

Florida Agricultural Council
Board Meeting
Holiday Inn
Tallahassee, Florida
Wednesday March 16, 2011
Minutes

In attendance: Joe Joyce, Mary Ann Gosa, Ben Bolusky, Gene Mooney, Ron O'Connor, Brent Sutton, Wade Grigsby, Alan Shelby, Mike Milicevic, Jim Handley, Joe Wright, Mack Glass, Jack Payne, Jeff Lee, Doug Archer, Kevin Morgan, John L. Hoblick.

1st Vice- President Milicevic called the meeting to order at 10:30 A.M. President Branch could not attend due to a meeting in Washington D.C.

Minutes to Board Meeting

Upon a motion made and seconded, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes to the Florida Agricultural Council's annual meeting held on Monday, November 8, 2010 in Apopka, Florida.

Report of the Secretary/Treasurer

The Treasurer's report for October 1, 2010 through January 31, 2011 was reviewed. Secretary Sutton reported that 15 members had paid their dues. A list of paid and non-paid members was presented.

Introductions were made by everyone.

Regional Ag Council Meeting Report

Dr, Joe Joyce reported that the 5 RAC meetings were the best attended ever. He is thankful for the support. The meetings had presentations on the IFAS Center for Public Issues Education by Dr. Tracy Irani. He also appreciates the Florida Ag Council paying for all of RAC meetings' expense. The question was asked by Jim Handley about whether the "Economic Contributions" handout was widely circulated. John Hoblick reported that the Florida Farm Bureau is passing them out to the legislature during their March 21-23 visit. Mary Ann Gosa also said she was. Comment was made that the handout was very informative and needed to be circulated to the public more than it has. Mary Ann also reviewed another handout "Economic Benefits and Jobs".

Legislative Update

Mary Ann Gosa reported that the state GR budget last year was 70 billion dollars. After Medicaid and Public schools (k-12) were removed only 6 billion dollars left. The state is predicting a 3.6 billion dollar deficit. She knows that IFAS will take a hit, between 5-15%. The house may be recommending a 5% cut. Quarterly revenue estimates are about to come out and 3.6 billion deficit may improve? Handout "2011 Legislative Budget Request" was discussed. Cellulosic Ethanol plant in Perry has not received any federal funding. Dr. Joyce reported there might be a private company that IFAS may join with on the plant. He also reported that the IFAS – Balm facility has been using inmates for free labor. Recently, the prison announced it was closing and that would impact their budget.

John Hoblick asked about the possibility of governor Scott cutting university funding. Scott wanted to pool all university funding together and appoint a board to dispense the funding. The Senate and House want to continue to have every university and IFAS listed as a separate line item in the budget. Dr. Payne reported that “Animal Agriculture Industry Science and Technology” and “Florida’s Green Jobs, Sound Science and Policy” were the top 2 priorities for IFAS this year. Dr. Joyce is trying to get non-recurring money to help with the ethanol plant. Ron O’Connor reported the Ag Council board member Joe Wright, is a nominee to be a member of the board of trustees. Governor Scott will make the decision. First vice-president Milicevic expressed appreciation on behalf of the board, to Joe Wright for his interest in being a member of the board of trustee’s. He also thanked Mary Ann for her work.

Dr. Jack Payne’s Report

Dr. Payne expressed gratitude for the council’s work with him. Almost \$100m of the \$300m in the IFAS budget is devoted to research. Some money comes from county governments to help support extension programs. All land grant universities meet together to discuss the federal budget. The new congress is making it difficult. He bragged on Jim Handley’s work in Washington D.C. Dr. Payne also mentioned that various agriculture associations recently testified before the Florida House Ag Committee on how important IFAS was to Florida agriculture. IFAS is down 66 positions and 33 million dollars over the past 3 years. Pension contributions and pay cuts may happen and he is stressing that everyone works together. U.S. Senator Nelson wants to slow down the EPA numeric criteria. One of his aides called Dr. Payne and asked for an economic impact report from IFAS. The study has already been done by IFAS and it would cost billions of dollars to implement. Earmarks also help IFAS. Mike reported that counties are considering cutting IFAS extension budgets, and Dr. Payne agreed. Dr. Joyce reported that there is a contract with every county and that if a county faculty is cut, IFAS has to pick up their cost for a year.

Appointment of Nominating Committee

First vice-president Milicevic requested that Ben Bolusky chair the nominating committee that would also consist of Hugh Grambling and Alan Shelby. They all agreed to serve. A new president along with the expiring terms of John Hoblick, Mary Hartney, Mark Glass and Cammy Hinton need to be addressed before our next meeting. It was also suggested to add First-vice president Milicevic and board member Ron O’Connor as sign-ons for check signing. This motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Sutton

Secretary/Treasurer, Florida Agricultural Council