

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

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

All members were present except:

Senator Carolyn McGinn, Excused
Senator Steve Abrams, Excused
Senator Janis Lee, Excused
Senator Steve Morris, Excused

Committee staff present:

Heather O'Hara, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Tamera Lawrence, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dana Wethington, 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 Natural Resources Committee, Senator Ralph Ostmeyer, said it was an honor to be part of this meeting.

Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Mark Taddiken, said he appreciated participating in the meeting.

Dr. Gary Pierzynski, Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture, and Interim Director of K-State Research and Extension, expressed appreciation at being able to address the joint meeting. He was appointed Interim Dean and Director March 1, 2010, and will continue through a second search process for permanent Dean and Director of KSRE.

Kansas Research and Extension combines the Agriculture Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service with programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources, Youth, Community Development and Family and Consumer Sciences. For each dollar of funding from State Appropriations, KSRE adds \$2.67 from Federal funds to land grant institutions, grants and contracts, county contributions to Extension, and tuition. Appropriations are shared across five K-State colleges: Agriculture, Veterinary, Arts & Sciences, Engineering and Human Ecology.

Dr. Pierzynski said the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops, observing its 10th anniversary, works with farm families on projects through research, planning and education. (*Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops, K-State Research and Extension*) He cited examples in the brochure of farm tours and on-farm workshops, as well as outreach and education activities through collaboration with more than 25 state and regional entities.

4-H, the largest youth program in the state, also serves 700 youth whose parents are in the military at Fort Riley, Fort Leavenworth and McConnell Air Force Base. 4-H provides consistency to youth who are transferred to multiple military bases when parents are reassigned. (*Kansas Military 4-H Club Partnership, K-State Research and Education*)

Operation Military Kids provides support of and development for military youth with parents stationed at military bases or with the National Guard. It has a positive influence on military-associated youth. (*Kansas Operation Military Kids, K-State Research and Extension*)

He said the agribusiness development team has worked with a three teams of of National Guard members who volunteer to go to Afghanistan. The Guard members learn about agriculture in a week, and work to

CONTINUATION SHEET

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

rebuild the agriculture economy in Afghanistan. A fourth team is scheduled to be trained this summer.

Dr. Pierzynski discussed fire management practices that occur in the Flint Hills during April and May, and are necessary as a natural part of the system to keep the prairie in its current state. Smoke creates visibility problems and air quality problems. A plan to avoid air quality problems during this year's burning season has been developed by a partnership including Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Environmental Protection Agency, Forrest Service, County Extension, municipal governments, KSU Research & Development, Farm Bureau and Kansas Livestock Association. The voluntary program will ask municipalities to refrain from burning landfills and other sites during April and May when pastures would be burned. Another component is a website maintained by KSRE for people to check when scheduling burn days and the possible impacts. (*KSRE Informal Report to the Kansas Legislature 2011, K-State Research and Extension*)

The PRIDE Program is celebrating 40 years in Kansas. In towns of 10,000 or less PRIDE provides grants for community improvement, including the new Get It-Do It that promotes healthy lifestyles for youth.

Dr. Pierzynski reported on water quality and quantity citing stream bank stabilization that reduces sediment levels in reservoirs and also projects resulting in the reduction of atrazine in drinking water.

He said the Biosecurity Research Institute, with a safety level 3 and located on K-State's campus, studies wheat disease that could affect the Kansas wheat crop. BRI also looks at food safety for the military.

National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility construction has been cleared and is waiting on Congressional funding.

The Olathe Innovation Center will open in April and will be a resource for food safety, general industry support and animal health.

Dr. Pierzynski talked about the variety of technology used to efficiently deliver programs across Kansas.

He wrapped up with updates about Extension Districts. An optional design allows Extension Agents to be subject matter experts and serve multiple counties in a district, rather than one person doing two or three duties in a single county office. Of the 105 Kansas counties, there are 67 single county offices and 38 counties in 14 districts.

Dr. Pierzynski took questions from the Committee.

The next meeting of the Senate Natural Resources Committee is scheduled for Thursday, January 27, 2011 in Room 159-S.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.