

**University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee**  
**Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018**  
**James P. Coughlin Center – Volunteer Room**

**Members Present:** Tom Snider, Steve Binder, Julie Gordon, Al Long, and George Scherck.

**UW-Extension Staff:** Catherine Neiswender, Darrell McCauley, Kim Miller, and Amy Hendrickson.

**Others Present:** None.

**Meeting called to order** at 9:00 a.m. by Tom Snider.

**Comments from the Public related to items on the agenda:** None.

**Approval of Minutes:** Scherck moved to approve the 2/15/2018 minutes; seconded by Gordon. Motion carried **5-0**.

**Program Reports:**

**Horticulture:** Miller distributed the *2018 Landscape Professionals Workshop* registration pamphlet. This program is a collaboration between Brown, Door, and Winnebago county professionals. The workshops are March 22 & 23. Extensive planning went in to coordinating workshops that meet various interests along with OSHA safety requirements. The date was chosen to increase likelihood of attendance due to being after snow removal season and prior to landscaping work. Miller is partnering with the Neenah Sustainability Committee for a tree giveaway at the *Suburban Homesteading - Tree Selection, Planting and Maintenance* workshop on March 19. Participants must be at the event that teaches how to properly care for a tree to qualify to enter the raffle for a free tree in April/May. 40+ trees will be given away. Additionally, Miller is partnering with FoodWise educators and Master Gardeners to provide education to individuals with mental health challenges by creating container gardens. UWEX is also preparing for the opening of the *Community Gardens* on Sherman Rd. The land agreement for this location expires after this year. Miller has been exploring alternative sites to consider for future planning. The group discussed other options to consider.

**Agriculture:** McCauley reviewed the *Soil Health Workshop* in Winneconne held in December. Attendees were very interested in the education regarding earthworm life cycles and soil health. McCauley and Miller conducted a *Small Farmers Network* meeting in December to gather information and foster discussion with farmers regarding educational interests. The January *Pesticide Applicator Training* had 29 participants. A new partnership with Steve Volz, Environmental Enforcement Specialist with Wis. Department of Agriculture, offered farm visits to participants focused on providing feedback regarding compliance. The *2018 Farm Safety & Tractor Certification Course* is nearly finished. Wisconsin law allows children to start driving farm equipment owned by their immediate family and start working on their family farm beginning at age 12 with certification. Federal law allows children to start driving farm equipment owned by others and working on non-family farms beginning at age 14 with certification. This training incorporates safety education related to operating tractors and machinery, chemicals, electrical, fire, trains, and how to respond to injuries. *Soil Health Field Day* will be held August 21, 2018 (location is pending).

**Committee Chair Report:**

**Nancy Barker Garden Sign:** Snider presented the completed sign honoring Nancy Barker. The sign will be installed in the Rain Garden outside the J.P. Coughlin Center. Tom Davies, Land & Water Conservation Director, is working to arrange a trip to visit Nancy Barker and show her the sign before it is installed.

**UW-Extension – Administration:**

**Staff Updates:** Neiswender shared that we currently have Elise Howland, an Intern from UW-Oshkosh, helping with Family Living programming. Neiswender and Mandi Dornfeld are in the process of transitioning Dornfeld's county position to a state position. This would allow improved access to resources for programming needs and be more functional within the new organization. Neiswender is completing *Performance Reviews* for state staff in Area 10. State staff are completing their *Plans for Work* required by the state office. These pieces are important for determining who will be nominated for a merit pay increase, which is limited to 20% of state staff.

**Department Activities:** Copies of the *2017 Annual Report* were sent to Sue Ertmer and should be available at the next County Board meeting. Neiswender reviewed a new resource available to UWEX that provides translation services to increase language access to those with limited English proficiency. This new resource allows UWEX staff to call a

translation service and receive in-the-moment assistance.

**State Activities:** Within UW-Extension, 15 open positions have now been filled, with 28 remaining vacancies. It has become clear that counties desire more positions than the state can financially support. Neiswender opened discussion for priorities regarding the open positions in Winnebago County: Community Resource Development Educator (formerly Neiswender's position, temporarily 50% filled by Allyson Watson) and Family Living Educator (formerly Chris Kniep's position). Binder strongly encouraged advocating to fill both positions. Snider encouraged documenting the work previously done by these two positions to show the current gaps in educational coverage. Neiswender explained that educators are encouraged to prioritize programming instead of taking on the additional work of the missing educators.

**Comments by Committee Members:** Members thanked Long for his service with the committee and invited him to attend meetings in the future to represent the public. Long expressed his appreciation to the committee and everything he has learned during his service.

**Next Meeting:** Next regular committee meeting will be held Thursday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

**Adjourned:** Gordon moved to adjourn; seconded by Long. Motion carried **5-0**, 10:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Hendrickson