

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

REE Advisory Board Office
Room 344-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-2255

Mailing Address:
STOP 2255
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250-2255
Telephone: 202-720-3684
Fax: 202-720-6199

DRAFT MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call Thursday, December 20, 2007 12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m., e.s.t.

Executive Committee Members Present: Martin Massengale, Chair; Walt Armbruster, Vice Chair, Carol Keiser, Marianne Smith-Edge, Mary Wagner, Ed Runge, Daryl Lund

Executive Committee Members Absent: Marty Apple, David Thomassen, Dr. Gale Buchanan, REE, Under Secretary and (Ex-officio).

Board Staff Participation: Joseph Dunn, Executive Director, NAREEE Advisory Board



I. Welcome and Update

Joe Dunn called roll of the Executive Committee members.

Martin Massengale welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some introductory remarks to the Committee members and other attendees.

Marianne Smith-Edge asked Martin if she could inform the Committee that the latest report on the National Agricultural Library is advancing through the *ad hoc* work group. Martin reminded Marianne that after a report has cleared the work group, it needs to be sent to the Exec Committee for comments before distribution to the whole Board, and that in both of the latter cases the report should be sent through the NAREEE Board office.

Martin then asked Mary Wagner to comment on the progress being made with the Organic Agriculture report from the October meeting. Mary told the committee that a draft copy of the report had been sent to the Exec Committee for review. Martin commended Mary and Daryl on their job in preparing a concise report, but he reminded those in attendance that all reports coming from the Board need to be thorough in order to demonstrate to Congress that the Board is doing its job in a thorough and objective manner, especially in light of the apparent increase in operating funds for the Board in both the Senate and House version of the Farm Bill. Walt Armbruster further commented that in the case of the draft Organic Agriculture report he reviewed, the introduction following the first paragraph needed to be expanded, and a page needed to be added to describe what the presenters at the meeting actually said. On this subject Martin commented further that the

rationale for choosing Organic Agriculture as a Focus Topic for the October meeting needed to be included. Finally, Martin strongly recommended the inclusion of an Executive Summary on all reports, and Joe Dunn reiterated Martin's comments and stated that Departmental Administrators felt that the Executive Summary for all NAREEE Board reports is of great value to them. Marianne Smith-Edge, Mary Wagner and Daryl Lund all agreed with these suggestions and will work to include them in the next draft version. Martin then asked of the status of the report on rural community development. Walt commented that the report was still being drafted and that he had hoped it would be finished shortly.

II. Update on the Farm Bill

Joe Dunn reported on the latest status of the Farm Bill. He said that the Senate had passed its version last Friday (December 14) by a vote of 79 to 14, which was viewed by many as a mandate for the Bill. Joe further stated that he wasn't sure of all of the detail yet, but that the additional funding for the NAREEE Board was in the Managers Amendment and since the same amount of additional funding was in the House Bill it was likely to survive passage. Martin asked Joe if he had knowledge if the Senate version had any additional funding for specialty crop research, education and extension. Joe said that he didn't have specifics yet, but he thought the additional mandatory funding in the Senate version amounted to \$16 M for specialty crops and \$16 M for organic farming research annually, whereas the House version was \$215 M for specialty crops and \$25 M for organic agricultural research over five years. Joe suggested that Rob Hedberg report on this subject at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

III. Discussion on Dates and Times of Future Executive Committee Meetings

Martin noted that the time period of Wednesday noon to 1 PM time for future meetings of the Executive Committee was inconvenient for some of the members, and asked those present on this teleconference about their availability during the same time period on Tuesdays or Thursdays. All agreed either day was fine. Martin then asked Joe to poll the entire committee via email regarding their preference. In the meantime it was agreed that **the next Executive Committee meeting would be held on Thursday, January 24th from noon to 1 PM eastern time.**

IV. Planning for the Spring Meeting

Martin Massengale suggested that the format for this meeting be a single, in depth focus session on the subject of the future agriculture, natural resources and related areas workforce, and the remainder of the meeting used for discussions between the Board and agency representatives regarding their current and future challenges, priorities and future directions. Martin reiterated that Dr., Buchanan has asked for time at this meeting to discuss, in depth, the role of the Board from his perspective.

Dr Massengale then stated he and Walt Armbruster had chosen a work group for the agricultural and natural resources workforce focus session of the spring meeting. The Board members chosen for this work group are:

Marianne Smith-Edge (co-Chair)

Jim Zuiches (co-Chair)

Marty Apple
Carol Kaiser
Mary Wagner
William Hudson
Jean Marie Peltier
David Thomassen
Tom Rosol
Colien Hefferan (*ex-officio*)

Martin stated that he has also asked Colien Hefferan to act as an ex-officio non-voting member of the committee. In hearing no objections to the membership of this committee, Martin indicated that he would proceed with the appointments. Marianne Smith-Edge asked that Joe Dunn contact her in early January to set up a conference call for the new work group, and Joe agreed. Finally, Martin asked about plans for the fall meeting. Joe stated that the group would have more choices for a location if it were moved to early November from late October. Several Committee members commented that they had no issues with moving the meeting to the later dates, and in fact the November time period would be preferable. Joe Dunn said he will update the committee at the next meeting.

V. Other Business

Martin asked if anyone else had any other business or news to discuss.

Marianne Smith-edge asked that all comments on the National Agriculture Library report be back to her by COB January 4.

Daryl Lund joined the meeting and reiterated his choice for Thursday meetings rather than Wednesdays.

Carol Kaiser wanted to mention the fact that the National Academy of Sciences is conducting a study on emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases. She stated it is a global surveillance study engaging animal, veterinary and human assessments. Martin asked Carol to keep the Committee informed as to the study's progress and determine if there would be some way the Board could help.

Daryl Lund told the committee that he intends to send out a memo to the Relevancy and Adequacy working group to begin organizing before the March meeting. He stated that in the past the work group organized after the President's budget was released and asked if there were any reason to hold off working on this report until after the March meeting. Martin Massengale stated that much of the R & A report deals with present funding limits rather than future funding initiatives and consequently future presidential budgets will not impact the report. Daryl suggested that the work group prepare a draft report now, but not for release in its final form until after the meeting. Martin recommended Daryl contact Sara Mazie as soon as possible for assistance with this report.

Hearing no other comments, Martin adjourned the meeting by wishing everyone a "Happy Holidays". Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

MARTIN MASSENGALE
Chair

JOSEPH DUNN
Acting, Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD: _____
Date

Initials
Chair

Initials
Executive Director

