National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board

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MINUTES
Executive Committee Conference Call

Friday, June 3, 2011 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EDT.

Executive Committee Members Present: Jean-Mari Peltier (Chair); Dr. Carrie Castille; Dr. Nancy Childs; Dr. Dennis Heldman; and Dr. Steve Daley-Laursen.

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dr. Mary Wagner (Vice Chair); Dr. Nancy Cox; Leo Holt; and Terry Wolf

NAREEE Board Staff: Robert Burk (Executive Director); and Shirley Morgan-Jordan (Program Support Coordinator).

Others Present: Carol Keiser-Long; and Caren Wilcox.

I. Roll Call of Executive Committee Members and Other Attendees

- Rob Burk conducted a roll call of the Executive Committee as members signed on to the conference call.

II. Comments and Welcome from Chair and Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Jean-Mari Peltier will review the minutes, with corrections, and approve them.

III. Comments from the Under Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics

- Dr. Catherine Woteki, Under Secretary was unable to attend the Executive Committee conference call but Acting REE Chief of Staff Caren Wilcox spoke in her place. She stated that she was pleased to be on the phone call. She stated that is has been a

challenging session as it relates to the budget. She spoke about the status of REE and the planning for REE. The House Agricultural Subcommittee on Appropriations has proposed to cut the REE mission area by 14%; NIFA by 16%; and ARS by 14%. Also there a number of facilities closing. The Senate may not do a budget and the result would be a continuing resolution, and as we have found there can be cuts during a continuing resolution. The Secretary asked the subcabinet and administrators to look at the programmatic and the core functions of the agencies and consider what the agencies could look like in the 21st Century. If the core functions are identified ahead of time, REE may be able to plan accordingly and improve the agencies for the future.

- Dr. Woteki will draft some questions for the NAREEE Advisory Board to research and answer. She wants the Board to explore issues critical for Agricultural research given the potential reductions in budget. REE would like the Board to remember that the Federal Government operates under certain restrictions and regulations and REE may not be able to provide answers to all of the potential Board questions. Dr. Woteki is looking forward to speaking with the Board. Caren Wilcox said that Dr. Woteki would like to thank the Board for the White papers. Dr. Woteki would like the Board to offer suggestions on the items that the Board thinks are important core functions and follow this up with a face to face meeting to discuss them in more detail.

- It was decided that the Executive Committee of the Board will review the Under Secretary's questions. It was also decided that the Executive Committee will meet face-to-face in Washington, DC to discuss the questions and hash out the recommendations to send to the entire Board for review prior to submission to Dr.Woteki. The Executive Committee would like to get the questions from Dr. Woteki, schedule a conference call for follow up questions to ask Dr. Woteki, the Committee and the Board will then attempt to come to a consensus on recommendations, submit the report to the Under Secretary and then meet with Dr. Woteki about the answers to her questions.

- The Executive committee decided a week after receiving the questions; they would like a conference call with Dr. Woteki.

- A question was posed by a member of the Board regarding the intended audience for this report? Caren Wilcox told the Executive committee that the audience would be multiple internal Departments of USDA, OMB, and OSTP.

- The Executive Committee stated that a good start with the potential REE budget cuts would be the comments made by the individual members on the REE White Papers. It was restated that Dr. Woteki would like the Board to evaluate the core functions on how best to absorb the budget cuts.

IV. Updates on Committee Activities and/or Reports

Renewable Energy Committee (REC)

- Carol Keiser stated that members of the REC have drafted a framework for its annual report based on the information in the Bioenergy White Paper. The report has been sent to the full Committee for responses and additional input and the REC will finalize the report at a meeting in July.

- The REC will have a meeting in Washington, DC on July 14, 2011 and meet with the National Program Leaders as the Board looks at renewable energy.

