



MINUTES
Executive Committee Conference Call
Friday, October 2, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EDT

Executive Committee Members Present: Dr. David Baltensperger (Chair), Ms. Robin Beck, Dr. John Coupland, Dr. Sarah Francis, Mr. Richard De los Santos, Ms. Liz Hobart, and Dr. Mike Oltrogge

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dr. Edmund Buckner (Vice Chair) and Dr. Jayson Lusk

NAREEE Board Staff: Ms. Michele Esch, Executive Director, and Ms. Shirley Morgan-Jordan, Program Support Coordinator

Ex-Officio(s): Dr. Scott Hutchins, Under Secretary (REE), Dr. Jacobs-Young (ARS), Dr. Spiro Stefanou (ERS), Dr. Dionne Toombs, Dr. Parag Chitnis (NIFA), Mr. Hubert Hamer (NASS), Dr.

Others Present: Ms. Michele Esch (ERS), Dr. Rich Derksen (OCS), Mr. Bill Hoffman (NIFA), and Veronica Wong (OSEC)

I. Welcome and Roll Call of the Executive Committee Members and Other Attendees

Ms. Michele Esch and Kate Lewis welcomed everyone on the calls.

- ▶ All the Board members introduced themselves stating the category they represent focusing on their expertise, knowledge input as a Board member.
- ▶ Dr. Hutchins introduced Dr. Spiro Stefanou who joined ERS coming from University of Florida.
- ▶ Kate Lewis introduced herself and her background with USDA coming from Rural Development. She thanked everyone for their help in getting her up to speed.
- ▶ A final introduction and roll call was made by Michele Esch. All EXECOM members and Ex-Officio stated their name and organization and Agency/category they represent. Michele Esch thanked Shirley Morgan-Jordan for her help in assisting with everything.

II. Welcome from the Chair

Dr. Baltensperger welcomed everyone on the call.

III. Office and REE Agencies

Dr. Hutchins stated that the Federal Government is on Continuing Resolution and we are progressing forward. He stated that the move to Kansas City is going great. Each Agency is doing great at maintaining their activities despite COVID-19.

NASS – Mr. Hubert Hamer

Mr. Hubert Hamer stated the Annual Small Grain and Quarterly Report was released. The response from producers have been tremendous and beyond according to the responses received last year online and by mail. The quality continues to be up to standard.

ARS – Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young

Dr. Jacobs-Young stated that the ARS Monthly Report was published on October 9th. ARS has done a great job in hiring and has done more hiring than ever in the past. Work is being continued in the laboratories and things are going well. The COVID related items in the Agency are going well also. Mississippi State University announced that they are coming out with a high speed computer and Atlas the runs up to 2x the speed as it would normally run.

ERS – Dr. Spiro Stefanou

Dr. Stefanou stated that he has been in the ERS Agency for 4 weeks and the staff is great. There is a lot of hiring going on at all levels and it's going great also. Concerning the pandemic, we have some papers that will be coming out along with some supply chains and have partnered with some Universities. ERS has been maintaining their pace and doing well.

NIFA – Dr. Parag Chitnis

Dr. Chitnis stated that they are excited about moving into their new building in Kansas City. There has been 188 staff on board and 132 new hires. ERS will be fully staffed by FY2021 and ERS will have 80% of their staff hired. ERS responded to the COVID-19 needs and have allocated 14.5 million dollars for research. ERS will be announcing 10.5 million dollars in the next week. The efficiency has been better now in getting the job done than it has in the past. There have been 300 more awards processed and published than last year. He stated that this has been phenomenal year for ERS.

OCS – Dr. Dionne Toombs

Dr. Toombs stated that the USDA Science Blueprint is making progress and the committee will be meeting in the early part of November.

- Dr. Coupland wants to hear more about the problems and what needs to be done

opposed to things going great.

Dr. Baltensperger wants to wrap up the July Meeting Minutes from the July 7-8, 2020 virtually meeting. The EXECOM members approved the July and August EXECOM minutes were moved and approved as well.

IV. Review of Final Letter from Diversity/Inclusion Subcommittee.

- Dr. Buckner developed the letter and Michele Esch shared the letter and edits were made. It was stated that the guidance on the letter will be great to utilize programs. Dr. Baltensperger asked if anyone had any additional comments. Dr. Oltrogge who is also on the committee and participated in the writing of the letter stated that the letter is ready to move forward to the full board. The letter was approved by the Board.

V. Update on the Relevance and Adequacy (R&A) Report

- Ms. Beck stated that Michele Esch still has the letter and needs to make edits. The R&A Report needs to then get approved.

VI. Other Business

• Status of Membership Extensions

° Michele Esch stated there has been a lot of extension of Board members due to their terms expiring. Michele Esch gave an update on the membership form. A letter will be sent asking to extend all expiring members until the end of the calendar year in December. The Citrus Disease Subcommittee (CDS) will need more nominations and will have to produce a Federal Register Notice soliciting members. We have contacted our partners in CDS, and names are ready to be submitted. The National Genetic Resources Advisory Council (NGRAC) met and approved the Crop Wild Report the report will be ready to be approved at the next meeting. The NGRAC will be reminded 2 weeks before the meeting. We are in the process of planning a CDS and Specialty Crop Committee (SCC) meeting.

Dr. Hutchins stated the first draft for the top 10 goals for REE has been drafted and the top 20 goals will be discussed. DHS has some delays with the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF). The NBAF will be a state-of-the-art biocontainment laboratory for the study of diseases that threaten both America's animal agricultural industry and public health. DHS S&T is building the facility to standards that fulfill the mission needs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) which will [own, manage and operate](#) (PDF, 16pp, 165 KB) the NBAF once construction and commissioning activities are complete.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Next meeting will be Friday, October 4, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

Dr. David Baltensperger
Chair

Dr. Edmund Bucker
Vice Chair

Michele Esch
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD:

Date

Initials following Advisory Board Approval