

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board

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MINUTES

Executive Committee Conference Call

Friday, March 7, 2014

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EDT.

Executive Committee Members Present: Dr. Milo Shult (Co-Chair), Dr. Charles Boyer, Dr. Carrie Castille, Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen, Dr. Mark McLellan, Professor Agnes Mojica, and Dr. Robert Taylor

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dr. Steve Hamburg; Leo Holt

NAREEE Board Staff: Michele Esch, (Executive Director, NAREEEAB) and Shirley Morgan-Jordan (Program Support Coordinator)

Others Present: Dr. Catherine Woteki, REE Under Secretary; Dr. Onwulata, Office of the Chief Scientist; and Dr. Ramaswamy, NIFA Director; Caren Wilcox, Special Assistant

I. Roll Call of the Executive Committee Members and Meeting Attendees

- Michele Esch conducted a roll call of the Executive Committee once members signed on to the conference call.

II. Welcome from the Co-Chair

- Dr. Milo Shult welcomed the newly elected and returning members of the executive committee.

III. Comments from the Office of the Under Secretary of USDA REE

- Dr. Woteki welcomed everyone on the call and stated that she was looking forward to the upcoming meeting in Wooster, Ohio.
- Dr. Woteki stated that she had three updates:
 - 1.) USDA testified on the House Appropriations Committee on March 26, 2014. The hearing was on the FY2015 budget. She stated that there is significant interest in the Innovation Institutes. The three new Innovation Institutes proposed in the FY15 budget will be under NIFA. Dr. Woteki stated that overall the hearing went fairly well and all questions were answered and now they are waiting on the follow-up questions.

The Senate Appropriations hearing was initially scheduled for April 10th but it was cancelled.

- 2.) The Farm Bill (FB) is being implemented as planned. NIFA is working on their FB mandated programs and making good progress. The National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB) has also made significant progress on the Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) & Citrus Disease Subcommittee (CDS).
- 3.) REE is continuing to work on the establishment of the Foundation for Food and Agriculture (FFAR). The National Academy of Science has a call for nominations for eight Board members. Nominations can be submitted to their website. The deadline is April 7, 2014.

The remaining seven members of the Board will be filled by industry nominations. The Secretary sent three hundred letters to representatives in Trade, Commodity, Scientific, and Professional industries requesting nominations. The Federal Register for public nominations was released today, April 4th. Nominations may be submitted to ffar@usda.gov. The Industry Nominations close on April 28, 2014.

- Dr. Shult asked if anyone had any questions and there were none.

IV. Update and Discussion on the Agenda for the Agricultural Experiment Station Briefing, 2014 Spring NAREEE Board Meeting

- Dr. Shult stated that he would like to see all Board members attend the New Member Orientation and that members would have to fly into Ohio on Sunday, May 4, 2014. The meeting will be focused on: the Experiment Stations and the PCAST recommendation regarding major and minor crops.
- Dr. Shult stated that having the NAREEEAB Meeting at the Experimental Station in Wooster would allow the Board the opportunity to hear new and different things happening in the field and on the current state of the Experimental Stations. The meeting would be similar to the meeting held in 2012 at Texas A&M, College Station, TX. Dr. Shult stated that he has been working with Steve Slack in preparing the agenda for the upcoming meeting and stated that Wooster, OH also has an excellent ARS facility ARS.
- The discussion on major and minor crops began at the September 2013 Board Meeting but due to the hiatus, it was not completed. In order to complete the task at hand, Dr. Shult asked for volunteers to serve on a working group. Mark McLellan, Agnes Mojica, and Robert Taylor volunteered for the Working Group on Major and Minor Crops.

Dr. McLellan asked for a brief update on major and minor crops. Dr. Shult stated that during the meeting in September 2013 the PCAST folks and the

REE Administrators spoke on the topic of major and minor crop balancing. The Board needs to identify how we the balance of private/public funding in major and minor crops. We will need to have people from the Board research some information concerning that.

Dr. Woteki stated that one suggestion will be to get help from Ed Kaleikau, Science Advisor in the Office of Chief of Science to help put together an outline for the Board to consider. The Board may also need to go back to the REE Agencies to identify what else that can provide to assist in drafting the report and recommendations.

Michele Esch stated that she will send out the original charge on the balance of major and minor crops. She stated that she would make contact with the Office of Chief Scientist Office. Dr. Shult stated that we need feedback from Dr. Onwulata and that he would set up a conference call with him and the group.

