



2025 NAFEC National Convention
June 23 – 26, 2025
Grouse Mountain Lodge
Whitefish, Montana
Minutes

Monday June 23rd- Tour Day

Tuesday June 24th

NAFEC Participated in the opening Ceremony for NASCOE Convention – Continental Divide Conference Room. There was also a welcome by the SED from Montana. Information was given to the attendees about the lodging, Whitefish and the schedule for the convention.

Washington DC Staff that were in attendance were Bill Beam, FSA Administrator and S Steve Peterson, Associate Administrator and Acting Undersecretary FPAC. The FSA Administrator Beam had been previously in DAFP under Trumps first administration. He state his priorities are:

1. Acreage Reporting-DOGE is working on the program to update acreage reporting
2. Modernize Farm Loan Programs
3. Delivery of Disaster Programs

He made general comments that there was a commitment in the department and USDA to find an effective way to deliver programs and are committed to move to the digital age like banks and other businesses.

He also told the group that Richard Fordyce will be Under Secretary of FPAC (He was FSA Administrator in Trump 1). Trina Brake will be DAFO and Jamie White will remain as acting DFAP until someone is appointed.

Steve Peterson, Associate Administrator and Acing Deputy Undersecretary for FPAC during the transition spoke to the group and stated he has 40 years of experience. He has been a CED, STO Specialist, DC Project Specialist and was a 2nd generation of ASCS/FSA employee as he father was also a CED.

Mr. Peterson stated that we as an agency can be more efficient, especially in areas where there are no staff in offices. We want to have a conversation how to do this efficiently and fairly.

Budget in Billions:

Year	S&E	CO	ACIF
24	1.5	1.2	.3
25	1.5	1.2	.3
26	1.178		

Cuts- decrease 61 staff in headquarters

Decrease 558 in State Offices

Decrease 1560 in County Offices (7440 down to 5840 for FY 26 (much of this has occurred with the DRP 1 and 2)



Steve also stated that a new disaster program signup will be happening soon. He indicated it would be a WHIP type program for the non-insured. There will be no more graduated payments based on race, sex etc. There will be more usage of Block Grants in several states.

NAFEC Annual Meeting Call to Order – NAFEC President Jim Zumbrink called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. Jim Zumbrink appointed Tammy Eibey as the recording secretary for the meeting.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance – President Zumbrink had Bob Braden do the invocation and President Zumbrink led the group in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call & Introductions of members present – Tammy Eibey completed the roll call. Those present were:

Jim Zumbrink, OH – President
Craig Turner, TX- Executive Vice President
Jim Densberger, NE- Vice President
Bob Braden, IA - Secretary/Treasurer
Cole Sims, LA- At Large Director
Dan Noteboom WA- NWA Director
Larry Olsen, SD - NWA Alternate Director
Kevin Dale, NAFEC Marketing Director/ Dillard Financial Solutions
Tammy Eibey, NAFEC Assistant Marketing Director/ Dillard/ IA Director

Minutes of Last Meeting Review & Approval – President asked for review and comments on the minutes that were submitted from the last quarterly call. There were no adjustment to the minutes that were submitted by Eibey. Cole Sims made a motion to approve as submitted, 2nd to the motion by Craig Turner. Vote and motion carried, minutes were approved.

Treasurer Report – Bob Braden Secretary/Treasurer said last year at this time there was \$47,000 in the account. Income not keeping up with the expenses. Bob requested that there be another review of member reimbursements. NAFEC is expecting a \$5,000 payment from Dillards for 2025. We should push for COC's to meet monthly, get members with 444's to get updated forms for the new dues structure. Somehow get on the COC meeting agendas to talk about NAFEC.

Balance 5/30/2025 \$29,868.08
-4,043.80 DC Trip Expenses
+ 811.54 444 deposits
\$26,635.82
\$ 5,000.00 Dillards 2025 Payment
\$31,635.82 Balance 06/24/2025

Motion to accept report by Jim Densberger, 2nd by Cole Sims, Vote and motion carried.



Executive Vice President Report – Craig Turner, Ex. Vice President spoke about a recent concern from Georgia and Louisiana members where the district directors have told the CED's that they need to record all COC meetings. David contacted DC and hopefully this is resolved. Texas has worked on funding to hold COC meetings. Georgia has a STO memo to have the video posted to share point. There are many concerns from employees, COC members, Ag groups are very concerned about staffing levels after the DRP 1 and 2 and regular attrition. The hiring freeze does extend to FSA.

