



2026

NAFEC Semi-Annual Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 7th & Thursday January 8th 2026
Lubbock, Texas

Wednesday January 7, 2026

2:30 Craig Turner, Executive Vice President, called the meeting to order since Jim Zumbrink, President, and Jim Densberger, Vice President, were unable to attend the meeting. Craig asked that we start with the Pledge of Allegiance. Kevin Dale was asked to give a blessing and prayer over the meeting and those in attendance. Craig appointed Tammy Eibey as the recording secretary for this meeting. Tammy started with a roll call for the meeting. Those in attendance were:

Craig Turner, Executive Vice President, Texas
Bob Braden, Secretary/Treasurer, Iowa
Dennis Kuhlengal, MWA- Illinois
Dan Pillsbury- NEA – Vermont
Dan Noteboom- NWA- Washington
Stuart Fitzgerald- SEA- Florida
Frankie Allen- SWA- Oklahoma
Theresa Whitney- SWA- New Mexico
Bill Luckett- SWA- Texas
Darvin Collins- RASCOE- Texas
David Senter- NAFEC Legislative Consultant
Kevin Dale- NAFEC Marketing Director, Dillard Financial Solutions
Tammy Eibey, NAFEC Assistant Marketing Director, Dillard's, Iowa NAFEC

2:35 **Overview of Meeting** – Craig explained to the group that this semiannual meeting began 5 years ago and meet prior to the American Agriculture Movement meeting. This meeting has in-depth discussions on NAFEC business and sets a plan of action for the year. The second day includes meeting with FSA staff, Ag Community Leaders, Ag Lenders, Ag Commodity Groups and Congressional member's local staffers. We have found that these meeting have been very helpful with building coalition partners and has found supporters of the NAFEC mission area within FSA. This is an open meeting and Craig encouraged open dialogue and there will be brainstorming sessions. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their history and experience with COC's and NAFEC.

2:45 **Act on Conference call Minutes** – Craig asked the group to review the minutes from the November 2025 quarterly call. Tammy had emailed out to everyone prior to this meeting. After review of the minutes, Bob made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted, there was a second by Dennis. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.

2:50 **Financial Report** – Bob gave a financial report to the group. He handed out bank statements and the online report from Tammy. He said he wanted to make sure there was transparency in the report and did state that NAFEC is a 501C 4. He asked the group to help think of ways to raise funds to support NAFEC as they might have another trip to DC and each meeting costs money. He talked about room reimbursement and lunch that NAFEC will cover here in Lubbock. Dan Noteboom made the motion to accept the financial report and there was a second by Dan Pillsbury. Motion carried and the report was approved.

3:00 **COAC** Chair Brian joined the meeting by a Teams meeting. Brian stated that since the end of the shutdown, it has been very stressful and challenging in the County Offices. 2025 started off very difficult for employees due to the DOGE and ended coming off an extremely long government shutdown. Even though some staff members were called back, they worked during that time unpaid and had limited access to program processes. The hope is 2026 will be better. Gov Exec had an article about USDA Reorganization and it noted that the comments received were overwhelmingly negative to the plan and stated that there were negative consequences to the 20 % reduction of staffing in the FSA CO Office as it is affecting producer interactions. Concerns that NASCOE has:

1. Staffing Levels – there is the largest gap in staffing/workload in the Agency history.
2. COC Elections- Revised timetable given. February 2nd deadline to vote. February 16th to count. March 2nd for new COC to take office. (Previous COC authorizations extended to March.

Brian explained that even temp hiring has been limited and that no social media can be used, only the local paper. NAFEC asked if they can help with trying to help change this process. Craig asked if NAFEC could get the list of Area and State COAC members. Brian will work on. Asked NAFEC to work on

1. Staffing
2. COC authority in program administration
3. COC training to be uniform and consistent in all states (COAC is doing a survey to capture what COC training is occurring and hope that helps gather data so we can use in training request to NO)

NAFEC told Brian that they want to make sure there is open communication and there to help NASCOE Brian said that in 22 PM Handbook, there is to be a grievance board for each state and it is also in the NASCOE labor/management agreement. Members include STO employee, DD, CED, PA and COC member. Some states do not even have one available. It would be good to have a joint letter stating the need for these board to be put in place based on policy and labor/management agreement. (ask Kayla). Brian thanked the group for including him and stated his committees next call is February 12th.

3:30 **Discuss activities/needs for joint action with NASCOE**- Things we have discussed and the following items were reviewed.

