretary to attend the next conference call of the SCC.

Relevancy and Adequacy Committee

Relevancy Sub-Committee

Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen reported that the notes from the Texas meeting had been compiled. He stated that since the last meeting of the Executive Committee Dr. Woteki had provided some updates on a number of related topics. He noted that a draft report was in place and that it would contain as many as 14 recommendations to pose to the Executive Committee to consider. Jean-Mari Peltier noted the difficulty in obtaining edits from the Board/Executive Committee in the past and encouraged the members to take a good look at the reports and provide comments.

V. Updates from Work Groups/Ad Hoc Sub-Committees

NASS Report Working Group

Dr. Milo Shult stated that he was compiling information provided by a number of the speakers at the Fall NAREEE Board meeting. He stated that he had compiled an outline for the report and he stated that his goal was to have a draft of the report prepared by the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Jean-Mari Peltier noted that there had been quite a lot of interest in these reports from the industry.

Extension Report Working Group

Dr. Milo Shult indicated that Rita Green was the Chair of this working group. He reported that he believes her intent is to first develop an outline for the report, but he was unclear the timeline she had in mind. Dr. Ann Bartuska questioned the intent of the report on extension. Dr. Milo Shult reviewed the recent meeting of the Board and the recommendations provided to the Board by Cooperative Extension. When questioned on what the “central question” was posed in the report Dr. Shult indicated that it could be “what is the current relevance of extension?” Moreover, what is the interaction between research and extension, but in general NAREEE is simply reviewing extension. Jean-Mari Peltier also indicated that a question could be “has there been such an erosion in funding that extension is no longer able to fulfill its tasks?” Dr. Steven Hamburg questioned whether they have the tools and data available to evolve as much as possible. Dr. Hamburg also discussed the efficacy of extension. Dr. Shult stated that the key is

to place the “light under the bushel” and he noted that perhaps extension is not being properly recognized.

Brainstorming Session Report

Dr. Mary Wagner indicated that she felt they need to sit down with Dr. Woteki and others to coordinate the outcomes of the brainstorming effort. She noted that she wants the discussion to continue, and that she wants to work with Dr. Woteki’s agenda.

VI. Other

Jean-Mari Peltier and Dr. Milo Shult discussed the make up of the membership of the NAREEE Advisory Board. Jean-Mari also discussed the adequacy of the make up of the grant review panels, with a focus on SCRI. A discussion ensued on the topic.

Dr. Catherine Woteki noted her concern over an external entity advising on the peer review process and communicating directly with appropriators. She noted that lobbying is unacceptable for a federal advisory committee.

Dr. Ann Bartuska discussed the SCRI language in the Farm Bill. Jean-Mari Peltier noted that the interpretation of the language by the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance differs. Jean-Mari indicated that she felt the Board should have the ability to provide insight into the structure of the panels. Further discussion ensued.

Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen noted that the Relevancy Sub-Committee had questioned if anyone from a foundation could be a Board member given the current structure of the membership. Dr. Ann Bartuska discussed the process of collecting nominations to the Board and the exhaustive efforts to collect information on diversity and adequacy of representation over a number of different areas not limited to stakeholder representation, geography, etc.

Dr. Nancy Childs discussed her dismay with comments made previously related to the Board being overly representative of “academics.” She noted her own lengthy experience with industry and how simply classifying her as an academic is misleading. Jean-Mari discussed the value of having a representative of a group like the Grocery Manufacturers Alliance on the Board.

Dr. Childs indicated that the next conference call of the committee was in close proximity to the Independence Day holiday and that the committee may want to consider an alternative date. Rob Burk indicated that he would poll the membership.

The next Executive Committee conference call is TBD

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Burk

Jean-Mari Peltier
Chair

Rob Burk
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD:

Date

Initials
Chair

Initials
Executive Director