NAFEC got Farmers Union, Farm Bureau and other commodity groups behind the CRP administrative being taken from FSA to NRCS. They support FSA and also American Farm Bureau had a national resolution to keep CRP with FSA.

Craig spoke also about the NAFEC trip to DC. Those attending were Jim Zumbrink, Craig Turner, Cole Sims, Bob Braden, Kevin Dale and David Senter. Teresa Dillard joined them for the first day meetings. Some of the things learned from the meetings:

- NAFEC needs to make coalitions with more Ag Organizations. NAFEC also needs to strengthen the relationship we currently have supporting NAFEC.

- All meetings were political, sides take sides. Cole said that there appeared to fear of retribution.

- 30% cut in Ag Budget in the Farm Bill as of today (Waiting for appropriation committee release of information. We need to get groups involved.)

Comments were made that the COC roll, as portrayed by DD's, to new CED's has eroded the importance and authority of the COC in the FSA structure. Here are items that may help:

- Educate the Administrator of the history and roll of the COC in FSA

- Remind groups and Administration that the COC is a grassroots structure

- Be involved with the Employee Association meetings in DC with Administration

- Make holding meetings regularly, more than quarterly.

Kevin Dale also agreed that when meeting with the republican representatives, it felt like they couldn't go against the President. The farm community needs to determine that this is not correct path, and if they don't things are just going to get worse without that support of FSA. (80% of the Ag voters did support this administration). The new Reconciliation Bill (the Big Beautiful Bill) cuts FSA to 5800 employees. FSA will find this hard to operate and it will be difficult to provide the service the producers have come accustomed to by FSA Employees in the county offices.

Discussion turned to fundraising and the contract with Coy. Due to the lack of activity and communication, the group felt that this is not going as expected. There was significant conversation on this issue and it was agreed to let it stay as is and wait for Coy to contact NAFEC. There will be a review when the contract expires 12/31/2026.



Benefit Presentation – Teresa Dillard, Dillard’s Financial Solutions, said thank you to NAFEC for their business. She introduced Debbie Staley and Jason List. They are here to help with all products. Teresa gave a brochure on Beyond the Spreadsheet and talked about high value life insurance. She presented NAFEC with the \$5,000 check for the 2025 contract agreement. She also had a check for \$500 for the NAFEC scholarship.

NAFEC members also thanked Teresa for allowing Kevin and Tammy to organize and guide the group forward. They stated that they have done so much like holding meetings, preparing letters, agendas, newsletters and oversight on memberships and accounting.

Legislative Report – David Senter, Legislative Consultant joined us by phone to give a report on what is happening legislative wise and also– including report on DC NAFEC meetings.

Budget Reconciliation Act is top issue. The House and Senate have been told to stay in Town until this gets resolved. The Senate Parliamentarian has ruled that language for States to pay for farm bill spending could not be included in the farm bill portion of the Bill. Senate Ag Committee revised to just include SNAP benefits. Could not suspend price but can’t until 2031. Ag items in the bill:

Increase reference prices by 20%

Increase base acres

Crop insurance items added

Without the Farm Bill, these might be the only ag items and that would be 64 Billion in the Title I changes.

David said the meetings in DC were good and as expected along party lines. They were good to put NAFEC and FSA on the radar of the staffers. David is now getting their press releases. USDA/FSA meeting were good and made connections. FY 2026 S & E for FSA/NRCS & RD are severely cut. NAFEC needs to do more reaching out to Ag partners. CRP language was not included in this bill. The program and authority goes away 12/31/2025 so this needs to be addressed. David could see another extension of the 2018 Farm Bill with amendments to increase prices, revise crop insurance and other program updates. 64 Billion in title I. There is a concern about a provision of 250 million of Federal Lands in Federal Parks and sales. Group is keeping an eye on this issue.

Kevin gave a report from Hunter Morehead’s Legislative report from the NASCOE meeting. Hunter said that Bill Bean and Steve Peterson are very positive for FSA.

DOGE is good for big government and will highlight the need for USDA but also will require us to become more efficient. The Public believes government is too big and spending needs to be decreased. At the end, FSA will be in a good position but it won’t come without feeling pain along the way.