- a) Joint letter on COC orientation from NAFEC/NASCOE- This worked well in the past and Kevin and Tammy sent to the SED's/Deputy SED's (Yes to Continue)
- b) Joint hospitality room with RASCOE in Michigan- (Yes and a limit of \$250)
- c) Joint legislative work/issues:
 - 1. Grievance Board
 - 2. Orientation Packets
 - 3. Hiring issues and how to allow many ways to advertise
- d. USDA reorganization is supposed to be complete by the end of 2026. Response had been very negative from the Ag Community.

4:00 **RASCOE**- Darvin Collins, SWA RASCOE Rep from Texas, thanked the group for allowing him to attend the meeting. His said as a past CED he found that Ignorance and Inconvenience were big draw backs for COC/NAFEC. Educate what the role of the COC is and the integrity the COC provides to programs. Preach to the CED and CO Staff that it is not inconvenient to have meeting and do minutes. It is protect of the employees and proves program oversight by the locally elected, grass root COC. Integrity again!

4:15 **2025 Activities** – Tammy & Kevin stated that 2025 was busy with letters, press releases and Newsletters (3 were electronic and 1 was mailed out). Kevin also did meeting in Florida with Jason and Brian in Stuart's area. They also went to local offices. Tammy and Kevin suggested that NAFEC consider doing a press release on the Disruption of service that will occur in USDA Reorganization continues with Hubs and use of temporary employees. Kevin, Tammy and David will work on but will wait until new Congressional members are sworn in so hope to get out early February.

4:35 **Legislative Report** – David Senter, NAFEC Legislative Consultant, stated that the Inspector General had reported that USDA lost 20,000 employees in 2025. FSA offices are understaffed and hiring has not been approved other for some temporaries. This is concerning since FSA appropriations for FY 2026 was approved in the Big Beautiful Bill. NAFEC should push for the use of those funds to back fill positions in the CO. Thompson and Bozeman have stated that the 12.8 Billion for release in the Bridge Program is not enough to fund losses due to disasters and tariff damages. Secretary Rollins has publically stated there will be no more funds from USDA. It has been quiet from COC's lately but most likely due to shut down and change in COC election deadlines. Reorganization will disrupt service out of the CO and will hurt producers during this farm crisis. Farmers go to the CO office not middle management for assistance with programs. Bridge payments to be out end of February but CO have not received word on sign up even though it was announced late on New Year's Eve day. David suggested putting the payment rates on the NAFEC Facebook page. 2018 Farm Bill again extended 1 year. Reconciliation Bill changed rates so there may be payments in October of 2026. NAFEC should look at a letter asking for appointment of STC's.

Adjourned at 5:30 pm for the day.

Thursday January 8th, 2026

8:00 Reconvene Directors meeting

A. 2026 Plan of Action- To Do List:

1. Visit with NASCOE about a joint letter to the Admin regarding the grievance board issues
2. COC organizational meeting e-mail to go out in February to all SED's. Tammy and I to work on using last year's template.
3. Send letter regarding the need for temps to be advertised on social media in addition to local newspapers.
4. New Press Release to be issued in February – David to lead, Tammy and I to assist.
5. Make mention of the need for staffing in any future supplemental Bill or Farm Bill. – Maybe a letter to the House and Senate Ag Committees after the new Congress is established.
6. Send letter to Sec Rollins about the need for STC to be established as quickly as possible (if it doesn't happen soon)
7. Send a positive letter to the Administrator regarding our desire to work with the Administration. Include the staffing needs, COC training needs, SED organizational meeting message etc.
8. Winter E-mail Newsletter by the end of February if possible. Two COC spotlights if possible (Dan Noteboom & Stuart Fitzgerald)
9. Review and Update Website
10. Keep Facebook page updated with NAFEC activity
11. Get info out on the scholarship(Share with COAC-Brian, post to Facebook and add to website)

B. Travel to DC – Craig discussed the group trip that they took to DC in May. It was fast but made connections and positive interactions. (Face to face are best) The visits did show just how partisan the divide is in today's politics.

C. COC orientation email – Kevin gave the group an overview of how he and Tammy reached out to State SED's or Deputy SED's regarding NAFEC and COC orientation meetings. The feedback was positive. It was also sent through the NASCOE COAC committee.

