September 12, 2013

Kentucky State FSA Office

Lexington, KY

MINUTES

KASCOE DIRECTORS’ MEETING

The KASCOE Board of Directors met on September 12, 2013at 10:00 am EST at the Kentucky State FSA Office in Lexington, KY.

Present: Coy Higdon, Micki Crider, Karen Evans, Dana McKinney, Janice Lake, Marcinda Kester, Runita Rice, Melanie Barnes, Brenda Dicken, Melissa Myers, Nina Hunt, Kevin Whitaker, John Goff and Patti Karn.

The meeting was called to order by President Coy Higdon. President Higdon welcomed all Directors and explained the shortness of notification for this Directors Meeting and meeting with the State Committee and State Executive Director.

President Higdon stated that in District 2 Laura Howell, the CED Director had retired at the end of July 2013 which would have Nina Hunt as the new Director for District 2. John Goff made a motion for Nina Hunt to be seated as the new Director for District 2; Runita Rice seconded the motion. All Agreed and the motion carried. This will leave the Alternate CED Director seat vacant.

President Higdon stated that Meghan Edwards had notified him that she has accepted the CED position in Barren County and would be changing KASCOE districts. President Higdon stated that he contacted Lana Baker which is Meghan’s alternate about this meeting. Lana stated that she would not be able to attend this meeting due to the short notice of the meeting. Lana Baker will now move up to the KASCOE Director for District 6.

President Higdon stated that Bob Finch had requested items to be sent to him as to discuss with State Committee later today. President Higdon stated that no items were sent but a list needed to be made this morning.

President Higdon clarified the travel and leave policy for Directors for today which is follows. During the actual Directors meeting annual leave must be taken. Travel time would be for time in travel status (coded as NP-Travel) and the State Committee meeting would be coded as Program Planning-Policy.

The Directors reviewed again the minutes for October 25, 2012 and April 27, 2013. Brenda Dicken made a motion to accept those minutes as written with no changes or corrections. Janice Lake seconded the motion and all approved. These minutes had ‘unofficial’ been approved verbally previously and this was making the minutes ‘officially’ approved.

**Notes from NASCOE Convention included:**

-adjoining states can join another states association if there is no employee association in their state

-National by-laws and constitution must accept these by-laws

-Juan Garcia ‘Thanked’ all employees for their work and dedication. Currently the Farm Bill has been put on hold and there probably won’t be a bill by September 30, 2013

-Permanent law on the Milk Program goes into effect on 10-01-2013 with a new Farm Bill

-since 2003 there has been a 32% reduction in FSA employees that have not been replaced. There are currently 240 county offices with less than 2 employees on staff. 720 county offices within 20 miles of the next office, 165 employees have recently taken the VERA option

-there currently is a hiring freeze until the budget comes out and possibility of rightsizing implemented

-VSIP is possible in U.S. but not in all states. There is a moratorium of 18 months to close a county office

-revised employee numbers will be coming soon and also a discussion on extending the current Farm Bill for 2 years.

The 2014 NASCOE Convention will be held in Oklahoma City, OK and the 2015 NASCOE Convention will be held in Milwaukee, WI.

A discussion was held on PAC membership and ways to increase membership.

President Higdon has sent an email out previously on Tuesday to all Directors requesting a respond to Wes Daniels’ questions as listed below: A discussion with Directors was held and President Higdon requested all Directors to get back with him within the next few days as to their responses.

1. Are county office employees willing to compute to work and how far willing to drive?
2. Are producers willing to travel for FSA services and how far willing to travel?
3. How many county offices are closed in the state of Kentucky?
4. Do CEDs want to get loan approval?

There arose a discussion about the NAP program and is it possible to take care of the program in an ‘Area Office’ instead of every county office. Also ‘GovDelivery’ was discussed that most farmers don’t want this service; they prefer to go to a county office.

**KASCOE Directors listed items to be discussed with the State Committee and State Executive Director:**

Shared Management-Lead PT whether it is Permanent or Temporary Shared Management

Acting CED more than 45 days then STC should talk with COC for more work to resolve the situation

Appears that the same rules are not being followed in situations with Shared Management and Acting CEDs-should be the same in all situations in accordance with handbook regulations

With budget restrictions will this allow more Shared Management situations, if not allowed to hire back

CED must be gone 40% of time to have a Lead PT only in one office. If a CED is going to another county office only 1 day a week then the percentage is different

Rightsizing and travel and lifting of the hiring freeze-status of these

Key PT Position-KASCOE supports that KY should have one and it should be a grade 8 but the State Office determines where it position is

Status of Awards for employees-is it true that there will be no TOA awards or Spot Awards for the fiscal year

Morale across the state is Bad!

CEDs potential loan eligibility and the status of this-STCs thoughts and STO thoughts

Combination of county offices

These items were submitted to the State Committee for the meeting later in the day with them.

The State Committee requested an earlier meeting with the KASCOE officers and Directors than what was originally scheduled. The KASCOE officers and Directors then convened with State Committee at 11:15 AM till 11:30 AM.

At 11:45 AM the KASCOE officers and Directors returned to their meeting.

A discussion was held concerning the pending Dress Code that was discussed with the State Committee.

Dana McKinney made a motion to approve the Dress Code and it was seconded by Kevin Whitaker. All approved the Dress Code and requested that it be submitted to the State Committee in form of a memo from the KASCOE organization.

President Higdon reminded Directors of the following items:

NAFC is having a video contest on ‘Positive Attitude of Farming’

NAFC is encouraging County Committee members to join and it should be discussed with Committee the next time they meet. County Office employees can also join as Associate member at $1.00 a pay period.

Coy has requested emails of County Committee members and Advisors to John McCauley to send a letter to them all concerning NAFC organization. Coy requested this in a letter form and at this time no response has been received back from Mr. McCauley.

President Higdon requested from each Director a name or two for people to be on a 2014 Convention Committee to start working on the upcoming Convention. He requested these recommendations from each Director to be to him by October 4, 2013.

The next Directors meeting will be held on January 16, 2014 at 6:00 PM EST at the Elizabethtown Service Center in Elizabethtown KY. A reminder will be forwarded to all Directors prior to the meeting.

Micki Crider made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Dana McKinney seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM EST.

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Patti J. Karn, KASCOE Secretary