The Secretary is a friend of production Agriculture. MAHA Commission (Make our Children Healthy Again) is getting a lot of attention. The first report has been issued that



deals with chemical usage in agriculture and other things. The second report will be coming out in August. We will begin to hear a lot about this in the news.

The CRP administrative change to NRCS is currently dead but it could be resurrected in a second reconciliation bill. There also is a lot of support for regional hubs to get folks out of DC. Governors are actively lobbying for their states to be a regional hub.

Larry Olsen, NAFEC NWA Alternate from South Dakota, asked to address the group. He asked to bring to the group in person two proposals he feels that NAFEC should move forward as a group. They are:

1. Elimination of the District Director Position
2. Change all working in the FSA County Offices to be under the supervision of the COC

The group had a lengthy discussion on these proposals. Ultimately the group did not feel that this should be brought forward by NAFEC. The political climate is a big concern as well as the alienation of other employee groups would not be favorable to NAFEC, especially during these times where it is stressful and morale is at an all-time low in the county offices. Larry did state that he would send as an individual.

Assigned: Committees & Committee work – President Zumbrink appointed the following:

Audit- Jim Densberger and Craig Turner
Resolutions- Larry Olsen and Bob Braden
Nominating – Cole Sims and Dan Noteboom

Meet with FSA Administrator Bill Beam and Steve Peterson, Associate Administrator and Acting Associate Deputy of FPAC met with NAFEC. Administrator Beam used this as a follow up to the meetings in DC. The conversation included asking to have NAFEC included with the other employee associations (NASCOE, NADD, NACS and NASE) when having calls and trips to DC. Asked to bring to the Undersecretary for funding.

Other items:

Push of in person training of COC and CED's plus new hires
Talked how Money dictates what can be done- Cut costs side vs Spend money side
Hiring freeze to lifted 10/01/25
Productivity? Administrative costs vs program payments made to producers
Total overall government costs are very high- Secretary is looking into issues
NAFEC asks to be at the table in discussions- grassroots system in government
Appointed Minority advisors to have a set 3 year term and voting rights (Secretary and COC Appointed members)

Steve Peterson talked about his career with FSA. He state that as time has passed, there has been more cuts to COC authority. The power/influence of the COC has lessened especially by not upholding the need to have monthly COC meetings. It could help to improve by providing



outreach on COC, (history and importance), not only to possible COC members, but new employees, STC, SED and Administration. Reorganization is coming and hopes that NAFEC will be engaged in the process. There is currently no DOGE leader but USDA has a DOGE committee/ leader now.

Under the Big Sky Dinner and State Pin Trading,

June 25, 2025 Reconvene NAFEC meeting in NAFEC room after Jim Speaks to the general session of NASCOE. Started the meeting back in the NAFEC meeting room at 10:30 AM.

Review Items completed since Lubbock meeting (Kevin Dale and Tammy Eibey)

- Office visits and virtual meetings with COC's
- Farm Bill Position Paper
- Talking Points discussed that were developed for the DC Legs Visits
- Comments from Washington DC & Whitefish (up to now)
- Newsletter- recently sent out electronically.
- Comments from NASCOE President and Vice President
- Winter meeting in January – discussion- on hold for fall quarterly call
- Fund raising committee update & discussion earlier discussed (see above from Tuesday meeting.) Bob brought up grants. NAFEC is a 501c-4.

Committee reports: Audit Committee of Jim D and Craig reviewed the Treasures report and recommended approval. Larry mad a motion to approve, Cole 2nd. Report was approved

Election Committee of Dan and Cole presented:

2025 Officer & Area Director Elections- the election and outcome is as follows:

- Jim Zumbrink– President
- Craig Turner – Ex VP
- Jim Densberger – VP
- Bob Braden– Sec/Treas

- At Large Director – Cole Sims, LA
- Alternate At Large – Dan Pillsbury, VT
- SWA – Theresa Whitney, NM
- Alternate – Frankie Allen, OK
- SEA – Stuart Fitzgerald, FL
- Alternate – Lance Ham, FL
- MWA – Waylon Smoliski – MI
- Alternate – Dennis Keulengel – ILL
- NEA – Ronnie Wagoner – MA
- Alternate – Chip Eaton – MD
- NWA – Dan Noteboom – WA
- Alternate – Larry Olson – SD

Motion to accept by Craig, Second by Jim D. Motion carried and votes carried for each officer and area/state position.