Specialty Crop Committee (SCC)

- The SCC is planning to meet on July 19 in Michigan. Under the guidance of Michigan State University and Michigan Specialty Crops interests, Dr. Armbruster was asked if the SCC will meet at two different locations to reach the maximum number of stakeholders (East & West). There are several cherry growers in the Grand Rapids area of Michigan and that would likely come to a meeting in Western Michigan. The hotel and other logistical details have not been finalized. Jean Mari stated that you do not have to be on the SCC to attend the meeting. Any members wishing to participate can attend.

- The Executive Committee should have received a draft report for comments. The report will be ready for release once the full Board has been given a final opportunity for comment.

- Jean-Mari Peltier noted that someone from ARS may attend the meeting but she has been informed that NIFA can only attend if invited. She requested that Rob Burk send invitations on behalf of the Board to relevant REE representatives. She noted that NIFA representatives asked if the SCC would hold another SCC meeting in Washington, DC for those individuals that are unable to come to Michigan. Jean-Mari Peltier proposed to possibly hold another SCC meeting in September in Washington, DC for those who didn't make it to the Michigan SCC Meeting.

V. Updates from Work Groups/Subcommittee

Competitive Grants

- No updated information was given related to the Competitive Grants Subcommittee.

Fall 2010 Meeting Planning

- Rob Burk and Shirley Jordan visited several hotels and the decision was made to move forward with a contract with the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. The NAREEE Advisory Board Office is preparing all of the paperwork for approval by the USDA procurement officials.

- Rob Burk noted that Jean-Mari Peltier had tasked Marianne Smith-Edge to head up the program committee for the meeting and she is willing but her term serving on the Board will have expired due to her six years of service.

- Rob Burk asked the Board to further consider the topic of the next full Board meeting and perhaps use the guidance of the REE Under Secretary regarding the most useful information to REE in its current budget considerations.

- Dr. Carrie Castille noted the value of the stakeholder discussions during the March meeting and felt it would be worthwhile to hold a similar session. Dr. Nancy Childs noted that it would be of value to invite previously unrepresented groups in to provide input.

Relevancy and Adequacy

- The committee has generated a draft report and which has been reviewed by the committee. Revisions were made and the document was submitted to Rob Burk. Jean-Mari Peltier noted that Dr. Mary Wagner, and she felt that it was a strong report. Jean-Mari Peltier felt that it was ready to be reviewed by the Executive Committee. The report will be sent to the Executive Committee by the NAREEE Board Office.

Spring 2011 Meeting Review

- Dr. Daley-Laursen will work on the report and provide updates at a later time.

VI. Executive Director's Report

Federal Advisory Committees Act (FACA) Compliance Updates

- Rob Burk stated that the NAREEE Office is reviewing operations to assure that the Board follows all FACA rules, regulations, etc. Rob Burk stated that the service terms of several of the SCC members may be due to expire. Jean-Mari Peltier stated that she would review the membership. Rob Burk asked that the membership set by the next meeting of the Board in November. Jean-Mari Peltier stated that she would wait until after the SCC Meeting to appoint any new members to the SCC.

- Rob Burk noted that the process of Report finalization should be reviewed. He suggested that a full Board conference call, and associated federal register notice may be in order for future reports.

- Rob Burk noted that member phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses are being removed from the Board website in compliance with the Privacy Act.

REE Updates

- Dr. Kitty Smith (USDA ERS Administrator), Sara Mazie (REE Budget), and Jim Bradley will be retiring from the Federal Government.

Website Updates

- The NAREEE Advisory Board is evaluating the Board website to make sure that it is user friendly, up to date, and in compliance. Edits are being made regularly..

Future Meetings

- **The next Executive Committee conference call will be Friday, July 1, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time.**
- **Renewable Energy Committee Meeting – July 14, 2011**
- **Specialty Crop Committee Meeting, Michigan – July 19, 2011 {Tentative – East side – MSU East Lansing at the Kellogg Center & West side -Grand Rapids)**
- **NAREEE Advisory Board Fall Meeting, November 7-9-2011**

Reminders

*** Deadline for Advisory Board member nominations – July 12, 2011**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Morgan-Jordan

Jean-Mari Peltier Chair	Rob Burk Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD: _____

Date

Initials Chair	Initials Executive Director