

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, March 19, 2009
James P. Coughlin Center – Volunteer Room

Members Present: Tom Widener, Susan Locke, Paul Eisen, Nancy Barker and John Reinert.
UW-Extension Staff: Chris Kniep, Catherine Neiswender, Nick Schneider, Darlene Kramer, Susan Bongert, and René Mehlberg. **Others Present:** Tom Egan, Winnebago County Fair Association.

Meeting called to order at 9:02a.m. by Chair Tom Widener.

Comments from the Public related to items on the Agenda: None

Motion to approve January 15, 2009 meeting minutes by Reinert/Eisen. Motion carried 5-0.

Department Updates - Chris Kniep

2008 Budget Update – transfer: Transfer was made from travel to wages and fringe benefits to cover short fall with fringe benefits.

UWEX Updates: Open clerical position hiring continues to be on hold due to budget. Tentative summer plans are to hire a LTE or have the position filled. DNR Service Center will be closing in 2010, if not sooner. Farm Progress Days Scholarship Fund, lost value last year, but Bryan Sleik was awarded a \$500 scholarship from the fund. Chancellor Wilson's County Board visit on March 3 was well received. Kniep has heard positive comments from UWEX administration regarding his visit. 2009 Budget expenditures to-date was shared.

WACEC Meetings: Shared letter on how cancelled District 6 meeting registration fees will be refunded. State WACEC meeting is June 15-16, with conference concluding at 2:00p.m.

Scholarship Program: Kniep shared scholarship information has been distributed.

2008 Annual Report – draft: Neiswender talked through the contents of the document, looking for “big picture suggestions” from committee members. Initial comments were received, with a request to get other ideas to Catherine or Chris in a week. The report will not be printed in the quality or quantity as last year.

Winnebago County Fair Association (WCFA) – Tom Egan

2008 Report: Distributed copies of the 2008 Fiscal Year End report and highlighted key aspects.

\$20,000 for 2010 “Fair” Celebration: Egan shared that the money is for the 100th anniversary of the FAIR ASSOCIATION. The money is to be used for a new/special project and requires County Board approval prior to spending. The WCFA still needs to make specific plans for the use of the money and have the plans reviewed by the Extension Committee prior to the use of the dollars.

Other Updates:

- New fair software will be purchased this year. The software allows multiple users to input data and for exhibitors to input their entries online. This will help with transition of duties from UWEX to WCFA. WCFA will be inputting Open Class entries this year with UWEX doing Junior Fair. In 2010, WCFA has sole responsibility of inputting all entries.
- WCFA has been notified that the second payment of state aid for 2008 has been cut.
- Shared WCFA director's list with the committee.
- Two complimentary inside vendor booths are provided to Winnebago County in thanks for the financial support given the Fair Association. Egan's observation is that the booths are often put together at the last minute, and he would like to see a more prepared presence there.

UW-Fox Valley Update: Widener had a conversation with the UW-Waukesha County administration.

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Currently counties are fiscally responsible for 2-year institution building facilities. The question raised was if UW Colleges start granting 4-year degrees, then does it become a 4-year institution and should the state be responsible for facilities cost as with the other 4-year institutions?

Sneak Preview of the new Communication Arts Center on Thursday, March 26.

Program Reports: Community Resource Development - Catherine Neiswender: Update on sustainability work, which is a main program focus, with many municipalities involved. Neiswender's work focuses on three levels: 1) Introductory level – what sustainability is all about; 2) Continue to provide support to communities to their boards as they work on their plans; 3) Advanced – more training to be done in the state, hoping to have the training in the Fox Valley area.

Neiswender has also been active with a four part training series of systems thinking with conflict, problem solving, etc. through webinars. Main audience is UWEX colleagues.

Neiswender and Kniep will be working with the Winnebago County and City of Oshkosh health departments on their Community Health Improvement Process and Plan development.

Neiswender supports the work of the UWEX Small Business Center located at UW-Oshkosh. They are using the JPCC for meetings and may use our facility for small business counseling.

Agriculture - Nick Schneider: Community Gardens are moving due to Department of Corrections building on the garden spot. A new location was secured through DNR for the next 5 years of 5 acres of land. Plots will be the same size and same price as last year; there will be changes with water access and availability.

Master Gardeners is providing \$500 for seeds to personal gardeners to grow food for Shared Harvest, a program where grown food is donated to the community pantry. Master Gardeners established a \$1,000 scholarship to a Winnebago County resident going into Horticulture and attending FVTC.

Nutrient Management program with Land and Water Conservation has grown from 2 participants in year 1 to 10 farms completing plans this year.

June 5 will be a tillage demonstration and field days.

Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) - Darlene Kramer & Susan Bongert: Bongert shared, "Get Ready, Get Set, Plan!" which was presented at "Heart of the Farm" agriculture workshop and was the walk-by topic for the month. Topic focused on how to save money and how to stretch food dollars.

Kramer distributed the 2008 Fiscal Year Food Stamp Nutrition Winnebago County Year-End Narrative Report and highlighted two key areas: 1) Food Resource Management; and 2) Hand washing program done in and out of school programs.

Comments by Committee Members: None

Next meeting is Thursday, April 16 at 9:00a.m.

Meeting adjourned by Barker/Locke at 11:18a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:
René L. Mehlberg, Recording Secretary