Dr. Shult asked for questions and discussion. There were none.

- Dr. Shult stated that holding the meeting at Ohio Experimental Station would include the opportunity to visit their facility and also view presentations. We will also get to spend more one on one time with the Experimental Station folks.
- Dr. Shult stated that Julia Sabin has invited the NAREEE Advisory Board on a tour at Smucker. The question was asked if we need any additional presenters or did we fill all the holes so that we will be able to write a good report. Dr. McLellan stated that he was happy that the board is having the Smucker Tour. It will be very valuable for everyone attending.
- Dr. Woteki asked if there were any specific concerns/issues the Board will want to make concerning the USDA role with the Experimental Stations. She stated that the Board will want to address them during meeting.

Dr. McLellan stated that there is a lot of interest in the update on the Open Data Initiative (NAL). Dr. Woteki stated that Dr. Liu from the National Agricultural Library had been invited to attend and will present on Open Data.

Dr. McLellan stated that there is room for salary increases as State budgets become more relaxed. He asked how that will apply to federal programs and federal dollars.

Dr. Castille stated that she would like to see understand how the research is applied in different states and organizations.

Dr. Mojica asked Dr. Woteki could she share the new developments of the

Farm Bill at the meeting. Dr. Woteki stated that she would share the new developments of the Farm Bill at the meeting as part of her introduction.

- Michele Esch stated that she would work with the Agencies and Administrators to provide an overview. Dr. Shult stated that it will be a key interest to the new and existing members to learn what's new and different in the Agencies.
- Shirley Morgan-Jordan provided an update on travel logistics for the May meeting.

V. Executive Director's Report

Reports Update

- The SCC Report has been provided to the Executive Committee for review. The draft report will be sent to the full Board for review at the May meeting. Dr. Shult thanked Dr. Boyer for his assistance in the development of the report.

Michele Esch stated that the new Farm Bill required the SCC to review and provide recommendations on the Relevancy Review process proposed by NIFA for the Specialty Crop research Initiative (SCRI) granting program. The review was very time sensitive so that NIFA could release their Request for Applications. The committee held a webinar in February to review the proposed relevancy review process.

Dr. Woteki provided an overview of the Ethics consultation that was held regarding the role of the SCC and new Citrus Disease Subcommittee in the SCRI process. She was very pleased that there should not be any conflict of interest of the Committee or for the full Board in their capacity as reviewers and approvers of the subcommittee's reports and recommendations.

Dr. Ramaswamy stated NIFA would be working closely with the SCC as we complete the first round of the relevancy review process. NIFA will provide a report to the SCC and the SCC will provide a review of the grants that were awarded in FY2014 and the relevancy review process.

Dr. Boyer provided an overview of the SCC Report. Dr. Shult asked Dr. Boyer if there was a clear understanding of what relevancy means to the industry. Dr. Boyer stated that the relevancy reviewers would be looking at the relevancy and the impact of the proposals. Dr. Ramaswamy suggested that people review the RFA for the definitions of relevancy and impact. Industry has indicated that the definitions are clear.

Dr. Boyer stated that due to the short time frame that NIFA has been very responsive to questions being asked.

Michele Esch asked the Executive Committee to send comments on the report to her via email.

- Michele Esch stated that the NGRAC Report developed in September 2013 will be discussed at the full board meeting in May. Barring any major issues, it will then be submitted to the Secretary.

Committee Updates

- The nominations for the CDS were due on March 28th. The NAREEE Advisory Board Office hoped to appoint the members by April 11. The CDS will hold a face-to-face meeting at the end of May 2014.
- The NGRAC is soliciting for nominations for four members; three scientific members and one general public member. The deadline for nomination is May 30, 2014.

VI. Other Business

Michele Esch asked everyone if there were any updates or questions.

Dr. Woteki stated that Dr. Cynthia Clark, NASS Administrator, will be retiring on May 4th and will not be attending the May meeting. She is being recognized as a Distinguished Alumni of Iowa State. Mr. Joe Reilly has been appointed as the Acting Administrator of NASS. Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young has been appointed as the Administrator of ARS.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

The next EXECOM Call for Friday, May 2, 2014 is cancelled due to the Board meeting being held the following week. The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on June 6, 2014 at 11 am EDT.

Dr. Steven Hamburg
Co-Chair

Dr. Milo Shult
Co-Chair

Michele Esch
Executive Director, NAREEE

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD:

Date

Initials following Advisory Board Approval