

Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee

September 11, 2019

Minutes

Committee members present: Chairman Bob Mott, Robb Jensen, Jim Winkler, and Mitch Ives. Alan Van Raalte excused.

Others Present: Myles Alexander, Carrie Kubacki, Andrea Rippley, Sara Richie, Michele Sadauskas, Rosie Page, Brian Desmond, Dave Hintz, Fred Andrist, Tom Barnett, Josh Skubal, Matt Leitner, Gary Williams, Jon Stauner, Nathan and Erica Nuskiewicz, Kerry P. Bloedorn, Devin Biggs, and Merry Lehner.

Call to order: Chairman Mott called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was properly posted and the facility handicapped accessible.

Approve Agenda: A motion by Jensen/Winkler to approve the second amended agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

Approve Minutes: Ives/Jensen made a motion to approve 8/12/19 CUW Committee meeting minutes. All ayes; motion carried.

Future Meetings:

Monday, October 14, 2019	1:00 p.m.	UWEX Conference Room
Monday, November 11, 2019	1:00 p.m.	UWEX Conference Room

FSA Representative Replacement:

Kim Simac is no longer able to serve as the Farm Service Agency (FSA) representative for the Committee. Simac had one year remaining in her position with Oneida County. It becomes a quorum problem when the position is vacant. Dave Bula, FSA representative for Forest County, told the Committee that there were not many people who applied for the position. Bula suggested contacting someone in the agricultural sector. It can be an elected official or any citizen involved in the agricultural production. Sowinski Farms or cranberry farmers would be good choices. Many new specialty produce farmers in the area should also be contacted. The FSA office in Wausau at 715-848-2330 can be contacted for further information. Mott asked Myles Alexander to make some contacts.

County/City Contract Update:

Brian Desmond said that the contract to hold the Fair at Pioneer Park with the City will expire on December 31, 2019. He spoke with Fred Andrist about any changes to the contract. Desmond will meet with the City Administrator on Monday, September 16, 2019, to discuss whatever changes are necessary. He asked the committee whether the terms of contract should be year to year or some other term. He will discuss an upgrade of electrical services for the future. Andrist said the temporary service panels put up by Gaber Electric cost \$2,800 annually. The Committee asked Andrist to check into an estimate for permanent electrical installation. In the past, the City asked for a commitment from the Fair if upgrades to the electricity were made to the Park, but Desmond said this has fallen along the wayside. The budget is yearly and they are not certain where that budget will end up. Desmond advised adding clauses regarding when the contract can end. Adding a clause allowing the contract to end for non-appropriation of funds, to end if any kind of non-profit or formation of a fair association, and to assign or sublease the contract to any other entity is created, to run the fair. It was agreed that a notice on January first of each year, will be required from the City, if the contract is not to be renewed. Andrist requested a shipping container for the storage of the trolleys with space provided at the garage at River Street rather than building an addition. Andrist wanted more clarification on garbage removal because the Fair paid for it this past year. Lastly, in the past the City rejected an admission charge for the Fair because it is at a public park. Mott asked that Desmond to see if their position on this topic has changed at his meeting on Monday.

Discussion/Response to Funding Opportunities – Committee Recommendations:

AIS, FAIR, UWEX

The Funding Opportunities committee was formed to examine the County's current budget. A Carlson and Dettman wage study showed Oneida County is \$800,000 behind the median wage for county salaries in the state. The hiring

numbers and retaining employees in the county are affected. The committee examined cost reductions or the removal of some departments. The AIS, Fair and Extension are on that list and should take this action seriously and prove their value to the County. As a lake rich county, AIS is of great concern and many supporters have come through with their support. Such action must occur with Extension and the Fair.

Dave Hintz, County Board Supervisor Chair and Chair of Funding Opportunity Committee commented that the County is behind about 6% with wages. The levy limits require that the County only tax what they did in the prior year. The tax levy is frozen except on new construction. With wages up and significant capital projects, the County has to stay within the levy limit. There are about 100 items for cost reductions and/or efficiencies. This is a comprehensive list examines if things are being done efficiently through re-organizing or by asking departments to justify their existence. AIS was moved to the "not under consideration list", due to feedback from other groups. The Fair and Extension are still on the list. Most departments were allocated back to their committee of jurisdiction. This means that Extension and the Fair must justify to the CUW Committee why we need them and convince the County. Departments will have a budget review on October 9 where the Fair and Extension will present their case for support. It is the job of the Administration to produce a draft budget to present to the full County Board. The Administration Committee will make these decisions on what to present to full County Board in November. Mott said last year they could only levy \$91,000 and this year \$112,000 from new builds. Just a cost of living increase if it were 2% would be around \$200,000. They cannot tax more than what the State says they can tax. Jensen said that the Funding group was trying to find long term sustainable plans. There are also alternatives such as wheel tax or referendum to increase revenue.

