

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, September 21, 2023
James P. Coughlin Center - Meeting Room D
& Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Steve Binder, Doug Zellmer, Tom Borchart, Kay Horan, and Karen D. Powers.

Members Absent: None.

Extension Winnebago County Staff: Chris Viau, Todd Wenzel, Stephanie Bowers, and Amy Hendrickson.

Others Present: Via Zoom: Abby Holappa, Bryce Trace, Chloe Bunker, Ella Thibert, Emelia, Emma, Evan D, Hunter Vogel, and Kira Verhalen.

Meeting Called to Order at 9:05 a.m. by Steve Binder.

Comments from the Public Related to Items on the Agenda/Requests to Add Items to the Next Agenda: None.

Approval of Minutes: Horan moved to approve the 8/17/2023 minutes, second by Borchart. Motion carried 5-0.

Safety Share – Tom Borchart: Borchart advised everyone to be aware and cautious of bees, wasps, and hornets.

Committee Chair Report: Binder reported on a conference he attended that discussed low-income housing and mental health awareness. He also highlighted the need to be nice to people and respectful of personal boundaries.

UW Division of Extension Program or Educator Reports and Updates:

- **Agriculture: Regional Dairy** – Bowers introduced herself to the committee. Bowers answered questions regarding the hay shortage, current drought conditions, dairy production, and manure/methane management. Discussion ensued.
- **Human Development & Relationships** – Wenzel continues serving as state co-chair for the Rent Smart program. Rates of Winnebago County resident participants for the statewide online courses remain high. Wenzel has been teaching Rent Smart at Oshkosh Correctional Institution, Winnebago County Jail, NOVA Counseling, Pillars, and COTS. Other organizations are exploring inviting Rent Smart to be taught as well. The state Rent Smart program conducts 6 month and 1 year follow-up surveys with participants. Eviction rates in WI remain high. Wenzel has been involved with delivering financial literacy education with the Reentry Ready program. Wenzel is team-presenting at the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education Symposium in New Orleans later this year. Planning AHEAD is an online series scheduled for October that helps participants begin planning for end of life issues (finances, medical, etc.). Encouraging Financial Conversations trains other professionals to discuss finances with their clients. Youth Forward Wisconsin's promotion of Childhood Savings Accounts continues to gain momentum in the area. Strong Couples is an online series providing communication education for couples. The statewide Fatherhood Group has been offering Focus on Fathers and Positive Parenting Family Transitions programs. Discussion ensued regarding rental costs, income disparities, and eviction trends.
- **Youth & Science** – Thompson was absent. Viau distributed a handout she developed for committee members to review. Viau highlighted that the Winnebago County 4-H program is currently the fastest growing in the state, due to combined efforts by Thompson in the schools and Berger with the clubs.

Extension Administration and Department Reports – Chris Viau:

- **Facility Updates:** Construction for the Outdoor Classroom has begun. The chicken run/coop can be seen on the northeast side of the JPCC building. Further building plans are expected through Spring of 2024.
- **Staff and Department Updates:** Kevin Jarek hosted a Corn Silage Dry Down event; Bowers attended and used this opportunity to network. Viau explained how educators are doing reciprocal programming to meet the needs of communities in Area 10 (Winnebago, Outagamie, and Waupaca). Viau, Hendrickson, and the Parks department are collaborating to identify and implement a new reservation system for managing meeting room reservations and parks events and reservations.
- **Area/Region/State Updates:** Viau summarized an update on holds for UW staff wage increases due to DEI concerns within the state legislature.

Wisconsin Counties Association-UW Madison Division of Extension and Education Steering Committee

Update: Horan has attended multiple meetings recently. Discussion has focused on how to maintain an Extension presence in counties where budgets are constricted. Horan has observed that not every county has the type of communicative relationship and unity that our county's committee has with Extension Winnebago County.

Announcing Upcoming Extension Events at County Board Meeting Discussion: Binder suggested announcing the 4-H Pizza Sale. Orders are due by October 19th.

Comments by Committee Members: Binder opened discussion on the possibility of combining multiple committees. Viau shared his personal experiences from other counties with combined committees. Binder and Viau expressed appreciation for the relationship between Extension Winnebago County and the Extension Committee.

Next Meeting: Next regular committee meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 19, 2023.

Adjourned: Powers moved to adjourn at 10:47 a.m.; seconded by Horan. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Hendrickson