



Research, Education, and Economics (REE)
National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board

Executive Committee Conference Call – May 2, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Executive Committee Members Present: Dr. Kenrett Jefferson-Moore (Chair), Dr. V.M. “Bala” Balasubramaniam, Ms. Donnell Brown, Dr. Jane Kolodinsky, Mr. Richard De Los Santos, Ms. Liz Hobart, Dr. Tandra Stevenson - 7

Members Absent: Dr. Edmund Buckner, and Dr. Mario Ferruzzi - 2

NAREEE Board Staff Present: Ms. Kate Lewis, NAREEE Board Executive Director/Designated Federal Officer (DFO) and Ms. Michele Simmons, Program Specialist

I. Welcome from DFO Kate Lewis, Roll Call, and Quorum Check. Quorum was met. First order of business was to approve the April Minutes. DFO Lewis asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The April meeting minutes were approved by consensus and no opposed.

DFO Lewis gave an update on the NAREEE Advisory Board candidate slate. The package is still with the Secretary’s office for review. As soon as we receive the candidate selection from the Secretary, she will inform the Chairs of the new members. Hopefully, the new and/or renominated Members will be selected in time to attend the NAREEE Advisory Board’s Meeting in June 2023.

At the end of FY23, we will be looking to nominate new or renominate Members.

Dr. Edward Buckner, Ms. Marguerite Green, Ms. Liz Hobert, Dr. Annette Levi, and Dr. Ariel Ortiz-Bobea’s terms will expire the end of September 2023. DFO Lewis is available by phone or email if you have any questions on reapplying. Applications are due by May 31, 2023. We will review the new FY24 applications in June. Hopefully the new members will be onboard by October 2023. DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions. There were none.

II. Remarks from Chair.

Dr. Jefferson-Moore welcomed everyone. She informed the Members that \$250 million dollars was allocated for the next generation agricultural list that was released by the USDA in the Fall of 2022. It was for Minority Serving Institutions. There were 3 tiers to the allocations. The 1st tier was for \$5-million-dollar projects. The 2nd tier was for \$10 million dollars. The top tier was for \$20 million dollars. This is huge for Minority Serving Institutions. This is also one of the 2 priorities that the Secretary and Under Secretary wanted us to consider for our Relevancy and Adequacy work.



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Dr. Jefferson-Moore is looking forward to meeting everyone in person at the meeting in June.

Ms. Brown – What were the grants for?

Dr. Jefferson-Moore – USDA released the \$250-million-dollar grant proposals to increase diversity across the USDA. The 1st tier was for individual Institute submission. The 2nd tier was for multiple disciplinary requiring partners. The 3rd tier was the same, but on a larger in scale. Most Minority Institutes could submit up to 3 proposals which could total \$35 million dollars. This will be a huge impact for kids that don't have funding to support their education.

Ms. Brown - Was there a theme for the grants?

Dr. Jefferson-Moore – To enhance and increase diversity in the agricultural and food industries.

DFO Lewis – The next item is to move forward on a vote for 2 work items.

**III. Update on the 2022/2023 Ag Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Report/
Recommendation (The Board's Relevancy & Adequacy project for FY23)**

DFO Lewis - Today's action is to approve a recent letter signed by Dr. Jefferson-Moore. You're also voting to approve the Board's July 2020 unchanged recommendations for the Ag Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Programs.

DFO Lewis - Here is a summary of the Report and Recommendations on the Relevance and Adequacy of the Ag Climate Adaptation Programs and Activities at USDA (July 2020).

1. Strengthening educational outreach and communication activities related to ag climate research.
2. Expand the undergoing research into investigating new areas that are in the report.
3. Increase overall funding for these research efforts to consider what social science has in the program.
 - Consider the role of social science in funding.
4. Increase funding of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) grant awards to land-grant institutions and other partners to develop ag and land management methods to reduce GHG emissions.
5. Increase REE agency and Forest Service R&D on resilient agriculture.
6. Enhance data coordinating efforts across REE agencies.
 - Standardize data reporting.
7. Categorize cross REE agency climate adaptation and mitigation projects.
 - Increase the ability to bridge data and interpretation among research projects.



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That summarizes the original 2020 report. The letter is asking the Secretary to provide acknowledgement and response back to the NAREEE Board. If you approve the items today, DFO Lewis will package the original report, the addendum, and the updated summary that the USDA developed in December 2022. Dr. Jefferson-Moore and the Ad-hoc committee measure the validity of the original report recommendations. She will give the entire Board a couple of weeks to review the materials so that NAREEE Advisory Board can vote on it at the meeting next month. If approved, the materials will be transmitted through the REE Under Secretary (U/S) and then Secretary Vilsack.

Dr. Kolodinsky – This is high level. What happens next? Who decides the distribution of the research for each item in the report once the recommendations are made?

DFO Lewis – If the report is approved by the full Board next month, we will develop a briefing memo that analyzes all of the recommendations. We will work within REE and the Forest Service to get the right points of contacts to address your recommendations. We will put each recommendation from the USDA's response in a briefing package. The final briefing package will be routed to the REE U/S for review and concurrence and then to Secretary Vilsack. Your report also goes beyond the Secretary. The report goes to our Congressional Office liaison and then to a variety of Congressional Committees both on the House and the Senate side.

Dr. Kolodinsky - I would like to know how dollars are allocated and which priorities are prioritized within a group of priorities. There's a lot of politics that happens after we make recommendations. I just would like to know where the Board's place is.

DFO Lewis – I will make note of your question. This might be a good question for you to ask U/S Jacobs-Young at our Board Meeting next month.

Ms. Brown – The report is comprehensive and impressive. I would like to thank the Ad-hoc Committee for reviewing the report.

Ms. Hobert – I continue to go back to what is our role as an advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture. We represent various sectors of agriculture and the customers of USDA. Our role is to advise REE. We can provide recommendations and hope they take them into consideration short and long term as the USDA identifies ways to better serve their customers.

DFO Lewis – Do we have approval to move the 2020 Board Report and the letter at our full Board meeting in June next month? Do I have a motion? Ms. Brown moved. All approved.



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She thanked all the Members on the Ad-hoc Committee that re-explored the relevance of the Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Report.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none

IV. Continued Discussion and Agenda Feedback on the Board’s in-person Meeting

DFO Lewis went over the draft agenda for the June NAREEE Advisory Board Meeting.

Dr. Stevenson - Thanks for the overview of the agenda. There was a section on the agenda about getting feedback on the Boards recommendations. What are the next steps at this meeting? Will there be a timeline?

DFO Lewis added Dr. Stevenson’s suggestion to the agenda. She asked if there were any comments are feedback on the agenda. There were none.

Ms. Simmons gave an update on the logistics for the June NAREEE Advisory Board Meeting that’s taking place in Washington, DC. She informed the Board that once a hotel is confirmed for the room block, the link will be emailed to the Members that are attending the in-person meeting.

Dr. Stevenson suggested that a group photo be taken at the meeting to add to the NAREEE Advisory Board’s website. DFO Lewis agreed that we will take a group photo.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions. There were none.

V. Wrap-Up/Adjourn

The next meeting will be **July 11, 2023, from 12 noon - 1 pm ET.**

The meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m. ET.