Minutes
NAAE Board of Directors
Meeting
January 31-February 1, 2025

The NAAE Board of Directors conducted an in-person board of directors meeting at the NAAE Office in Lexington, Kentucky on January 31 and February 1, 2025. Board members in attendance included: Bill Newsom (TN), President; Cameron Dale (OK), President-Elect; Kyle Stapleton (ID), Region I Vice President; Lauren Emerson (LA), Region II Vice President; Paul Aarsvold (MN), Region III Vice President; John Hammond (KY), Region IV Vice President; Nelson McCracken (GA), Region V Vice President; Aaron Geiman (MD), Region VI Vice President; and Alissa Smith (KY), NAAE Chief Executive Officer. Eric Tilleman (MT), Past President joined virtually for a portion of the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting are as follows:

1. **Call to Order** –President Bill Newsom called the board meeting to order at 8:07 a.m. on Thursday, January 31, 2025.

2. **Approve Meeting Agenda –** Nelson McCracken moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, to approve the meeting agenda with flexibility. Motion carried.

3. **Approve Board Minutes** – Kyle Stapleton moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, to approve the minutes of the following meetings: September 20-21, 2024; December 2, 2024 – 2024 NAAE Pre-Convention Board Session; December 4-6, 2024 – 2024 NAAE Convention Business Session; and January 9, 2025. Motion carried.

4. **NAAE Board of Directors and Staff Reports –** President Bill Newsom invited each director and staff person to present an update on their activities since the last Board meeting in early January.

5. **NAAE Board of Directors Orientation –** Chief Executive Officer Alissa Smith led the NAAE Board of Directors training to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board and staff. NAAE staff and board also signed their annual Conflict of Interest Policy and Disclosure Statement.

6. **CEO Update** – Alissa Smith provided a report on the staff and the most recent All-In Meeting with staff as well as FFA Foundation meetings. Alissa shared plans for the upcoming year as well as a 3-year plan for Teacher Recruitment and Retention efforts.

7. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings**
   - Finance – The NAAE Board Finance Committee meeting was called to order by chair John Hammond at 11:30 a.m. Alissa Smith provided an update on the financials including the hotel bill and the schedule for the 2024 audit. John then discussed the

NAAE Financial Review committee meeting and the Board agreed to take the dues increase options to the regional meetings to discuss and gain feedback for the September Board meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

President Bill Newsom recessed the board meeting for lunch.

8. **NAAE Membership Report** – Alissa Smith provided the monthly membership report as of January 29, 2025, that included regional and state breakdowns of membership and comparisons of last year as well as student membership info.

9. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings cont.**
   - Strategic Planning committee was called to order with Cameron Dale presiding at 12:48 p.m. The 24-25 Board committees were outlined, and Alissa shared the update for 2025 Awards and the judging of the awards. The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.
   - Policy & Bylaws committee was called to order by Bill Newsom at 12:49 p.m. The committee discussed a proposal from Region VI regarding prayer before meetings at NAAE Convention. The board agreed to remember to cultural courtesy and acknowledge the importance of everyone feeling as they belong in our organization. The committee adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

10. **NAAE Regional Conference Planning –** Alissa Smith shared with the Board the plans for Regional Conferences and Regional Vice Presidents shared their needs for the conferences.

11. **ACTE Ag Ed Business Division Update** – Lavyne Rada, ACTE Ag Ed Business Vice President, joined the meeting virtually and provided an update to the Board on ACTE Ag Ed Business.

12. **2025 NAAE Convention Planning** – Alissa provided an update to the Board on the 2025 schedule and plans for the year. Alissa introduced a proposal that would include a NAAE National Agricultural Educator Hall of Fame that would be introduced at this year's convention. After much discussion, Paul Aarsvold moved, Aaron Geiman seconded, to create a NAAE National Agricultural Educator Hall of Fame. Nelson McCracken move to amend the motion, Kyle Stapleton seconded, and have the sponsorship be at least $3500. The amendment passed. The motion as amended carried.

13. **National #TeachAg Day Overview** – Alissa updated the Board on plans for 2025 including a national breakout box challenge that will focus on an in-class activity for teachers to use to encourage their students to think about the career of teaching agriculture. Plans for 2026 and 2027 were discussed and outline in a draft form for further work and finalization.

14. **Executive Session** - Kyle Stapleton moved, Aaron Geiman seconded, to go into Executive Session at 5:38 p.m. The board went into executive session from 5:38 p.m. until

6:13 p.m. for the chief executive officer's annual performance evaluation. Aaron Geiman moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, for the NAAE Board of Directors to close executive session.

President Bill Newsom recessed the meeting until Saturday, February 1, 2025.

The meeting was call back to order at 8:00 am on Saturday, February 1, 2025 by President Bill Newsom.

15. **NAAE Representative on Ag Ed Board Reports** –
    - **National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees** – Cameron Dale updated the board that they have not had a meeting yet and will provide an update at the next meeting.
    - **National Council for Agricultural Education** – Jeff Voris updated the board on the latest related to the Council.
    - **National FFA Board of Directors** – Paul Arsvold updated the board on what has occurred since our last meeting and informed us there would be a meeting in late February.
    - **National FFA Alumni & Supporters Council**–Nelson McCracken shared his notes from the National FFA Alumni meeting he attended in January.
    - **Ag Ed Managing Board** – Aaron Geiman provided a report from the last Ag Ed Managing Board meeting including insight of the upcoming themes.

16. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings Cont.**
    - **Advocacy in Agricultural Education**
      Bill Newsom, Board Chair for the Advocacy in Agricultural Education Committee, conducted the meeting. Mary Handrich, Wisconsin, Advocacy in Agricultural Education Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.
    - **Member Experience**
      Cameron Dale and Kyle Stapleton, Board Chairs for Member Experience Committee, conducted the meeting. Erica Whitmore, Washington, Member Experience Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.
    - **Professional Development**
      Aaron Geiman and Paul Aarsvold, Board Chairs for the Professional Development Committee, conducted the meeting. Emily Sewell, Oklahoma, Professional Development Membership Committee Secretary, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.
    - **Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition**
      Nelson McCracken and Lauren Emerson, Board Chairs for the Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Committee conducted the meeting. Annette Weeks, Washington, Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.

17. **Committee Reports** – Kyle Stapleton moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, to approve the committee reports as presented. Motion carried.

18. **New Business** – no new business was discussed.

19. **Adjournment** – With no further business to be transacted at this time, Lauren Emerson moved, John Hammond seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:41 p.m. Eastern time.