D. Newsletters planned – Tammy told the group to have 3 maybe 4 newsletters

- a. Winter Newsletter will include the following
 - i. Article from Jim as President
 - ii. David's legislative update
 - iii. COC checklist we used a couple years ago

- iv. Two NAFEC spotlights (Dan N. and Stuart)
- v. Staffing Concern Article
- vi. Scholarship information
- vii. NASCOE Rally and Convention Information if available

E. **Quarterly conference calls** – Kevin talked about the schedule of having February, May, August and November. The group all were in agreement that these have been very productive for the group and it includes state representatives. Dates will be determined later but at 10:00 central.

9:00 **State Director Appointment Recommendations** – Kevin asked to have Tommy Salisbury, Oklahoma, replace Vidal as alternate OK state member. Motion to accept recommendation by Frankie, Second by Dennis. Motion Carried and approved Tommy as alternate for Oklahoma.

9:15 **Membership Update** – Tammy showed the group of the listing provided by Dillard's. Tammy noted there still is a lot of clean up needed. Tammy's goal is to work on this issue.

9:30 **Discussion on Area Meetings** – Kevin NEA/MWA/SEA is April 9-11 in Cincinnati
 (Tammy will attend and maybe Jim Z.)
 NWA and SWA is April 19-22 in Reno
 (Kevin will attend and maybe Theresa and Dan N.)

Discussion on National Meetings – Tammy stated that the National Convention is July 29-August 2 in Saulte Saint Marie, Michigan. No hotel information yet. Tammy will share once announced but put the dates in your calendar.

10:30 **Follow up on unfish discussion items** - Craig talked to the group about the Coalition Partner meeting that will start after lunch.

1. There will be brief introductions
2. David and Kevin will give a history of NAFEC and COC system
3. David to ask group to include something about NAFEC in their newsletters
4. Craig will ask group to include NAFEC in any DC trips
5. Bob will talk about sponsorships from their organizations
6. Stuart will talk about Disaster Program administration after the Hurricane in Florida and delays due to staffing shortages. Theresa will talk about payments behind in NM. Frankie will talk about workload in OK.
7. Bill will ask them to help push for filling of STC's
8. Talk about membership (Kevin)
9. Comments from NAFEC
10. Questions from attendees

11:00 **Terry Cater, NASCOE SWA Executive** from New Mexico joined the group to talk about NASCOE and what they are working on as an organization.

1. Boost Membership
2. Support NAFEC/COC and educate employees. (NASCOE Recognizes the important

roll of NAFEC and power they have to help FSA and CO employees. They are supporting associate memberships.

3. Educate others about the grassroots side of FSA (unique in government agencies)
4. NASCOE leadership is hopeful for the future and trying to boost morale.
5. Building relationships and working with management is key
6. Hunter Moorhead, Legislative Consultant, is working to keep NASCOE updated
7. NASCOE is having their Pre negotiation meeting in Nashville January 19th.
8. Very concerned about staffing and the hiring freeze.

SWA and NEA Rally is in Reno and has invited NAFEC to attend.

12:15 Break for Lunch

1:30 **Reconvene with COC's, CED's, DD's SED's and Meetings with Ag Partners, visiting Congressional members staffers/Farm Organizations/Ag Lenders, etc.**
Thursday Afternoon Session

Those Attending:

NAFEC Officers & Directors: Craig Turner, Bob Braden, Dan Noteboom, Dan Pillsbury, Theresa Whitney, Frankie Allen, Stuart Fitzgerald, Arthur Chaney, Bill Luckett, Dennis Kulengel, NAFEC/RASCOE/Dillards: Darvin Collins, David Senter, Kevin Dale, Brian Hayden, Jason List .FSA Attending: Eddie Traveno Texas Deputy SED, Keith Hiser, DD, Corey Brewer, DD, Kelly McMillian, DD, Shelly Fuston, DD, Kyle Longoria, CED, Terry Cater, CED & NASCOE, Clay Evans, CED, Kayla Wise, CED, John Terry, COC, William Dellacamra, COC. Producer Associations etc: Frank Dellacamara, producer, Angie Martin, Texas Corn Producers, Cody Bessett – Plain Cotton Coop, Terry Franks, Texas Farm Credit, Helana Ramirez and another aide from Congressman Errington's office), Dan Taylor Fiber Max, Carley Turner, Farm Credit.

