

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board

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MINUTES

Executive Committee Conference Call

Friday, March 6, 2015, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm EST

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

Executive Committee Members Absent: Leo Holt, Robert Taylor

NAREEE Board Staff: Shirley Morgan-Jordan, Program Support Coordinator

Others Present: Kim Green-Designated Federal Officer--Director, Office of the Chief Scientist, Dr. Cathie Woteki, REE, Under Secretary, Caren Wilcox, REE, Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, Director, NIFA, and Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young, Administrator, ARS, Dr. Rich Derksen, Office of the Chief Scientist

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

Kim Green conducted a roll call of the Executive Committee and determined that quorum was present.

II. Welcome from the Chair

Dr. Shult welcomed everyone on the call. He then turned the meeting over to Dr. Woteki.

III. Comments from the REE Office of the Under Secretary

Dr. Woteki welcomed everyone on the call and provided several updates.

- REE's appropriations hearing to Budget Subcommittee were postponed until March 24, 2015. Dr. Woteki commented that REE has a generous funding request in line with the NAREEE Board's recommendations. The budget request includes establishment of two Innovation Institutes to be funded at 40 million each (NIFA): one on Nanomaterials in Wood Products and one on Bioproducts. All four REE agencies would get an increase in funding for research and infrastructure improvements. The proposed budget includes a \$200 M request for infrastructure improvements at 5 ARS laboratories.

IV. Update on ARS-Animal Handling and Welfare Review Panel

Dr. Shult gave an update on the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) - Animal Handling and Welfare Review Panel (AHWR) Panel. Consideration was given to using the NAREEE Board to convene a possible sub-committee to look at issue, but USDA decided to use a different convening authority. The Secretary utilized the same candidate slate to review and appoint the members of the panel.

Michele Esch accompanied the USDA AHWR Panel members on a visit to US Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) last week. The Panel did a comprehensive review and will issue a draft report on March 9. Dr. Woteki commented that the Panel's report will be available for public review on USDA's website and that public comments can be submitted on the report. This will also be announced in a Federal Register Notice. Written public comments are to be submitted via email by March 18. The AHWR Panel will hold a public teleconference on March 18, 2015, to take oral comments. Shirley will send a copy of the Federal Register Notice to Board members when it is published.

Dr. Woteki and Dr. Shult then discussed that the NAREEE Board has been asked to stay engaged and play a continuing role on this issue in reviewing and commenting on the ARS-AHWR Panel Report. NAREEE will hold a meeting via teleconference on April 14 to provide additional advice and recommendations to USDA and to solicit additional public comments the report (approximately 1 to 2 hours in length with a moderator). If the NAREEE Board determines it has further comment, it will provide such in the form of a report or comments on the Panel Report to Secretary Vilsack by April 21. Dr. Shult suggested that the Board members take action after the April 14 public meeting in the form of pulling together a response. The Board could review the ARS-AHWR Panel final report and provide any additional thoughts and comments and incorporate what is heard at the public meeting on April 14. In accordance with statute, the NAREEE response that would go to the Secretary will also be shared with Congressional oversight committees.

Dr. Shult commented that after the immediate planned activity by the NAREEE Board is completed, the Board should discuss where the topic/issue should go and whether it becomes a functioning subcommittee of NAREEE. Dr. Woteki suggested that continuing functions might be discussed/included in the NAREEE response to the Secretary. For example, a recommendation could be that the Panel visit/review other locations in addition to MARC. The NAREEE Board could assist with implementation and oversight in a "Phase II".

Dr. Jacobs-Young, ARS Administrator, commented that while the New York Times article that came out on the USMARC was very negative, it did point out the need to have dialogue around animal research and the need for enhanced discussion with consumer groups and partners.

Dr. Woteki commented that she will be speaking about animal nutrition research for animal health on March 27, 2015, at the National Research Support Project (NRSP-

9) Spring Summit. The meeting provides an opportunity to discuss why animal research is important.

