

Agriculture & Extension Committee Minutes
Thursday, May 19th, 2022 5:00pm
Health & Human Services Center & Zoom
303 W. Chapel Street

Lynn Perkins called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Roll call: Dan, Ricky, Kevin, Roger, and Darrell attended the meeting in person (no one attended via Zoom). Lynn, Joe, Jessa, Ruth, Amanda, Jackie, Josh, and Sarah were at the meeting.

Election of Committee Chair – Ricky nominated Dan for the new committee Chair, seconded by Darrell. No other nominations. Darrell motioned for a unanimous vote, Kevin seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Election for Vice Chairman – Kevin nominated Ricky for Vice Chairman. No other nominations. Kevin motioned to close nominations and cast unanimous ballot, seconded by Darrell. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Election for Secretary – Kevin nominated Roger for Secretary. No other nominations. Ricky motioned to close nominations and cast unanimous ballot, seconded by Darrell. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Motion to approve agenda by Ricky, seconded by Kevin. Motion passed.

Motion to approve minutes of the March 17th, 2022 meeting by Ricky, seconded by Roger. The motion passed.

Report from Committee Members – Ricky shared his compliments to the release of results of the SWIGG study on May 16th, 2022. He shared that it will be important to take the research and create shared objectives among the three counties for action to improve water quality. Volunteers are needed for the Dairy Breakfast on June 4th. Dan shared an article from the state paper about the newly elected UW Madison Chancellor, Jennifer L. Mnookin.

Wisconsin Extension Association (WEXA) Update – Lynn and Dan explained that WEXA will now be a subcommittee of the Wisconsin County Association.

Extension Orientation and Overview – Lynn Perkins presented an overview of UW Extension and the Wisconsin Idea. She provided information about each of the six institutes for context to new committee members. Iowa County Educators and Regional Ag Educators spoke about their role in Extension and current projects. Lynn finalized the presentation by reviewing the 2022 County Contract for Educator Service and Iowa County Support for 2022.

Highlights from Educator Reports

Regional Ag Educators

Josh – Josh began by explaining that he is the Crops and Soil Educator focusing on soil health, pest management, and manure processing. He coordinates educational meetings and field days, provides consultation for production challenges, contributes to outreach opportunities, provides info for producers, and collaborates with educators and specialists across the region. He coordinates between field locations and UW Madison research. He hopes to engage the Committee by sharing what he is doing, asking for guidance, and encouraging them to join in on programming.

Amanda – Amanda is the Livestock Educator focusing primarily on beef, small ruminants, and pasture management. She explained how the Regional Ag Educators will measure success. They will make sure that County needs are met with programming, answering phone calls, and farm visits. They will assess annually how they are doing. She also shared that there will be a PELTR training for first responders on how to respond in emergency situations that involve livestock. This will be held at the Mineral Point fairgrounds on June 11th.

Jackie – Jackie is the Dairy educator and provides support to all dairy farmers. She shared how the Regional Ag Educators will report on their work. This will be done through written reports provided to the Committee, verbal reports at meetings, and meeting with Committee members upon request.

Community Development Institute

Barry – Lynn provided an information about Barry's work in Extension, such as quality of life and place projects, environment, community planning and sustainability, and community leadership programs. Some of his areas of focus include renewable energy, electric vehicles, and broadband.

Health and Well-Being Institute

Jessa – Jessa shared an overview of the FoodWise program which provides nutrition education to low-income audiences. FoodWise is federally funded through SNAP-Ed and not through the county. Jessa and Lynn are going through the hiring process for a new Nutrition Educator for Area 17. Jessa has plans to work with SWCAP Head Start, food pantries, SUN, etc. Jessa shared information about the FY23 agreement between Iowa County and FoodWise. Jessa and Lynn will follow-up with Larry Bierke for review and signature.

Human Development and Relationships Institute

Ruth – Ruth shared about her role within Extension. Her two primary focus areas are on older adults and their caregivers, and providing financial education one-on-one. She works closely with ADRC to enhance what they are already doing and she receives referrals from Head Start, SWCAP, ADRC, and drug treatment from the Courthouse. She has provides educational series, such as Wise Wisconsin and Stand Up, Move More.

National Resources Institute

Joe – Joe shared about his role within Extension as a Regional Educator. His role is not funded through the county and is instead funded from DNR and DATCP. Joe focuses on water quality and works closely with farmer-led groups and their partners to provide structure for farmers to talk with each other. He focuses on conservation and sustainable practices and collaborates with Land Conservation offices. He has access to data about farmers from Farm Journal which helps him target information to the appropriate audience. There was a public meeting of results on May 16th, 2022 for the SWIGG study. The summary report and full report are available on the Grant, Green, and Lafayette Extension websites. Now that results are released, there will be collaboration with the Land Conservation offices to provide presentations for county boards and homeowners on next steps for action.

Positive Youth Development

Sarah – Sarah shared about her role as the 4H Educator for Iowa County. She provides a 4H newsletter six times a year for committee members. There are 64 youth signed up for day camps this year. She had programming related to educating youth on the different “hats” that farmers wear in their career. She provided education to youth through agri-science STEM kits sent home to families. There are 471 youth members in the 4H program, and 94 adults approved as 4H leaders in Iowa County.

Iowa County Fair Update – Kevin updated that entertainment for the Iowa County Fair has been booked. There will be a rodeo, lawn mower races on Friday night, a tractor pull on Saturday night, demolition derby on Sunday night, and horse races on Monday. There will be a kids’ show Friday – Sunday. More information can be found on the website.

Iowa County Contacts Update – Lynn shared that there have been over 15 calls and emails to the Iowa County Extension office with questions for the Regional Ag Educators. Tom has a list of contact information for each educator that he can provide to people with questions based upon their area of focus. There is an Ask a Gardener online form that Tom directs Horticulture questions to. This contact sheet and process has gone well so far and will be continue to be evaluated. Some of the topics for questions included: costs of land rent, toxic weeds, bulls, insects, greenhouses, soil and fertilizer questions, etc.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 21st at 5:00 pm. Meetings will continue to occur every other month on the third Thursday of the month. Ricky made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Dan. Motion passed.