- A. Craig began the meeting with introductions and thanks to all those attending and then gave the floor to David Senter
- B. David discussed the history of the COC's, the history of AAA/ASCS/FSA and the history of NAFEC
- C. David then discussed a recent motion taken by the executive committee to support the passage of permanent disaster legislation. David asked those present to comment on their thoughts and ideas about such proposition. Several comments were made by those present with most informing NAFEC this would be extremely difficult to get the support needed for approval due to the cost. Cody Besett indicated the cost would probably be scored by CBO in the 80 – 100 billion price range for a Farm Bill item. Farm Credit Terry Franks indicated most of the lending community would support permanent crop disaster legislation as it would provide stability to the lending sector of farming. While most agreed this is a good idea but it would be costly and it would need to be very specific plan to get any interest in Congress. David indicated NAFEC is not proposing the specifics of the program, rather, just the concept.

- D. Bob Braden then discussed NAFEC's ability to sell sponsorships for our website and newsletter. Bob indicated \$500 for a website sponsorship and an additional \$250 for a total of \$750 to include a page in our newsletter. There was little discussion after Bob's comments.
- E. FSA Staffing Issues were then discussed in depth. Stuart Fitgerald, Frankie Allen, Theresa Whitney all spoke for NAFEC. Kevin Dale added comments as well. Keith Hiser and Shelly Poston spoke on behalf of the DD's. This discussion was very emotional and direct. Many actual examples of county issues, personnel issues (depression, leaving the agency etc.) were all discussed. Cody Bessett indicated he felt that technology could greatly ease the need for staffing. He indicated his father didn't go to the office but he just wanted to do everything online. While his comments probably needed to be made, it allowed our group to see exactly what some of the younger generations and even farm public believe. However, the comments were not received well with the group. Angie Martin assured NAFEC that concern over staffing shortages is being said in every meeting the commodity groups have with Congressional members.
- F. Bill Luckett then discussed the need for State Committee's to be appointed due to appeal issues. The groups were asked to help encourage this from the Secretary's office.
- G. Dillard Financial Solutions Presentation – Jason and Brian gave the group a presentation explaining their role with Dillard Financial Solutions and their personal history with the insurance business, how they approach business relationships and products they have available. They answered questions from the group and provided them with contact and benefit information. They also have connection in other farm organizations and can help get contact information for NAFEC. Stressed approachability, communication and follow up on requests. There was a lot of discussion during this presentation.
- H. CED's and COC's were then asked to make comment, ask questions etc. Several CED's indicated they were frustrated with programs being announced before FSA had anything on them to share. Producers are calling the offices as soon as announcements go out further putting stress on already low staffed offices.

CED's also indicated a problem with getting producers to run for the COC. One such problem that could be resolved would be to allow COC members who live out of the county but only farm in the county to run in the county in which they farm. NAFEC will discuss and look into this further.

Keith Hiser on behalf of NADD indicated there are now less than 200 DD's nationwide. Keith indicated the following priorities from the association.

1. Home to work needed for gov vehicles like it used to be
2. CCC-770's need to include some form of compliance, not just review with nothing to follow
3. Consistency is needed for reduced service offices.
4. Reorganization is coming as early as March, DD's would like to be in that discussion
5. DD and COC training are needed desperately.

Craig Turner called for a motion to adjourn at 4:30 pm which was made by Dan Noteboom and seconded by Dennis Kulengel.

Next quarterly call will be in February at a date to be determined later.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tammy Eibey
Recording Secretary

Exhibits:

