

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
JOINT WITH SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND
HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The joint meeting was called to order by Chairman of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, Representative Larry Powell at 8:30 a.m. on January 25, 2011, in Room 783, Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Senator Stephen Morris – excused
Senator Jeff King – excused
Senator Steve Abrams – excused
Senator Janis Lee - excused

Committee staff present:

Tamera Lawrence, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Heather O'Hara, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Judy Seitz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dr. Gary Pierzynski, Interim Dean and Director, College of Agriculture K-State Research and Extension (KSRE)

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Mark Taddiken, stated his appreciation to be invited to the joint meeting.

Chairman of the Senate Natural Resources Committee, Senator Ralph Ostmeyer, said that it is an honor to be a part of this joint meeting.

Dr. Gary Pierzynski, Interim Dean and Director, College of Agriculture K-State Research and Extension, began serving in March 2010 and after an unsuccessful search for a permanent Dean and Director, will be serving a little longer.

The Kansas Research and Extension (KSRE) is a combination of the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service. Funding for the KSRE comes from a mixture of state appropriations and federal formula funds. He said that for every \$1.00 KSRE receives from the state; KSRE adds \$2.62 from other sources.

It is the tenth anniversary of the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC). (Attachment 1) The Center has been working with the Farmers' Markets and maintains a website that lists all of the markets.

Dr. Pierzynski mentioned the work that the 4-H does with military youth and families in providing support during relocation. (Informal Report to the Kansas Legislature 2011 on file in Senator Taddiken's office.)

He noted the Committee had received a Kansas Military 4-H Club Partnership 2010 Annual Report (Attachment 2). Kansas Operation: Military Kids (Attachment 3) is another program for military connected youth and provides youth development activities.

He discussed the practice of pasture burning in the Flint Hills in the spring. This burning is necessary to keep the prairie in its natural state. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) Smoke Management Plan Committee with other parties are working on a comprehensive smoke management plan. This plan will incorporate many factors which influence when pasture can be burned as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-mandated ozone monitors for Kansas City and Wichita.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the Senate Agriculture Committee at 8:30 a.m. on January 25, 2011, in Room 783, Docking State Office Building.

Dr. Pierzynski mentioned that it is the 40th anniversary of the PRIDE Program which provides assistance to smaller towns; usually with less than 10,000 people to obtain grants for community improvement. A new program, Get It-Do It, focuses on programs to promote a healthier life style for youth.

He also reported on efforts to slow reservoir sedimentation. Dredging a reservoir is very costly. The Kansas Forest Service received a federal grant to assist the Delaware River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) group to identify areas where streambanks could slow flood water and deposit sediment in riparian buffers – areas planted with vegetation instead of reservoirs.

Dr. Pierzynski said that the Biosecurity Research Institute (BRI) is studying wheat blast fungus which is currently only in South America. The BRI also ensures the safety of food for the military. The Olathe Innovation Center will serve as a resource for more than 120 food safety-related businesses along the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor.

The site for the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) has been cleared and is awaiting additional funding from Congress.

He said that a webinar has been produced to help farmers determine whether it is worthwhile to spray their crops, from both financial and environmental standpoints.

Dr. Pierzynski took questions from the Committee.

The next Senate Agriculture Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 1, 2011 in Room 159-S.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.