

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, June 21th, 2018
James P. Coughlin Center – Volunteer Room

Members Present: Tom Snider, Steve Binder, Tom Borchart, and Michael Brunn.

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

Others Present: 4-H representative: Joe Kuehnl; Winnefox Library representatives: Jeff Gilderson-Duwe (*Oshkosh Public Library* and *Winnefox*), Holly Selwitschka (*Winneconne Public Library*), Vicky Lenz (*Elisha D. Smith Public Library*), Julie Stobbe (*Carter Memorial Library*), Gretchen Raab (*Neenah Public Library*), Mark Arend (*Winnefox*).

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

Comments from the Public related to items on the agenda: Kuehnl expressed his concerns to the committee regarding the current lack of a permanent 4-H Youth Development Educator position in Winnebago County. He expressed his appreciation for the extension of Jody Bezio's interim position but strongly encouraged the committee to support her position becoming permanent. Snider stated that the committee is fully supportive of Bezio's position becoming permanent. Neiswender supported the need for a full-time 4-H position in Winnebago County.

Approval of Minutes: Binder moved to approve the 5/17/2018 minutes; seconded by Borchart. Motion carried **4-0**.

Program Reports:

Winnefox Library: Winnefox Library System representatives provided brief introductions. Gilderson-Duwe distributed and reviewed 2018 Highlights of Winnebago County Libraries. He highlighted the increasing use of ebooks and audiobooks within the library system. Hendrickson distributed the 2019 Winnefox Library System Budget Request. Gilderson-Duwe and Arend explained how the budget figures were calculated. Gilderson-Duwe and Arend explained the breakdown of the budget pieces into operational costs, facility costs, and special project request costs. Gilderson-Duwe expressed appreciation to the committee and the county for their support over the years and asked for the committee's endorsement when presenting this budget request to the County Board. In response to committee questions, Gilderson-Duwe explained the 5.06% increase in the budget request is the outcome of the formula used to estimate inflation and usage costs. Snider called for a motion to approve the endorsement of the 2019 Winnefox Library System Budget Request. Brunn moved to approve endorsement; Borchart seconded. Snider conducted a roll call: 4 ayes; 0 nays. The committee suggested the libraries all submit their meeting minutes to Cassie Gregor at the Winnebago County Clerk's office for public posting.

Gilderson-Duwe summarized some of the changes they've been experiencing regarding library usage at the Oshkosh Public Library. They've been seeing an increase in usage of ebooks and audiobooks but not to the extent that these resources are replacing physical books. Their focus has been on drawing the community to the library as a place to interact with one another and expand reading horizons. One fun event this library hosted was the *Dark Stacks* event, which included readings of Edgar Allen Poe's works, performances, and catacombs at the library; the next event will focus on The Brothers Grimm.

Lenz shared that the Elisha D. Smith Public Library (Menasha) is seeing a slow increase in their physical circulation and a slightly faster increase in their electronic circulation of library materials. The Menasha library hosts numerous regularly-scheduled programs that draw consistent attendance. The library also opened their doors to the public as a "cooling spot" during the recent heat wave.

Raab distributed a folder of materials from the Neenah Public Library. The library has partnered with the local school district to provide free lunches to youth and \$4 lunches to adults. The popularity of this program highlights and meets a real need within the community. Neenah library is working with an architect to determine how to best use their current space and furniture to limit costs and meet public needs. The library hosted a fishing event for participants of the Memory Café program, where a school fishing team provided all the supplies and made sure each participant caught a fish. Raab expressed her appreciation to the Master Gardener program for helping with their landscaping.

Stobbe also expressed her appreciation to the Master Gardener program for their help in beautifying the Carter Memorial Public Library (Omro) grounds. The Omro library has seen a decrease in circulation but an increase in visitation and attendance. The library is developing a place for people to gather and spend time. They vary their programs to maintain interest.

Selwitschka explained that the Winneconne Public Library is currently under construction. Despite the construction in Winneconne, library attendance is still high. They have a close partnership with the public school, with 12 classes regularly taking trips to the library. They've focused on partnering with local businesses to increase attendance and contributions to the community. There is also a café inside the library. Selwitschka explained their library is currently considering becoming a joint library, which the committee may hear more about later this year.

Horticulture: Miller gave a review of her activities in the horticulture programs. The Winnebago County Master Gardener program is the 4th largest group in the state of WI, providing over 7,000 volunteer service hours through 14 different programs in the community. Miller and Plant Health Advisors have been very busy responding to horticulture inquiries. This is the busy season where people are submitting plant and insect samples for identification and recommendations. This year, Miller has been involved with the *Ascend Initiative*. This program assists young adults with mental health challenges in developing necessary life and employment skills. Miller has partnered with FoodWise for this initiative to teach participants how to create and use a container garden. The program provides educational content, instruction, and demonstration to help the participants learn and practice how to care for their container gardens and how to use their produce. A partner of the Ascend Initiative has seen the value of this project and agreed to fund raised bed gardens next year to continue this education. Miller reminded the committee that this is the last year in the DNR land use agreement for operating the Community Gardens in the current location. She has been exploring options to determine whether to continue the Community Garden program. ADVOCAP has agreed to take over operation of the gardens, but a location has not yet been determined. Miller briefly reviewed the history of the land rental and the current challenges with renewing the lease versus finding an alternate location.

Committee Chair Report: Snider reported that the UWEX Budget Transfer presented last month passed.

UW-Extension – Administration:

Staff Updates/Area Updates: Neiswender explained she has been strongly advocating for maintaining the interim 4-H coordinator position. We currently have two interns working with UWEX. Taylor Hurst is assisting Mandi Dornfeld with Family Living programs. Cerrina Stokes is assisting Darrell McCauley and the LWCD office with agriculture programs. The UWEX office will be closed Friday, June 22 for the Area-10 Gathering.

Department Activities: Neiswender expressed her appreciation to the committee for their support of the budget transfer. Dornfeld becomes a state employee as of July 1, 2018. Neiswender distributed and explained the draft UWEX Table of Organization. This handout explains how each position is funded and ideas for filling positions to meet needs in our community. The committee expressed their concern about making sure Bezio's position is funded next year. Binder suggested allocating county funds to cover the cost of Bezio's position if the state chooses not to fund. Neiswender will provide updates once they're known.

2019 Budget Update: Neiswender and Hendrickson are working on the 2019 budget. The labor worksheet for county employee wages and fringe benefits will be submitted today. The details of the budget are due in July.

State Activities: Neiswender will lead a brief committee discussion in July related to the Statewide situational analysis.

Comments by Committee Members: None.

Next Meeting: Next regular committee meeting will be held Thursday, July 19th, 2018.

Adjourned: Borchart moved to adjourn; seconded by Binder. Motion carried **4-0**, 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Hendrickson