

Department of Agriculture Agency Review Committee

Study Assignment

An agency review of the Department of Agriculture, pursuant to SDCL 1-26E-2.

Summary of Interim

The first meeting of the interim Department of Agriculture Agency Review Committee was held on Monday, June 13, 2005, at the State Capitol Building in Pierre, South Dakota.

The meeting began with opening remarks by the chair and vice chair about the interim review committee. Mr. Rueben Bezpaletz, Chief Analyst for Research and Legal Services, reviewed an outline of a typical study plan for interim review committees.

Secretary Larry Gabriel began the Department of Agriculture presentation and discussed with the committee the agency's mission, strategic plan, responsibilities, and budgeted funds and FTE's for the Office of the Secretary and the Department of Agriculture. Deputy Secretary George Williams explained his role and duties within the agency.

Mr. Kevin Fridley, director of Agriculture Services, gave an overview of the two offices within the division, Agronomy Services and Plant Protection and Dairy. Mr. Jon Farris, director of the Division of Agriculture Development, gave a brief history of Rural Rehab funds and discussed the different types of loan and grant programs available for agriculture uses within the division. Mr. Ray Sowers, director of Resource Conservation and Forestry, discussed the various programs and talked about some current and future insect epidemics that may affect South Dakota. Mr. Steve Hasenrol, Division of Wildland Fire Suppression, gave a brief history of why the division was created along with its responsibilities and reported on current fires in the Black Hills. Ms. Susan Hayward, State Fair Manager, discussed the mission, business plan, and gave a report of the upcoming State Fair.

The second meeting of the interim Department of Agriculture Agency Review Committee was held on Wednesday, July 13, 2005, at the State Capitol Building in Pierre, South Dakota.

Secretary Gabriel discussed the Department of Agriculture's involvement with SD Ag Producers Ventures and gave a brief history of the creation of the Value-Added Agriculture Sub Fund which is administered by the Board of Economic Development and the Governors Office of Economic Development. Mr. James Hagen, Secretary of the Department of Tourism and State Development, provided the committee with information about grants that SD Ag Producers Ventures had applied for and received from the Value-Added Agriculture Sub Fund of the Revolving Economic Development and Initiative Fund (REDI fund).

Secretary Gabriel and Ms. Susan Hayward reviewed the department's three-year plan for the South Dakota State Fair and responded to questions from the committee regarding the State Fair.

Mr. Jon Farris distributed copies of a Rural Rehabilitation Funds and talked about the Farm Mediation Program.

The committee then heard testimony from several boards and commissions that are required to report to the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. The boards and commissions

discussed their mission, responsibilities, and funding. The boards and commissions that testified were: SD State Fair Commission, Animal Industry Board, SD Veterinarian Medical Examiners, South Dakota Oilseeds Council, SD Brand Board, SD Soybean Research and Promotion, SD Wheat Commission, American Dairy Association, SD Conservation Commission, Seed Certification Board, SD Weed and Pest Commission, and SD Value Added Finance Authority.

The committee heard public testimony from various agricultural entities and individuals regarding the Department of Agriculture.

The final meeting of the interim Department of Agriculture Agency Review Committee was held on Thursday, October 13, 2005, at the State Capitol Building in Pierre, South Dakota.

The committee requested some additional information from the Department of Agriculture at the second meeting. Mr. Kevin Fridley and Mr. Neil Foster from South Dakota State University discussed with the committee the possibility of changing the composition of the Seed Certification Board members. Mr. George Williams informed the committee of the Office of Ag Policy's duties and responsibilities that have been created within statute. Secretary Gabriel responded to committee questions about the department's performance indicators that are displayed in the Governor's budget book.

Secretary Gabriel and Ms. Susan Hayward updated the committee on the current financial condition of the state fair. The department and the committee discussed options that could help the state fair become more financially stable, the status of the three year plan, and the Master Plan being developed for the state fair.

Mr. Brian Walt, President of the Corn Utilization Council, presented to the committee the council's mission, responsibilities, and funding, and stated that their primary focus was in research and marketing.

The committee reviewed three legislative proposals and approved one. The committee reviewed draft legislation that made form and style changes to certain agricultural statutes, limited the appropriation and certain transfers and expenditures of funds for the state fair, and repealed the farm mediation program. The meeting concluded with a committee discussion and directives to the Department of Agriculture.

The committee recommends to the Executive Board that the Department of Agriculture be continued; having found the department met the burden of establishing sufficient public need is present to justify its continued existence.

Listing of Legislation Adopted

- An act to make form and style revisions to certain agricultural statutes.

Summary of Meeting Date & Places and Listing of Committee Members

The committee met on June 13, July 13, and October 13 in the State Capitol in Pierre.

Committee members were: Representative Justin Davis, Chair; Senator Clarence Kooistra, Vice Chair; Representatives Thomas Brunner, Cooper Garnos, Gerald Lange, Ryan Olson, David Sigdestad, Larry Tidemann, and Mike Vehle.

Staff members were: Aaron Olson, Fiscal Analyst; Tom Magedanz, Principal Research Analyst; and Reta Rodman, Legislative Secretary.