V. Agenda Development for April NAREEE Board Meeting, April 27-29

Dr. Shult asked for volunteers to approach speakers for April meeting; it will be held in the American Geophysical Building (AGU) on Florida Avenue, NW Washington DC.

It was agreed that reviews and the process for conducting the NAREEE Relevancy and Adequacy Report be included on the April agenda. Working with Michele Esch and Rich Derksen in the Office of the Chief Scientist, the NAREEE subcommittee is working to establish a process for future reviews. Dr. Castille commented that Michele Esch and Rich Derksen did a fantastic job in pulling together a draft process that would have a true impact. The process lays out a 5 – year rotational review process that would begin with the REE research portfolio on food safety and research.

The National Genetic Resources Advisory Council (NGRAC) has released a report and they are prepared to come and present on at the April meeting.

Dr. Shult suggested the topic of agricultural safety for inclusion on the April agenda. Dr. McLellan suggested the Board have Dr. Ann Bartuska pick someone from the Forest Service to talk about their successes/tell their story on this topic and to queue up the discussion for other parts of USDA. NAREEE could help USDA think about how to carry these messages outwards, take successes and move them forward– especially to extramural universities. Dr. McLellan commented that APLU is setting up to conduct a large scale review on this topic. Dr. McLellan has the lead to contact Ann Bartuska and develop this topic for possible inclusion on the April agenda.

The Executive Committee discussed having the Data Management Workgroup give an update and decided that yes, it should be on the agenda. Dr. Daley-Laursen will lead on giving an update. More information is needed including how much time is on the agenda. The final report (January 13) is currently in USDA's hands and a culmination point has been reached laying out 8 items. Dr. Daley-Laursen commented that USDA folks and University and stakeholders are marching forward and putting processes in place, and they do need to convene players to ensure working together with common language common interests, scale, and priority of what to work on together to ensure efficiency. Questions include how to formally convene comment interests. Dr. Daley-Laursen commented that Bill Hoffman from NIFA has been great to work with on this and would like his continued involvement with the scope of the effort.

The Executive Committee discussed the Riley Foundation report and whether to include on the agenda for information only or for discussion. After discussion, members decided to circulate the report but not put on as an agenda item at this time. Michele Esch will circulate a copy for Board member review.

The Executive Committee discussed recent reports released by the National Academies. Dr. Brannon commented that she found the report “A Framework for Assessing the Health, Environmental, and Social Effects of the Food System” very compelling, especially the case studies. The members discussed possibly having Academies staff or their committee heads give a briefing to the Board as an info piece. Dr. Brannon will work with Michele Esch on this. (Maria Oria is the Senior Program Officer on the Food and Nutrition Board at the Academies for the study mentioned above).

The Executive Committee discussed Funding Challenges for Partners as a potential agenda topic. Dr. Taylor previously raised funding challenges highlighted in a review of state agricultural experiment stations. Dr. Shult raised the question of whether there was anything the NAREEE Board could do in its role. Dr. Ramaswamy commented that he thinks this might be beyond the purview of the Board, but that maybe NAREEE could help with communications or help frame what measures USDA might use to assess if capacity funds are resulting in returns on investments. After additional discussion Dr. Shult suggested that this topic is not ready yet to be added to the agenda/come in front of the Board for action. Dr. Brannon suggested that Dr. Ramaswamy could give an update on his upcoming meeting with NASDA at the April meeting.

The Executive Committee discussed having the REE Administrators give presentations at the April Meeting. Dr. Shult commented that Michele Esch has done a very good job in working with Administrators on focused and targeted presentations. REE Administrators should present to the Board what they think is important for Board members to hear. If Board members have any specific topics they should let Michele know so she can work with the Administrators to get the topic incorporated.

VI. Other Business

No other business was identified.

There being no additional business, the call was adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Dr. Milo Shult
Chair

Dr. Steven Daley-Laursen
Vice Chair

Michele Esch
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD: _____

Date

Initials following Advisory Board Approval