

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

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## DRAFT MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call Tuesday, September 18, 2007 12:00 Noon – 1:00 p.m., e.s.t.

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Martin Massengale, Chair; George Hoffman, Vice Chair, Walter Armbruster, Carol Keiser, Daryl Lund, and David Thomassen, Mary Wagner, James Zuiches

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

**Others Present:** Ron Hedberg, Legislative Liaison

**Board Staff Participation:** Joseph Dunn, Executive Director, NAREEE Advisory Board, Shirley Morgan-Jordan, Program Support Coordinator.



### I. WELCOME AND UPDATE

Shirley Morgan-Jordan called roll of the Executive Committee members.

Martin Massengale, Chair of the NAREEE Advisory Board provided some introductory remarks and welcomed Executive Committee members and others on the call. Martin thanked Mary Wagner for the outstanding program she prepared for the Specialty Crop meeting that took place in Modesto, California in August. Martin stated that the Secretary of Agriculture has agreed to meet with the Board on Monday, October 29, 2007 from 1:30-2:00 p.m., and that there will be an additional report that afternoon at the meeting concerning the National Agricultural Library and given by the NAL *ad hoc* Task Force. Also, he would like Board to have additional discussion on strategic planning, that is, what type of activities does the Board need to participate in to improve or increase its effectiveness as an advisor to USDA's research, extension, education and economics programs in the coming years? Martin asked the committee members to think about developing some ideas concerning the Board's effectiveness in this regard. Martin also stated that there will be some turnover in the committee next year, and that the Executive Committee will be elected on the

second day of the meeting. Dr. Gale Buchanan will be in Ohio giving a presentation for the first day of the meeting, but will attend on day two, giving remarks at the breakfast.

Dr. Joseph Dunn, Executive Director of the Board stated that Dr. Buchanan is highly supportive of the Board and wants it to function at its highest capacity. He also commented that Dr. Buchanan would prefer some continuity in the Executive Committee. Joe also stated that REE will absorb more of his salary since he has not been able to spend half of his time on Board business. Shirley Morgan-Jordan stated that plans for the October meeting are proceeding well and she will do everything within her power to make sure the meeting runs smoothly.

David Thomassen asked if the Board were under a continuing resolution with the budget, and if the Board members will be able to travel under those conditions.

Rob Hedberg stated that he needed to check with Sara Mazie and Tina Buch about how travel should be handled. Martin stated that the Board had been able to travel before under a continuing resolution and we would just operate on the same amount of money that was authorized last year (\$350,000) until a new farm bill is past..

## **II. Update of Programs for October Meeting: (October 29-31, 2007, Double Tree Hotel, 1515 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20005)**

Mary Wagner covered logistics for the Organic Agriculture Focus Session of the October meeting. This session will begin with a dinner speaker, Bob Brackett who is Director of FDA's Center for Food Safety & Applied Nutrition. On Tuesday, October 30, 2007, the presenters will have 20 minutes each for their presentations along with questions and answers. Mark Lipson will be the industry guest speaker. David Klurfield from USDA will talk about Human Nutrition and the impact of organic agricultural vs. food safety. Mary also stated that the REE Agencies will cover the research side of organic agriculture. . Finally Mary commented that she would make sure there was no duplication of information provided by the speakers through clear coordination of their presentations. Dr. Lund complimented Mary Wagner on the wonderful job she has done in putting the agenda together.

Martin Massengale stated that the business meeting will start at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 31, 2007 which he anticipated would take no more than 1-2 hours. After that Martin suggested that working groups remain an additional hour or more to initiate their reports and recommendations. Consequently Martin said he felt the meeting could be adjourned by 12:30 p.m., possibly having a box lunch available for those who stay past noon in order for them to depart from Washington in the early afternoon.

Jim Zuiches stated that the Rural Development Workgroup met by conference call approximately two weeks ago to discuss the logistics of the October meeting. The only feedback from the call he received was to proceed forward with the logistics he presented. Jim stated that he would like the letters of invitation to be sent out from the Board office as soon as possible. He stated the he will have three panels on this agenda one each from ARS, ERS, Rural Development Cooperative Extension. He would like each agency to discuss their partnerships and collaborations in terms of how they were collecting information. The final speaker for his focus session will be Dr. Bo Beaulieu, Director, Southern Rural Development Center on the subject of "Rural Entrepreneurship

and the Regional Rural Development Centers. Jim has indicated to Dr. Beaulieu that he would like him to cover how the centers operate in relation to extension and research.

### **III. Update on the Farm Bill**

Rob Hedberg, Congressional Liaison for the REE Mission area was invited to the meeting of the Executive Committee to discuss the status of the Farm Bill. Rob stated that he fears the Senate is running out of time with the Farm Bill. He stated that mark-up keeps getting postponed because there is a fair amount of negotiation going on. Senator Harkin wants to know how much money he has to work with. Senator Backus (Finance Committee) also wants to know the status of available money. Although there are still some significant issues that need to be ironed out, the House bill has passed so and we are 1/3 of the way there. A question was asked if there is any new legislation on Energy and Specialty Crops. Rob stated that the latest draft from the Senate committee has mandatory funding for both but the amounts have been left blank. **Rob also stated that the Senate Bill eliminates CSREES and replaces it with NIFA, which would have two programs, one competitive and one formula. If NIFA goes forward, it would have its' own Board. The Senate draft did not include a new Board. The Director will be a six year Presidential appointee.**

***ACTION:*** *As follow up to this conference call and at the request of the Board – Please have Rob Hedberg provide an update to the members regarding 2004 Farm Bill at the October Meeting.*

### **IV. Update on Specialty Crop Meeting**

Martin Massengale stated that the Board recognizes all the quality work that Mary Wagner had done in making the August meeting in Modesto, California a success. He also stated the Board offers condolences to Mary on the passing of her mother. Walt Armbruster will be on travel for several weeks and plans to produce a draft report from the Specialty Crop Committee meeting when he returns by the end of the month. Walt also commented that the appearance of Congressman Cardoza at the meeting added great value to it.

### **V. Status of New Nominees to the Board**

Joe Dunn stated that the names of 52 nominees were given to the White House Liaison's staff at USDA for vetting. After the new members are vetted, we will begin the process of choosing the most qualified candidates for seats on the Board.

### **VII. Status of REE Responses to the Board**

Joe Dunn reported that the REE Mission area has assembled a new interagency working group to assist Dr. Buchanan in developing a unified REE response to each of the NAREEE Board reports. This working group is termed the Board Response Action Team (BRAT) which is composed of representatives from the four REE agencies (ERS, CSREES, ARS, and NASS). BRAT members have agreed to supply Joe with REE responses to the Boards report two weeks prior to the meeting.

A discussion followed regarding making time at the October meeting for Board members to question REE's responses to the Board's recommendations. The decision was made to allow some time for this on Monday afternoon. Therefore it is critical that both the Board members and those REE staff receive the Board's reports and REE's recommendations prior to the meeting. Joe Dunn stated he will make every effort to do this.

### VII. Dates for March Meeting

The Board discussed whether they wanted to have the meeting in early or late March. The Board decided to try to have the meeting the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March.

### VIII. Other Issues

One of the Board members complimented the website and asked if reports prior to 2004 would be posted on it. Joe Dunn stated that we are working backwards in putting up the reports on the website. A lot of the reports that were downloaded got lost and we are working hard to collect all of the reports and place them on the web.

**ACTION:** *As follow up to this conference it was proposed to talk about the website at the October Board Meeting*

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

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MARTIN MASSENGALE  
Chair

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JOSEPH DUNN  
Acting, Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Initials  
Chair

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Initials  
Executive Director