1. Financial Report

Account #	Credit	Debit	Description	Posted Date	
6039	361.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	12/23/2025	Ending Balance: \$28,846.76
6039	118.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	12/9/2025	
6039	97.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	11/25/2025	
6039	55.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	11/12/2025	
6039	350		Customer Deposit	11/6/2025	
6039	2030		Paid Check#403	10/15/2025	
6039	183.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	10/15/2025	
6039	320		Customer Deposit	10/14/2025	
6039	290.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	9/30/2025	
6039	162.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	9/16/2025	
6039	130		Customer Deposit	9/3/2025	
6039	299.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	9/3/2025	
6039	62.62		Debit Card Purchase BLOO	8/28/2025	
6039	1000		Paid Check#402	8/27/2025	
6039	189.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	8/19/2025	
6039	224.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	8/5/2025	
6039	20		Customer Deposit	7/25/2025	
6039	200.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	7/22/2025	
6039	300		Paid Check#398	7/15/2025	
6039	2094		Paid Check#401	7/15/2025	
6039	300		Paid Check#400	7/11/2025	
6039	130.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	7/8/2025	
6039	6055		Customer Deposit	7/8/2025	
6039	300		Paid Check#396	7/1/2025	
6039	2014		Paid Check#394	6/30/2025	
6039	300		Paid Check#397	6/30/2025	
6039	300		Paid Check#399	6/30/2025	
6039	91		Paid Check#395	6/27/2025	
6039	290		Customer Deposit	6/24/2025	
6039	300.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	6/24/2025	
6039	650		Paid Check#393	6/18/2025	
6039	3044		Paid Check#392	6/18/2025	
6039	250		Paid Check#391	6/11/2025	
6039	220.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	6/10/2025	
6039	100		Paid Check#390	6/5/2025	
6039	302.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	5/30/2025	
6039	178.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	5/13/2025	
6039	40		Customer Deposit	4/29/2025	
6039	313.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	4/29/2025	
6039	3169		Debit Card Purchase VRBO	4/24/2025	
6039	190.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	4/15/2025	
6039	2000		Paid Check#389	4/14/2025	
6039	500		Customer Deposit	4/14/2025	
6039	230.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	4/3/2025	
6039	500		Customer Deposit	3/27/2025	
6039	209.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	3/18/2025	
6039	198.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	3/4/2025	
6039	100		Customer Deposit	3/3/2025	
6039	999.3		Paid Check#388	2/19/2025	
6039	198.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	2/19/2025	
6039	750		Customer Deposit	2/18/2025	
6039	271.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	2/4/2025	
6039	500		Customer Deposit	1/31/2025	
6039	95		Customer Deposit	1/30/2025	
6039	203.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	1/22/2025	
6039	250		Customer Deposit	1/22/2025	
6039	38.95		Debit Card Purchase MCM I	1/8/2025	
6039	317.3		Debit Card Purchase SALTG	1/7/2025	
6039	114.77		ACH deposit AGRI TREAS 31	1/7/2025	Beginning Balance: \$31,357.97

2. Scholarship Information for 2026



NAFEC and Dillard Financial Solutions To Award \$1,000.00 Scholarship

NAFEC and Dillard Financial Solutions are pleased to announce that they are teaming up in 2026 to cosponsor a \$1,000 scholarship award. Many times we hear of our youth being referred to as "our future" or "leaders of tomorrow" when in reality, thousands of them in communities and towns all across our nation have been leaders, in their own right, for quite some time. We think they should be recognized.

If you are a current or past COC member and paying full dues as a regular member of NAFEC and have a child, grandchild or great grandchild that has graduated high school and is enrolled, or in the process of enrolling into an accredited college, university or trade school this fall, then they are an eligible applicant and you are encouraged to tell them about this opportunity.

The application will consist of a single cover page and a one page essay. Both pages are to be designed, created and edited entirely by the applicant. The cover page must have the following details:

- Full name, mailing address, email address, home phone and birth date of the applicant
- NAFEC member name, State & County where they serve(d) as a COC member and relationship to member
- Name of college, university, or trade school attending or enrolling to attend
- The field of study or degree plan the applicant plans to pursue
- A listing of the applicant's involvement in service commitments to their community, civic, church and youth development organizations such as 4-H, FFA, Scouts, etc.
- **Please note that on the cover page** there is a need for a signature and date to certify with the statement: "I have personally prepared this cover page and the essay and I certify it is accurate."

Because this is a competitive scholarship award, the one page essay will help the judges understand how the applicant views their experiences, personal growth, outcomes and achievements associated with the various community, civic, church and youth organization in which they are involved.

The NAFEC and Dillard Financial Solutions scholarship **deadline is April 15, 2026**. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Mail applications (Cover page and one page essay) to:

Tammy Eibey
2810 Hwy 13
Ryan, Iowa 52330

All eligible applications will then be forwarded to three judges that will consist of a NAFEC Officer, a NASCOE/COOAC committee member and a Dillard Financial Solutions Representative. Each judge will rank the applications with one (1) being the highest ranked and two (2) the second highest ranked, and so forth through all the applications. The application with the highest cumulative scoring by the three judges will be awarded the \$1,000 scholarship. If there is a tie in scoring, the NAFEC President or VP will break the tie.

Because the deadline is April 15, 2026, we encourage you to pass this information on to any eligible applicant so they can start putting their information and thoughts down. NAFEC and Dillard Financial Solutions look forward to announcing the winner on July 30, 2026 during the NAFEC meeting and NASCOE National Convention in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan.

The National Association of Farmer Elected Committees is a non-profit organization composed of and led by farmers, nominated and elected by farmers, and serving all farmers in each of the county USDA Farm Service Agency Offices. To learn more about NAFEC or to join, please go to <https://www.nafecfsa.com>

