

**University of Wisconsin Education, Extension and Agriculture Committee**  
**Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**James P. Coughlin Center – Volunteer Room**

**Members Present:** Tom Widener, Nancy Barker, Tom Snider, George Schenck, and Nancy Barker.

**UW-Extension Staff:** Chris Kniep, Kim Miller, Evan Groth, Kris Soper, Mandi Dornfeld, and Amy Timm.

**Others Present:** Julie Bartels (Fair Association).

**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:** Widener declared the 11/19/2015 and 11/24/2015 minutes without objection.

**Program Reports:**

**Fair Association:** Bartels shared income results for the *2015 Winnebago County Fair*. The Friday of fair week received low attendance and income due to rain shutting down the carnival and the grandstand show. Attendance was good for all other days of the fair. All bills are paid and there is money remaining. The fair will now be held starting on the first Tuesday of August to compliment election schedules. In 2016, the fair will be directly after EAA. The *2016 Winnebago County Fair* will be held August 2-7<sup>th</sup>. The contract has been renewed, with dates set, for 5 years. The current online program for Fair registrations, Showworks, will be replaced with the same program as 4-H Online. The 2016 fair will feature a main stage musical performance. The group discussed the purpose of the fair and options for musical entertainment in future years.

**Family Living Programs:** Dornfeld delivered a Powerpoint presentation sharing results from the first 3 *Block Parties*. 48 “low-strength” families (with 3 or more indicators of child stress) attended the events. The first event was for 4K and Parent Connection. The second event was for the Oshkosh Area School District. The third event was an open house for community partners that identified 9 potential community partners. Dornfeld will provide oversight for grant writing and will conduct a *Block Party* for similar groups in Appleton. Science has shown that children learn a variety of skills from playing with blocks. Parents and other family/caregivers were directly involved in play and engaged with their children at the events. It was observed that once children have the uninterrupted attention of their parent, their behavior is more manageable and positive. Participant evaluations and volunteer evaluations were very positive. Dornfeld will continue conducting training for volunteer play partners. There is currently a pool of 50 volunteers for block play partners. The goal is to build that volunteer base to 100. *Block parties* have involved UW-Extension partnership with multiple organizations within the community.

**Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program:** Groth and Soper distributed and reviewed the annual report created by Wendy Beyer before she left the WNEP Coordinator position. In previous years, walk-by displays were commonly used to engage participants for short periods of time at locations WNEP works with. Currently the focus is on Mini-lessons providing 6-8 lessons to the same group of participants over a short time-frame this approach allows WNEP to spend more time engaging with the program participants and increase educational impact. Programming involving a series of one or more lessons has increased from 35% to 83% and has shown greater impact with participants. Winnebago County has the highest need for food share in the tri-county area. WNEP has conducted 294 teaching events in Winnebago County. One goal is to supplement the education the participants receive from the nutritionists and site workers. The 2016 goal is to increase education through using more group series lessons. WNEP educators commonly receive questions and identify needs in the moment that aren't always directly related to the topic they intended to teach on that day. This reveals the need for flexibility in their presentations for problem-solving and needs-based education.

**Agriculture/Horticulture:** Miller shared a recap of the three *Tree Pruning* workshops conducted in Oshkosh, Sheboygan, and Green Bay. Workshops partnered with the DNR and UW-Extension offices in other counties. Workshops included 123 participants, limited to approximately 40 per workshop. Workshops covered best practices of proper tree pruning care. Evaluations showed that prior to the workshop, 32% of participants did not use BMPs (Best Management Practices), and only 10% said they would not use them after the workshop. Evaluations revealed that 4 participants from workshops reported being “highly likely” and 10 participants reported

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being “likely” to pursue International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certification. In the 2015 *Master Gardener* training program, 12 people completed level 1 training at a 100% retention rate compared to the previous year’s 22 completions with a 75% retention rate. The 2015 MG training program stressed the expectation for participants to become volunteers with UW-Extension. Master Gardeners completed 7,690 volunteer hours with Winnebago County in 2015. MG also volunteer with the UW-Extension office *Plant Help Line* to help answer calls about plants. They answered calls from over 315 county residents involving multiple contacts and questions. Residents value the help they are receiving from the UW-Extension and MG volunteers and recognize the academic-based answers and resources they receive. MG are involved in several local projects, including the Neenah Library, a historical project in Winchester, and a butterfly garden for the Lutheran home. The Winnebago County MG program is consistently in the top 5 for volunteer hours per members.

**Committee Chair Report:**

**Emerald Ash Borer:** Miller shared that Facilities is continuing to move forward with the EAB management plan. The contractor is completing removals and pruning and is making more progress than expected. Funds not used this year are expected to be carried over to 2016. Miller distributed a report from the Parks Department that highlights the work they’ve completed month-by-month in 2015. Parks has identified trees in need of treatment, and treatment is expected to begin in Spring 2016.

**PA System/Hearing Loop:** Widener reported that the P&F Committee approved the budget transfers for both the PA System and the Hearing Loop. The work for the PA System is expected to be completed the last week of December. The work for the Hearing Loop is expected to be completed the first week of January.

**UW-Extension – Administration:**

**Staff Updates:** Kniep shared that the 5 UW-Extension employees paid directly by Winnebago County did complete the McGrath Compensation Studies. The study will be used to review pay scales, benefits (such as PTO and flex time), and position descriptions for these positions. The Extension Committee members discussed the need for Winnebago County to be more competitive with other counties and agencies regarding new county employee pay and benefits. The committee plans to get this topic on the agenda for the January or February P&F committee meeting.

**UWEX Updates – Department Activities:** All program reporting is due December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

**UWEX nEXT Generation Update:** Kniep distributed documents sent from Rick Klemme that include a timeline for the proposal, talking points, and frequently asked questions for the committee to review. The proposal has three counties that will have their own county offices are Brown, Dane, and Milwaukee. The remaining counties will be organized into clusters. Kniep distributed documents providing feedback, recommendations, and rationale generated by the Winnebago County UW-Extension office regarding the proposal. Each county was asked to participate in this process.

**2016 Meeting Calendar:** Kniep distributed a list of UW-Extension Committee meeting dates for 2016.

**Comments by Committee Members:** None.

**Next Meeting:** Next meeting will be held Thursday, January 21, 2016, 9:00 a.m.

**Adjourned:** Snider moved to adjourn; seconded by Barker. Motion carried **4-0**, 11:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Amy Timm