Vice Chairman, Terral Balzer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He asked Dr. Ken Kephart to introduce his staff, as follows: Tammy Balzer, Administrative Associate, and Dr. Geraldine (Gigi) Opena, Research Associate. (Dr. James Mickelson, Dr. Qasim Khan, Nicole Flowers, and Tom Fischer were on Thanksgiving vacation).

Dr. Kephart introduced Dr. Jeff Jacobsen, Interim Dean and Director, Montana Agricultural Experiment Stations, MSU College of Agriculture, and Dr. Mal Westcott, Head Research Centers.

Members of the advisory committee introduced themselves: Rodney Jabs, Tony Zinne, Greg Lackman, Mike Bernhardt, Kim Nile, and Terral Balzer.

The following members who notified us of their inability to be at the meeting were: David Kelsey, Mike Greytak, Mark Helland, Walt Hudyma, and Bill Griffin. There was no response from Carter Miklovich, Dennis Newton, Ervin Schlemmer, and Glen Leonhardt.

County Extension agents in attendance were: Kent Williams, Paul Dixon and Lee Schmelzer.

Old Business

Dr. Jeff Jacobsen made a presentation regarding the progress of the authorization from the 2001 Legislature who authorized a Million Dollar Match. He indicated that donations were coming in and that there was a Community meeting held at Homesteader Hall on the previous night (Monday, Nov. 24) to solicit public comment on the approved office-building project. He mentioned that Yellowstone County Commissioner, Bill Kennedy presented a $10,000.00 check at the meeting with intention to give another $15,000.00 over the next three years. Also present at that meeting was Head of Facility Services, Robert Lashaway who was available to answer any questions. Dr. Jacobsen also noted that architects have been given the go-ahead to begin a $600,000.00 office-building project. Dr. Jacobsen also thanked Monica Lindeen, who was a key legislator who helped with the 2001 legislation. A question was asked by an advisory member if any amount is welcome as a contribution, and Dr. Jacobsen responded by saying that any amount over $100.00 would be a welcome contribution.

Dr. Jacobsen also commented on the College of Agriculture Animal Science Building project, which is a four-year project that will strengthen and enhance the livestock industry in Montana.

Dr. Jacobsen noted another commitment he is involved in is raising scholarship dollars for students in the College of Agriculture. He mentioned that states cannot fund higher education and aggressive fund-raising for student scholarships is a must.

Dr. Mal Westcott then gave “A Million Dollars is a Terrible Thing to Waste” presentation and an overview of the research center infrastructure and present needs.

Dr. Jacobsen and Dr. Westcott committed to filling Dr. James Mickelson’s position when he resigns in January 2004. Dr. Westcott noted to the advisory members that they now have the task of creating the description of exactly what type of position they would want. Discussion followed regarding this. Greg Lackman made a motion that we continue with the present position of Weed Scientist. Kim Nile seconded. Motion Carried. Dr. Kephart commented that a vacancy announcement could go out as early as February 1st for this position.

Paul Dixon, Yellowstone County Extension Agent discussed county agent re-staffing plans for South Central Montana. He reported that LeRoy Luft is the Interim Director of Extension Services and that
agents Darrell Krum and Kirk Barnett took early retirement and searches are underway to fill these positions. He also reported that in early 2004 plans are underway to fill the positions of the Carbon County agent and Wheatland and Meager Counties will also have new agents.

A break was taken for lunch and then followed with a tour of the new greenhouse facility and the cereal lab and weeds lab.

Greg Lackman moved to accept the minutes from the November 21, 2003 meeting as approved and distributed. Seconded by Mike Bernhardt. Motion carried.

Terral Balzer reported on the State Advisory Committee Meetings (MAES) that were held in June and October 2003. Terral read the minutes from the June meeting but no minutes were available from the Dean’s office as of yet on the October meeting.

Dr. Kephart began his superintendent’s report with the following items discussed: FY2004 MAES allocation, faculty and staff changes (hiring of Dr. Opena 12/02, and pending resignation of Dr. Mickelson), and update of building and physical plant issues. He reported that Dr. Mickelson was still renting the farmhouse and that the Land Leases have been extended to Jim Hein. He also led a discussion on the 2003 Foundation Seed Production and that we have sold out our production this year.

Dr. Kephart also discussed research issues, and asked if the members would like to carry on with the February 2004 Research Review program. It was decided that this would be something what would be beneficial to continue with. Field Day has also been scheduled for July 2, 204.

Dr. Kephart also discussed SARC’s website development and that he is currently working on a “Fertilizer Blend Calculator” to be utilized on the website.

New Business

No constitutional and/or bylaw changes were needed.

A review of committee membership and participation was held. It was noted that Walter Hudyma has asked to resign from the Advisory committee because he will be moving to Iowa. Term-limits were discussed, but no action was taken at this time. Dr. Kephart noted that he would be in contact with members who were not present to find out their intentions.

Election of Officers was held. Greg Lackman moved to re-instate all present officers, David Kelsey, Chairman, Terral Balzer, Vice Chairman, and Rodney Jabs, Secretary. Motion seconded by Tony Zinne. Motion Carried.

Terral Balzer moved, Tony Zinne seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:05 p.m.