

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Taddiken at 8:30 a.m. on January 21, 2009 in Room 446-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Steve Morris- excused

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Thompson, Revisor of Statutes Office
Judy Seitz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Greg Foley, Executive Director, State Conservation Commission (SCC)
George Teagarden, Livestock Commissioner, Kansas Animal Health Department (KAHD)

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Taddiken said that the Legislative Post Audit had a report in which it was determined that the state would save about \$710,000 if the State Conservation Commission (SCC) and the Kansas Animal Health Department (KAHD) were to be merged into the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA). As yet, there has not been a bill introduced; but he wanted the Committee to gather background information on this proposal.

Greg Foley, Executive Director, SCC, ([Attachment 1](#)) said the SCC was statutorily established as a stand-alone agency in 1937. All 105 counties have five locally elected supervisors. The 525 supervisors serve local citizens through implementing state cost-sharing programs and providing administrative assistance to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). There is an elected member from each of the 5 (five) administrative areas. He introduced the elected members: Rod Vorhees, Wilson county; John Wunder, Jefferson county; Ted Nighswonger, Graham county; Andrew Larson, Finney county; and Brad Shogren, McPherson.

The SCC provides assistance to the supervisors of the Conservation Districts in carrying out any of their powers and programs; facilitates transfer of information and program experiences; to develop, coordinate, promulgate applicable program rules and regulations and implement programs as the legislature appropriates funding; secure the cooperation and assistance of the U.S. agencies; disseminate information throughout the state concerning the activities and programs; cooperates with and gives assistance to watershed districts and other special purpose districts in relation to the flood prevention act; conserve and develop water resources of the state and maintain and improve water quality; and to enlist the cooperation and collaboration of local, state and federal public and private entities to further the conservation of natural resources.

Mr. Foley reviewed the 2008 Annual Report describing the various programs, the FY 2008 achievements and the FY2009 activities.

George Teagarden, Livestock Commissioner, Kansas Animal Health Department (KAHD), ([Attachment 2](#)) reported that the Livestock Sanitary Commission was formed in 1884 because livestock producers had concerns with diseases and they wanted an agency to bring those diseases under control and eradicate the diseases, if possible. The core mission then was to control and eradicate infections and contagious diseases of livestock and it is still the same. In 1969 legislation was approved to re-organize and re-name the agency the Kansas Animal Health Department. The legislature established two advisory boards to assist the Commission in making policy decisions, the Kansas Animal Health Board (KAHB) and the Pet Animal Advisory Board (PAAB).

Mr. Teagarden said the four functions of the KAHD are: disease control, brands, animal facility inspections and administration. There are 33 FTE who work in the various programs. The federal counterpart for disease control is the Topeka based state office of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Veterinary Services.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the Senate Agriculture Committee at 8:30 a.m. on January 21, 2009 in Room 446-N of the Capitol.

The total budget for the KAHD for the current year is \$3,412,192 and consists of 27% State General Fund, 43% fees generated by license sales and 28% USDA cooperative agreement funds.

He said that electronic filing of health papers has been possible for 3 to 4 years but there are only 12 veterinary practitioners who use the electronic filing instead of paper filing.

Mr. Teagarden noted that the KAHD's response to the Legislative Post Audit report was included in his testimony (Attachment 2-5 through 2-10).

Mr. Teagarden said that the animal facility inspectors have a 50 + page policy manual for inspections of facilities licensed, or required to be licensed, under the Kansas Pet Animal Act. He provided a CD copy of this manual (on file in Senator Taddiken's office).

Mr. Foley and Mr. Teagarden answered questions from the Committee.

Erik Wisner, Policy Analyst, KDA, requested the introduction of a bill related to the transfer of food safety responsibilities from the KDHE to the to the KDA .

Senator Huelskamp moved and Senator Bruce seconded the motion to introduce a bill related to the transfer of food safety responsibilities from the KDHE to the KDA. Motion carried.

Mr. Wisner requested the introduction of a bill that would consolidate three different fee funds into one fund.

Senator Ostmeyer moved and Senator Lee seconded the motion to introduce a bill concerning the consolidation of three different fee funds into one fund. Motion carried

The next meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.