

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, December 17th, 2020
Zoom Virtual Meeting

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

Members Absent: None.

Extension Winnebago County Staff: Chris Viau, Kim Miller, Mandi Dornfeld, and Amy Hendrickson.

Others Present: Mike Domke (Winnebago County Fair Association President), Mike Norton (Winnebago County Board Supervisor), and one unknown.

Meeting Called to Order at 9:01 a.m. by Tom Snider.

Comments from the Public Related to Items on the Agenda: None.

Approval of Minutes: Binder moved to approve the 11/19/2020 minutes; seconded by Zellmer. Motion carried 5-0.

Safety Share: ThedaCare released a Community Leader COVID-19 Brief, which was shared with committee members by County Executive, Mark Harris. Viau shared the document on the screen. Borchart recognized Extension for sharing the document in their newsletters. Snider and Borchart thanked everyone for following the recommendations and encouraged them to continue doing so.

Committee Chair Report:

2021 Extension Committee Meeting Schedule: Snider moved to continue meeting at 9:00am on the third Thursday of each month; seconded by Binder; motion carried 5-0.

Winnebago County Fair Association: Domke recapped the virtual portions of the 2020 Winnebago County Fair. The website and Facebook pages were updated last year and saw more community engagement. Everyone is encouraged to visit the website and Facebook pages to see the exhibits. The planning committee is planning the 2021 Winnebago County Fair with expected accommodations for COVID-19. There have been changes to the current fair board with 3 vacant positions. The focus for 2021 is getting youth more involved. Advertising will begin soon. Community events will be an opportunity for advertising. Most of the entertainment and deposits from 2020 carried over to 2021. Committee members and Domke discussed entertainment suggestions for the fair.

UW Division of Extension Program or Educator Reports and Updates: Viau directed the committee to the December 2020 Extension Winnebago County Review document for summaries of educator program updates.

Horticulture: The Master Gardener Association converted to a calendar year operating schedule this year. Due to Master Gardener reporting now not being due until 12/31/2020, Miller will be sharing a recap of the program at a later date. Miller shared a presentation on the new Foundations in Horticulture program, which was launched this year as a pilot program to 4 counties. COVID-19 has brought many challenges, but also the opportunity to change the way programs work. Miller has been collaborating with others in the state to develop and implement a new educational program, Foundations in Horticulture, with a separate Volunteer Onboarding for those interested in becoming Master Gardeners. This separation allows participants to gain education on horticulture with or without committing to becoming volunteers with the Master Gardener program. Feedback so far has shown increased interest in younger and employed participants, increased access through the virtual format and language interpretation options, increased interaction amongst participants and between educators and participants, and improved workload balance and communication amongst the educators. All prospective and current Master Gardener volunteers will be required to complete the Volunteer Onboarding beginning in 2021. Borchart inquired how the team will know if this new program and format has been successful. Miller shared that the demographics collected so far show increased participation across demographics compared to previous programming. The program has also been helping the team meet strategic goals that have been developed. Evaluations at the conclusion of the programs will provide additional feedback to help gauge success.

Binder inquired regarding updates at the Sunnyview Garden Partnership site. The name was approved by the Winnebago County Board. Binder made suggestions regarding the new sign when ordered and installed.

Extension Administration and Department Reports:

Staff/Facility/Department Updates: Viau thanked the committee for their support of the Diversity Affairs Commission. Viau shared that the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Coordinator position is in the process of being converted from a temporary, part-time position to a permanent, part-time position. All full-time staff have the ability and technology needed to telecommute. Viau will keep the committee and staff updated regarding telecommuting policies and accommodations. The James P. Coughlin Center remains closed to the general public. Meeting rooms continue to be available only to county departments. Viau expects a phased-in approach when the meeting rooms open to the public. Binder requested plowing plans be discussed for the JPCC to balance expenses with safety/access while the building remains closed to the public.

Area/Region/State Updates: Viau reviewed current health trends, precautions, and procedures in Area 10 and at UW-Madison. The state's 2-year budget cycle renews in 2021. With the new state legislature and congress going into effect soon, Viau will be ensuring information regarding Extension's programming and updates are shared.

Comments by Committee Members: Borchart inquired how Extension measures who their programming is reaching and how successful the programming is. Miller explained that program evaluations measure outputs (how many people complete the program) and outcomes (long-term impact of the program and use). Borchart questioned where someone can go to see this data and if there is a visual available to see where participation is occurring. Viau highlighted a new tracking method being implemented by the FoodWise program. Viau also reviewed collection and use of Census data and trends within the area. Snider requested educators include their email addresses in the monthly reports that are being shared. Snider requested the reports also be shared with the Clerk's office to be listed on the county website each month.

Next Meeting: Next regular committee meeting will be held Thursday, January 21st, 2021.

Adjourned: Powers moved to adjourn; seconded by Zellmer. Motion carried 5–0, 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Hendrickson