

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, March 17, 2022
James P. Coughlin Center - Room A/B
& Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Tom Snider, Steve Binder, Doug Zellmer, and Karen D. Powers.

Members Absent: Tom Borchart.

Extension Winnebago County Staff: Chris Viau, Kris Soper, Dana Berger, Sarah Thompson, Todd Wenzel, Mandi Dornfeld, 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/Requests to Add Items to the Next Agenda: None.

Approval of Minutes: Powers moved to approve the 2/10/2021 minutes, second by Zellmer. Motion carried 4-0.

Safety Share – Tom Borchart: In Borchart's absence, Snider advised attendees that a new wave of COVID-19 seems to be coming. Stay safe and don't throw away your masks.

Committee Chair Report: Snider shared the Diversity Affairs Commission ByLaws and Strategic Plan were approved at the Winnebago County Board meeting.

Diversity Affairs Commission:

- **Bylaws & Strategic Plan Approval Status Update** – There were some comments made during the last County Board meeting regarding the Diversity Affairs Commission that were concerning to the members of the commission. Commission members have reported comments and aggressions towards the commission. The commission will address safety concerns going forward. Binder later shared he anticipates the need for a Coordinator to provide support for the group and outreach in the community.

UW Division of Extension Program or Educator Reports and Updates:

- **Finance** - Wenzel reviewed the packet of materials distributed to the committee regarding the financial education he's doing in the community. Committee members and staff discussed eviction and rental trends in Winnebago County. Rent Smart Virtual courses are still being offered and are well-attended by Winnebago County participants. Wenzel is offering Rent Smart for Oshkosh Correctional Institution inmates scheduled for release within 6 months. He is also offering Rent Smart to some high schools in the area. Wenzel has accepted nomination to be state co-chair for Rent Smart. Wenzel has been offering Financial Coaching to residents at COTS. The Encouraging Financial Conversations program trains front-line agency staff working with individuals facing financial concerns. The Youth Forward Wisconsin Children's Savings Accounts program is also underway. Wenzel collaborated with colleagues to create mindfulness resources for use with financial programming. Collaboration with colleagues has also developed financial resources for justice-involved audiences. Focus on Fathers uses the Raising Caring Kids curriculum to present father-specific programming. Wenzel recently participated in an interview with WLUK regarding managing personal finances with current inflation. Snider requested Wenzel send him some links for financial education/resources to share with veterans. Soper inquired regarding collaboration between Focus on Fathers and FoodWise.
- **FoodWise** – Soper introduced a mindful eating exercise and conducted a breathing exercise for the committee. Soper is one of the first professionals and the only one in our community offering the Nourishing Families Around the Table program. It is a trauma-informed approach to nutrition education. The program consists of two lessons at a time taught once per month: 2 books with 6 lessons each for a total of 12 lessons with recipes included in the books. Soper distributed a Conversation Questions: Nourishment in Our Communities handout. Soper is also conducting programming for Big Brothers, Big Sisters doing cooking and nutrition lessons. Soper has resumed conducting in-person programming.

Extension Administration and Department Reports – Chris Viau:

- **Facility Updates:** Meeting Room usage has continued increasing. Custodial staff is still short-handed and doing limited cleaning in the meeting rooms. Meeting room users are still being asked to clean and sanitize before and after their meetings.
- **Staff and Department Updates:** Staff are no longer required to wear masks. Staff are encouraged to use masks if/when they would like and when interacting with customers who are masked. Extension did get approval for a small budget carryover of funds from 2021 to 2022 to accommodate programming expenses that occur over a school year schedule. Viau shared that funding has been secured for Wenzel to provide financial education full-time in Winnebago County for the rest of 2022 and is optimistic that funding can be obtained for 2023.. The part-time Horticulture Educator position is expected to be posted before summer. The delay in posting has been strategic to allow the changes in the Master Gardener program to become more finalized before having a new educator step into the horticulture role. The open Agriculture Educator position(s) continue being on hold. Viau acknowledged upcoming changes regarding timelines for agenda and action item processes between committees and county board.
- **Area/Region/State Updates:** None shared.

Comments by Committee Members: Snider shared personal remarks regarding well wishes for the committee and new leadership after elections. Committee members and staff congratulated and thanked Snider for his service.

Next Meeting: Next regular committee meeting will be held Thursday, May 19, 2022.

Adjourned: Powers moved to adjourn at 10:56 a.m.; seconded by Zellmer. Motion carried 4–0.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Hendrickson