

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board

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MINUTES

Executive Committee Conference Call

Friday, June 6, 2014, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST.

Executive Committee Members Present: Dr. Milo Shult (Chair), Dr. Charles Boyer, Dr. Patsy Brannon, Dr. Carrie Castille, Dr. Mark McLellan, and Julia Sabin

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen, Leo Holt, and Dr. Robert Taylor

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

Others Present: Dr. Catherine Woteki (REE, Under Secretary) and Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, (NIFA, Administrator)

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 members of the Executive Committee. Dr. Shult stated that the highlights document from the meeting in May was an excellent recap of the meeting.

Dr. Shult asked to change the next Executive Committee Conference Call scheduled for July 4th to July 11th and also August 1st to August 8th. All members on the call agreed with the change.

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

Dr. Woteki welcomed everyone on the call and provided an update on two important and relevant topics:

- **Foundation for Food & Agriculture (FFAR)**
The establishment of the FFAR is underway. By statute, the FFAR has 5 ex-officio members who are responsible for establishing the Board of Directors and incorporating the Foundation. The ex-officio members are: the Secretary of

Agriculture, the USDA Chief Scientist, NIFA Director, ARS Administrator, and the Director of the National Science Foundation. The FFAR Board is to have 8 members recommended by the National Science Foundation and 7 members recommended by industry. USDA received 220 nominations from industry for the 7 available positions. The board will have an enormous amount of work to do including: establishing themselves as a 501(c)3, setting up a bank account, and managing \$200M from the Commodity Credit Corporation fund. The FFAR will be able to hire key staff and an Executive Director. The Secretary's goal is to have the Board members in place and incorporation completed by mid-summer. We are right on target. Dr. Woteki stated that there is a lot to come concerning this new foundation.

- **FY2015 Appropriations**

The FY 2015 Appropriations process is going well. The House and Senate have submitted their markup and USDA has responded to certain questions for response. Overall, REE is doing fairly well. NASS is receiving less funds from both the House and Senate. However, there are increases in ARS, NIFA, and ERS' budgets. Dr. Woteki stated that there are additional proposed funds for pollinators. However, the Opportunity, Growth and Investment budget item contained no funds in either the House or Senate versions of the budget. This means that there will most likely be no additional funds for the ARS Southeastern Poultry Research Laboratory in Athens, GA; funds for the Innovation Institutes; or funds for the FarmVets Program in NIFA.

She stated that we have had a partial restoration of budget funds and that we are in a much better position than last year or the year before. However, in response to a question from a committee member, acknowledged disappointment of the lack of funds for the Innovation Institutes.

Dr. Woteki stated that she is currently focusing a lot of her time and energy on the FFAR & the budget process.

IV. Discussion on the Establishment of Priorities for the Relevancy and Adequacy Report

The 2014 Farm Bill contains a new provision for waiving the matching requirement for certain competitive funding. An exemption for matching can be obtained if:

- You are a USDA research agency (ARS, ERS, etc.);
- You are eligible to receive funds from one of NIFAs capacity programs (in other words, a land-grant or another one of our capacity funded partners, using the most obtuse possible angle for consideration);
- You partner with one of those organizations above (definition of "partnering" pending) or;
- ***The Secretary waives the match requirement because the grant involves research or extension activities that the NAREEE Advisory Board has determined are national priorities.***

The Executive Committee discussed the process for defining these national priorities. Dr. Carrie Castille provided an overview of the 2012 Relevancy and Adequacy process. She stated that the working group looked at the process of establishing priorities within REE and the group evaluated the REE Action Plan. They did acknowledge the priorities of the Action Plan but also suggested several additional priorities that should be added for future iterations of the Action plan. The Relevancy and Adequacy Committee wants to develop an equally significant report but is concerned over the timeline for delivering this report. The waiver process and use of the established national priorities applies to grants awarded after October 1, 2014.

Dr. Castille asked for guidance from Dr. Woteki on how the group can utilize the FY2012 report and what additional information REE needs from the NAREEE Advisory Board on the priorities. Dr. Woteki stated that she will need some time to get together some specific questions and then would like to re-engage with the group.

Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy stated that they have been working on the definition of “partnership” and that NIFA will utilize the rule making process in the Federal Register. Dr. Ramaswamy stated that there has been some urgency in developing these parameters because of the Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program; the grants for this program will be awarded after October 1, 2014 and therefore impacted by the matching funds requirement.

