

University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee
Thursday, June 18th, 2015
James P. Coughlin Center – Volunteer Room

Members Present: Tom Snider, Tom Widener, Nancy Barker, and Ron Hardy.

UW-Extension Staff: Darrell McCauley, Wendy Beyer, Kim Miller, and Amy Timm.

Others Present: Vicki Lenz (Menasha Public Library), Holly Selwitschka (Winneconne Public Library), Julie Stobbe (Carter Memorial Library – Omro), Gretchen Raab (Neenah Public Library), and Jeff Gilderson-Duwe (Oshkosh Public Library; Winnefox Library System).

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Tom Widener

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

Approval of Minutes: Ron Hardy moved to approve the 4/16/2015 minutes. Tom Widener seconded. Amy Timm made a correction to the minutes to include Sarah Thompson in “UWEX Staff” present. Motion carried 4-0 to approve the minutes as corrected.

Program Reports:

Winnefox Library:

Program Reports

- Holly Selwitschka (Winneconne Public Library) shared what she’s proud of about the library system. Holly focused on highlights based on the 2014 “faces of the Winnebago County Libraries” pamphlet.
- Vicki Lenz (Menasha Public Library) shared about Food for Fines and the Summer Reading Program. They have been successful in their goal to get more children in to read by offering reduced fines. Ron Hardy shared the decision for his local library to eliminate fines. Tom Snider discussed the consideration of fines both for revenue as part of the budget and for getting the books back in a timely manner.
- Jeff Gilderson-Duwe (Oshkosh Public Library) shared trends they’ve seen in libraries in recent years: increased digital material usage, increased wireless usage, decreased resource check-out, and decreased foot-traffic into the library. Program planning has been starting to focus more on community building, learning, and activities compared to the previous focus on inventory management. Jeff shared a quote he heard recently: “We’re not in business to increase [book] circulation. We’re in business to increase the intelligence of our communities.” Jeff shared that local municipalities and county funding have been cooperative, but state funding has been flat for the past 4 years and is anticipated for the next 2 years. This has resulted in recommending a staff reduction for the 2016 proposed budget that would eliminate their graphic designer/copy position. This staff member has already been notified.
- Gretchen Raab (Neenah Public Library) shared about the Fox Valley Memory Project that invites individuals with dementia, cognitive disabilities, and their caregivers to come in and participate in various events, including games and theme nights. Gretchen highlighted the Free Legal Clinics program as one of their most used services in the library system (Oshkosh, Neenah, and Menasha locations). Gretchen shared her appreciation for the UW-Extension partnership in offering programs in their communities. Gretchen also shared appreciation for the Master Gardeners and all the work they do. They have created new “Nina the Pelican” stickers, yard signs, and t-shirts for marketing the Neenah Public Library. Traffic has increased with the Summer Reading programs.
- Julie Stobbe (Omro Public Library) expressed appreciation for the Master Gardeners for rejuvenating their plant life around the library. Julie shared about their partnership with the schools through the Battle of the Books, Books on Buses, Kids’ Bingo, and 1000 Books before Kindergarten programs. The Summer Reading Program has brought an increase in traffic, particularly for Wi-Fi and children reading with parents/grandparents. An expansion project is quietly progressing for increasing their library space and property.

2016 Budget Request – Jeff Gilderson-Duwe reviewed the library system’s budget proposal request as presented in the handout. Ron Hardy moved to approve the 2016 Library Budget Proposal. Tom Widener seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Agriculture: Darrell McCauley shared that Resilient Agriculture and Diversified Agriculture are the two program areas he will be focusing on. Resilient agriculture covers soil health, nutrient management, agricultural structures, cover-crop programs, grain storage and quality, crop production, youth education, and career development. Diversified agriculture works with small-scale agriculture and local food programs, including Farm to School and the Local Food HUB. Breakfast on the Farm was very successful with over 4,000 attendees, 90% of which were non-agricultural. Darrell also provided the committee with a flier for the Soil Health Field Day on September 2nd, 2015.
Meat Animal

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Quality Assurance had 82 youth attend two different sessions that taught animal behavior and low-stress methods of handling livestock. The East Metro grant for \$3800 was approved for the Community Garden Coordinator position, and Tou Veu started in that position this week. Tou will be interviewing garden participants to identify needs and create a communication process that effectively explains the garden policies and identifies educational needs to create educational programs. Ron Hardy suggested a survey to assess the current local food production and its ability to meet local food needs in the county to advocate for AG program development and promotion.

WNEP: Wendy Beyer presented an update about WNEP education shifting focus by reducing the mini-lessons and increasing series with 5 or more lessons. Wendy conducted an activity as an example for the committee of an educational lesson about variety in food and nutrients. Wendy reviewed 2016 funding and their federal increase of 10% for the next 3 years. They have identified times with OACP when they can provide education to individuals at the pantries for increased participation. Washington, Gegan, and Banta elementary schools have agreed to partner with WNEP for in-school program education. Wendy is focused on ensuring programs are reflective of each county's SNAP populations. Wendy pursues educational programming opportunities according to "food desert" areas. Every year, WNEP asks for an agreement with the Winnebago County University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee for their partnership and support for WNEP programming. Tom Widener signed the 2015-16 agreement on behalf of the Committee.

Committee Chair Report:

Horticulture: Emerald Ash Borer – The Department of Facilities and Property Management put together a request for proposals for arboriculture and tree maintenance services. They received one bid by the 6/17/2015 deadline. There is the potential of treating a maximum of 50 ash trees according to the Facilities tree inventory. Facilities is in the process of purchasing hand-held devices that will allow them to track maintenance in the tree inventory program while in the field. Tom Widener shared that he is working to get monies in the budget for 2016 to conduct work outlined in the Urban Forestry and EAB Management Plan.

Garage Up-date: The building is complete. They are now completing the punch list for smaller tasks. They are ahead of schedule and will have things completed in time for the fair

2016 County Board Scholarships: A 10th scholarship was awarded this year. There were 43 entries this year, which was significantly more than is typical. Tom Widener opened discussion for whether the committee wanted to keep the scholarship program the same or make any changes for 2016. Tom Widener proposed that the county budget for 10 scholarships, continue planning to award 9 scholarships, and have the 10th scholarship as an option if the 9th and 10th are close. The committee was in agreement.

UW-Extension – Administration

Staff Updates: Tou Veu will be a temporary Community Garden Coordinator/Liason, as previously discussed, ending in September. Interviews for the 4-H Educator position are underway. Koby Schellenger and Tom Widener were invited to be part of the face-to-face interviews. Tom shared that Koby has recently moved and they are unsure of how that affects district membership yet.

UWEX Updates: Darrell expressed appreciation for all the work Sarah Thompson has been doing by taking on additional responsibilities with 4-H and the scholarship. Chris Kniep's written update was shared with the committee.

County Board Scholarship: Previously discussed by Tom Snider.

Comments by Committee Members: None.

Next Meeting: Next meeting will be held Thursday, July 16th, 2015.

Adjourned: Nancy Barker moved to adjourn; Tom Snider seconded. Motion carried 3-0, 12:04 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Timm