

Agriculture & Extension Committee Minutes
Thursday, August 15th, 2024 4:00pm
Health & Human Services Center & Zoom
303 W. Chapel Street, Dodgeville, WI 53533

Dan Nankee called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Roll call: Dan, Ricky, Brad, and Kevin attended the meeting in person; Darrell was an excused absence. Mel Masters was also in attendance for the meeting. Lynn, Dan, Maggie, Jackie, Bridget, and Tom were at the meeting. Barry was traveling but checked in briefly via Zoom.

A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Ricky, seconded by Kevin. The motion passed.

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 20th, 2024, meeting was made by Kevin, seconded by Brad. The motion passed.

Report from Committee Members – Dan questioned if there was a way that we could get the information contained in our educator reports out to the people in Iowa County, so that more people could be aware of all the things Extension is doing. Ideas included mass emails, newspaper articles, and radio spots. Jackie mentioned that the ag educators do have regular radio spots in the other three counties in our area, but the main option for Iowa County (WDMP) is too expensive to be viable. Brad mentioned that he has some connections there and may be able to look into this.

AED Update – The search for a new FoodWise Educator is hopefully coming to an end. They have made an offer to one candidate and are awaiting a reply. We should know one way or the other by Monday. If the offer is not accepted, the position will be posted for a third time.

Lynn introduced our new Human Development and Relationships (HDR) Educator, Bridget Mouchon. Today is Bridget's second day of actually being in the office, and she spoke about her past experiences working with SWCAP in Dodgeville from 2016-2022, being the Family Living Agent in Green County for ten years, and working in both Green and Lafayette Counties the past several years as the Health & Well Being Educator. She has experience in behavioral health and caregiving research and is bilingual. Just today she led a StrongBodies session via Zoom and led the first session of an Aging Mastery class.

Highlights from Educator Reports

Agriculture

Jackie – Jackie highlighted a PELTR (Planning for Emergency Livestock Transport Response) class that will be held in Dodgeville at the Law Enforcement Center on September 28th. This training is for emergency management personnel and first responders so that they know what to expect and do in the event of a trailer accident or other sort of animal-hauling mishap. They will be bringing in a semi and cattle trailer/truck so that the emergency management people can see what they are like and what it may be like trying to get the animals out.

Jackie travelled to Texas because she was nominated for a national award. She was not selected as the recipient for the award, but she did come in 4th out of 50+ nominees.

Community Development Institute

Barry – Barry was on the road and was not able to attend the meeting in person, but he did record a video update of the things he is working on. The Wisconsin Rural Entrepreneurial Venture program is progressing – Barry just had a 1 ½ hour zoom with them this morning.

Barry is also working on some programming that he's hoping to implement in the next 12 months or so regarding community development – providing leadership and guidance to Iowa County towns, villages, and cities. The programming will consist of a variety of topics, such as broadband, zoning, housing, grants, transportation, youth and healthy living education, AI, academic and community development, and more. This programming is currently in development. As Barry put it, "If you're not growing, you're dying." We need to find ways to help these small communities stay alive.

Youth Conservation Field Day coming up in September. Currently there are about 110 sixth-grade students signed up to attend; if Dodgeville comes on board, that number will increase to probably 150-160.

Health and Well-Being Institute

Maggie – Maggie attended an outreach event at the Livingston food garden, where she had a table with recipes and information (some in Spanish). They are going to be developing a survey for the food pantry users to be sure that they are stocking the types of products and produce that the people will use. For example, it was learned that the people using the food pantry prefer bags of uncooked rice as opposed to boxes of Minute Rice, so the Minute Rice was not being utilized.

The gardens at the Meridian Housing properties are growing nicely. The produce from the garden is being distributed to the residents of the properties. There will be classes and cooking demonstrations scheduled at these properties as well to educate the residents about what is being grown and different ways the produce can be used.

Maggie has also been partnering with the ADRC with their Farmers Market Voucher program. She has been holding educational sessions with participants, including how to wash and store produce, tips and tricks for using the vouchers, and more. One big issue that has come up is transportation for people in more remote areas to get to farmers markets in order to use the vouchers. The vouchers aren't very useful to people if they are not able to get to the markets to use them. One possible solution is to come up with some sort of "mobile market" that can travel to these places, bringing the produce to them so they can use their vouchers.

Positive Youth Development

Dan – Summer is a busy time for the 4-H program, from 4-H Camp, to cooking classes, to the fair coming up in a couple of weeks. Dan distributed a fair schedule that he developed, as well as coupons for the fish pond game that he will be hosting throughout the fair in the Exhibition Hall (the cost to play will be \$.50 per cast, or free with a coupon). There are over 440 exhibitors signed up for the fair, with over 3,300 entries.

The Ambassador interviews and banquet were held a few weeks ago, and five youth were selected as Ambassadors. Darrell helped by being part of the interview team. The Ambassadors then participated in a ropes course event at Bethel Horizons along with Ambassadors from Lafayette and Sauk counties as a way to experience team building and coming together as a group.

The Iowa County livestock judging team placed first at the state competition, the dairy judging state competition will be this Sunday at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison.

The summer intern, Nicole, has wrapped up her duties and has returned to UW-Platteville as volleyball practices are starting up. A report was provided in the mailed meeting materials highlighting the projects that she worked on over the course of the summer.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17th at 4:00 pm. Ricky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Brad. Motion passed.