Dr. Shult stated that we need to ensure that the NAREEEAB is in compliance with the Farm Bill. The Executive Committee asked if they could utilize the 2012 Relevancy and Adequacy report to identify the national priorities. Dr. Woteki stated that we would need to re-evaluate the report with a new lens to determine if that would be acceptable.

Dr. Woteki asked Dr. Ramaswamy to identify the percentage of grants that are awarded to non land grant colleges and universities and non federal partners. Dr. Ramaswamy stated that approximately 75% of the funds go to the LGUs, approximately 10% are awarded to federal labs (ARS), and the remaining 15% are awarded to other entities, including the non land grant colleges and universities and private entities. A member asked Dr. Ramaswamy if he could give the Board an idea of the sub areas of the topics that were funded such as food, nutrition, animal health etc. Dr. Ramaswamy stated that he would provide this data to the Executive Committee. He also stated that he would be interested in the NAREEE Advisory Board’s input on the final definition of “partnership.” Stay tuned for more information on the rule making process.

Dr. Shult asked Dr. Mark McLellan to provide a summary of the Citrus Disease Subcommittee (CDS) meeting. Dr. McLellan stated that the group had identified a large set of priorities by region. It was apparent from the conversations and discussion that the needs in Florida were much different than the needs in California and Texas as it relates to Huanglongbing and the Asian Citrus Psyllid. The CDS did

vote unanimously on the regional priorities and the distribution of year one funds (\$25M). This information was sent to NIFA for the development of the Request for Applications (RFA). The CDS will be developing a report and recommendation for review by the NAREEE Advisory Board.

V. Working Groups Update

Agricultural Experimental Stations

Dr. Patsy Brannon stated that the Working Group had held its first meeting. They reviewed the past two reports of the Relevancy and Adequacy Committee and the report on the Cooperative Extension Service. The group intends to have a draft available in early August and a final report for the full NAREEE Board for the fall meeting. The Working Group has identified three general areas for recommendations:

- 1.) Partnerships – which includes the Land Grant Colleges and Universities relationship with USDA and the relationship between the Agricultural Experiment Stations and other Federal Agencies and Agricultural organizations
- 2.) Balance of formula and competitive funding
- 3.) Attention to maintaining formula funds

The Working Group will work closely with the Chair of ESCOP on the development of the recommendations. The report will contain examples of relationships/partnerships and identify the impact of the Agricultural Experiment Stations.

Action: Michele Esch will provide a breakdown of funding by State. Dr. Ramaswamy suggested looking at the Heat maps on the NIFA website to get the breakdown of the Hatch and Smith-Lever funding.

Big Data

Dr. Shult provided an update on behalf of Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen, Chair of the Big Data Working Group. The group has not met but they intend on convening in late June/July.

Dr. Shult asked Dr. Woteki on a status update on the report to the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). The correspondence has been submitted to OSTP but we have not received any comments back to date.

Balance of Crop Research

Dr. Mark McLellan stated that the group has not formally met but has had email correspondence. The report will focus on providing guidance on how to approach the balance of crop research. He indicated that he was steering the working group away from focusing on the details of the major and minor commodity crops. He stated that he would be in contact with the REE Advisory Board Office to plan a

conference call.

He also stated that USDA will most likely need to hold a listening session and may need to commission work to accomplish a full study of the topic.

VI. Executive Director's Report

Committee Updates

- Citrus Disease Subcommittee held a meeting in Washington, DC on May 19-20, 2014. A report is being developed for deliberation by the NAREEEAB.
- The Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) report was approved at the May Meeting along with several other reports. These reports will be going to the Secretary shortly. The SCC will have a conference call this month and will plan a meeting for September in Washington, DC. The goal for that meeting will be to provide a review and recommendations on the previous year's SCRI grants and to provide comments on the relevancy review process for the upcoming year.
- The National Genetics Resource Advisory Committee (NGRAC) is soliciting for nominees for four positions. The deadline was extended to June 13, 2014. The NGRAC is holding a conference call on June 16, 2014, and plans to have a face-to-face meeting in late summer.

NAREEEAB Fall Meeting

- We are in the process of planning the Fall NAREEEAB Meeting. A poll will be sent out to the Board members asking for their availability during the first and third weeks of November.
- In careful planning, we will make sure to schedule the meeting around the APLU Meeting (<http://www.aplu.org/page.aspx?pid=2892>) which will transpire November 2-4, 2014 in Orlando, Florida.

VII. Other Business

None

The next EXECOM Call is scheduled for Friday, July 11 2014.

The meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Dr. Milo Shult
Chair

Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen
Vice Chair

Michele Esch
Executive Director, NAREEE

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD:

Date

Initials following Advisory Board Approval