Resolutions etc.: The resolution committee of Larry and Bob provided the group with their recommendations for NAFEC resolutions to come from this convention:

1. Whereas NAFEC has worked with Dillard Financial as NAFEC's benefits provider. Whereas NAFEC recognizes Dillard Financials diligent efforts to provide sound products for its Membership. Whereas NAFEC recognized the considerable assistance from Dillard Financial in NAFEC's operation through the contributions of Kevin Dale and Tammy Eibey. Therefore, be it further resolved that NAFEC will continue its partnership with Dillard Financial Services.
2. Whereas NAFEC is a partner with NASCOE for the past 66 years. Whereas NAFEC supports FSA County Office Staff and their delivery of USDA Farm Programs. Whereas NAFEC supports the American Farmer. Therefore, be it further resolved that NAFEC's support of American Agriculture is without exception.
3. Whereas NAFEC supports Farm Service Agency County Committees nationally. Whereas NAFEC supports the continued supervisory role of the locally elected County Committee. Therefore, be it further resolved that NAFEC supports the continuation of locally elected County Committees to Represent and be responsible for Farm Service Agency Farm Program delivery.
4. Whereas NAFEC appreciates the effort and hard work done to put on the 66th annual NASCOE RASCOE NAFEC National Convention and Board Meetings. Whereas NAFEC acknowledges the participation and input from the Montana State Farm Service Agency Whereas NAFEC recognizes the participation and attendance of the Farm Service National Office. Therefore, be it further resolved that NAFEC expresses its gratitude to the NASCOE Northwest Area and its NASCOE State Associations affiliates, and the MASCOE Association for all of their hard work and efforts for hosting the 2025 66th Annual NASCOE RASCOE NAFEC National Convention and Board Meeting in Whitefish Montana.

Motion to accept the resolutions as submitted was made by Jim Densberger and a second by Craig Turner. Vote and motion carried.

Kayla Mattson, NASCOE President (newly elected) Kayla met with the group to thank NAFEC for their continued support of the FSA County Office employees. She talked to the group about the NASCOE attorney as a benefit to NASCOE members. There has been a high number of requests this year as the requests directly relate to the DOGE termination letters and DRP 1 and 2. Kayla asked for continued support and she hopes to build a strong relationship between NASCOE and NAFEC.

Joel Foster, Outgoing NASCOE President- Joel asked to meet with the group to thank NAFEC for the support and help they provided on several issues during his presidency and hope the working relationship continues in the future.



Keith Hiser, DD Association President. Keith met with the group and thanked NAFEC for their work to continue to show the importance of the COC. NADD is struggling as there has been a change in leadership and a tough time with this administration time. It is hard to get answers to questions is states and DC. There are currently only 183 DD's since the DRP offers. The meetings that were to be held with employee organizations have not happened. Government vehicles used by DD's cannot be taken home now. We all know that any business as well as FSA/Government have inefficiencies that need to be addressed. Keith has been a CO employee (CED) and talked to the group that training needs to be for all employees, including DD's, STC, SED's and new DC staff. He would like to have national conventions that would bring in more DD's and SED's. Heard a possible rumor that Farm Loan go from GS to CO (?) but who knows. Keith told the group that his door is open and gave them his phone number. He hopes we can work together in these trying times.

NAFEC Plan for the remainder of 2025:

1. Create letters to send to Ag Partners to get support of FSA staffing and funding
2. Send membership and information packet to SED's in December
3. Do a RASCOE/ NAFEC hospitality in 2026
4. Tammy to purchase stamps and get reimbursed
5. Maybe 2 newsletters by end of year. Next one to be printed
6. Develop and review how to raise funds
7. Try to increase membership in all Areas
8. Attend State conventions/ Area Rallies and National Convention

Scholarship Auction -Presentation of NAFEC scholarship – Bob Braden talked to the group about the NAFEC/ Dillards scholarship and who is eligible to apply. In 2025 we had 3 applicants. This year's winner was Rachel Ehlers from Eldridge Iowa. There will be more information about Rachel in our next newsletter.

There was a motion made by Craig to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 pm on June 25, 2025. There was a second by Bob. Motion was carried and the meeting of the 2025 NAFEC National Convention was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Eibey, Iowa NAFEC Director
NAFEC Assistant Marketing Director