

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, April 15, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting

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

Members Absent: None.

Extension Winnebago County Staff: Chris Viau, Todd Wenzel, Amy Hendrickson, and Mandi Dornfeld.

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: Binder moved to approve the 2/18/2021 minutes; seconded by Zellmer. Motion carried 4 – 0 (Powers joined after approval of the minutes).

Safety Share: Borchart shared that bicycle traffic is picking up and reminded everyone to watch out for bicycle traffic and children as schools let out. Viau encouraged everyone to utilize their spheres of influence to encourage younger populations to receive their COVID vaccinations.

Committee Chair Report: Snider notified the group that the Veterans Service Commission will soon be contacting the Extension office regarding scheduling their meetings at the James P. Coughlin Center (JPCC).

UW Division of Extension Program or Educator Reports and Updates:

Financial Education – The CDC has extended the Federal Eviction Moratorium through 6/30/2021 but it is not automatic; evictions can still occur for various reasons. Federal funding is available for rental assistance and landlord funding for those affected by COVID-19. Wenzel collaborates with the Winnebago County Eviction Prevention Taskforce to advocate for Rent Smart, Landlord Education, and Financial Education programs. Rent Smart continues to be available online monthly through May. There will be a nationwide Rent Smart Train the Trainer course in June. Wenzel completed the Financial Coaching training program in January and will start offering the 4-session course. Other programs Wenzel continues to be involved in include: Encouraging Financial Conversations, Rebuilding Credit, Children's Savings Account, and Money Matters. Wenzel may be scheduling in-person classes later in the year depending on the public health situation. He is also coordinating with the Oshkosh Correctional Institution to offer Extension programming for inmates scheduled to be released. Wenzel directed the committee to review the 2020 Financial Education Impact Report for more detailed program results.

Borchart expressed his interest in Wenzel presenting at an upcoming special session for the County Board.

Extension Administration and Department Reports:

Facility Updates – Viau gave an update on the new Community Garden site: water installation is underway, the Highway Department will be finishing up site work in the upcoming weeks, and the new sign has been ordered. The gardens are expected to open early May, weather-dependent. The JPCC reopened for public access on 3/22/2021 with short notice. Viau has been collaborating with staff to develop a staffing plan to provide customer service within safety guidelines. Meeting Rooms at the JPCC remain open only to internal county entities under all public health recommendations. Room capacity is limited due to the 25% capacity and spacing requirements.

Staff and Department Updates – All county and state staff have been equipped with the technology and permissions for remote work. State staff are transitioning their primary work location to resume being in-office as of 7/1/2021. Customers and community partners will continue to be directed to reach educators via phone or email due to educators often being out of the office doing educational outreach, as per usual. New guidance continues to come out regarding shared office space and equipment.

Area/Region/State Updates – Summer program guidance for state staff came out this week. Safety protocols continue with expanding audience size. The University of Wisconsin has the legal authority to require facial coverings for any events within their purview. Extension has always been successful with in-person programming;

the past year has proven that Extension is also successful with virtual programming. A hybrid approach utilizing both in-person and virtual programming is expected going forward. The 2022-2024 state budget process is underway. Committee members discussed the state budget. Zellmer expressed his desire for some funding to go towards the fair. Binder expressed willingness to request additional funds to expand the Community Garden if more space is needed. Borchart and Viau discussed program evaluation and demographic collection procedures. Borchart requested evaluation results be shared/available for the committee's review.

Comments by Committee Members: Discussion circled back to the special sessions of the County Board. These special sessions are televised, so this is a great opportunity to share what Extension is doing in the community. After the next special session on 5/5/2021, there isn't another scheduled session until 9/1/2021. Snider offered to look into whether additional sessions can be requested if desired.

Next Meeting: Next regular committee meeting will be held Thursday, May 20, 2021.

Adjourned: Borchart moved to adjourn at 9:52 a.m.; seconded by Powers. Motion carried 5 - 0

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Hendrickson