Chairman Mott read several letters: Three Lakes Community Foundation, passed a resolution for community development work. They asked the county to maintain Extension on September 5, 2019. There were members of the public present who spoke:

John Stauner – Three Lakes resident, cranberry grower, and volunteer Director with Three Lakes Community Foundation, along with Jim Morely and Gary Williams were present to emphasize how important Extension is to their community. The mission of their foundation is to enhance and support opportunities that make Three Lakes a better place. In the past year, Extension was active in helping the Foundation learn more about their town through Extension sponsored community conversations. In 2018, they held community forums with 28 organizations. This year, Three Lakes had two fires that brought forth much discussion about future of Three Lakes. It is time for action and not just talk about things. A new initiative called Design Wisconsin team, with the help of Myles Alexander, will bring twenty Extension specialists to town to help them define a common shared vision for their future. The event will take place over a three day weekend in September of 2020. This isn't just the foundation but the whole town is involved in raising \$10,000 where they \$5,000 will likely come from area businesses. There is no other place where they can fund a project like this for \$10,000 other than Extension. This same project has been very successful elsewhere. UW Extension will enable this project to happen where otherwise they could not do it. Funding from Extension is essential. Their resolution passed last week lays out their position. They are here to stress how important Extension is for this work and that is why they are here to advocate Extension.

Jim Morely – Vice Chairman of the Board. They have started the implementation with meetings to specifically learn the best practices available to focus on the needs and opportunities of the community through Design Team Wisconsin. There were the fires, but the town has also lost student population. They are trying to build economic opportunities. He appreciates how difficult it is for the County when they have to find ways to save money. Their experience with Extension is key to their success. Extension is one of the gems of the State, please keep Extension in 2020.

Gary Williams – Foundation Board Member. He was involved with the University in Madison for forty years. He was active with the University, the State and a trade association executive. He was very familiar with levy limits during that time. Sometime back, at the State level, the legislature working with the University created Extension and the Wisconsin Idea. Purpose was to get the knowledge and expertise of researcher that existed at the University out to everyone in state who could possibly use it. We were the first in the nation to do so. The whole Extension concept operates through the County. The county is the link in to get things done. His suggestion to the Committee is to take a historical look at all the programs in the past and see what Extension has accomplished for the County. Look at all the programs that have made a difference for Oneida County. They have something great going on for the future of Three Lakes, but that is just next year. What about all the years to come? We need to take a look at how to upgrade what is done through Extension. There is much potential. A second comment was on the nature of budgeting. He understands and was involved in State budgets, he understands you always have to look at efficiencies. At some point, you have to come to a logical end. When levy limits were put on, if the people wanted to exceed the levy limits, there was a process to do it. The process can happen but it requires leadership to make adjustments to go forward. He did not think that saying no to levy limits was a good purpose.

As mentioned, Oneida County was the birthplace of Extension and it does not want it to be a county where Extension would cease to exist. It is too important of an institution. Mott touted the E.L. Luther story.

Richard Nelson- President, Nicolet College: Mott read a letter addressed to Dave Hintz and Bob Mott to the committee. The mission of the college is to transform lives, foster economic development, and expand employment opportunities. Education is underpinning of regional economic well-being. Partnership with Extension includes entrepreneurship training, scholarships, and educational opportunities for our Northwoods. They support for education and building prosperity for Oneida County. The connection with a research university like Madison, would be too much to lose.

Dan Butkus- Squash Lake Citizen: Letter stated that while he understood the actions of LRES he found it short sighted. There are two issues: Extension provides essential shared services with other counties. The intention of Extension is and was to provide services to more rural areas of the state. He urges Oneida County not to turn its back on the concept of the Wisconsin Idea, because of a refusal to take a tax levy increase to referendum. Second, the potential move of Extension to Nicolet is a stroke of genius, eliminating some concerns and saving \$22,000 in office space rental fees.

Brian Diel – President of Diel Insurance Group. He telephoned Mott, and other County Board Supervisors regarding Extension. He followed up with an email for the public record regarding the long term economic viability of Oneida County, which is dependent on attracting and maintaining the people who live and work here. This is what builds the tax base and helps keep our largest employers, contractors and tradespeople in business and thriving. Cutting small ticket budget items for services and amenities that are so important, such as Extension, and forming the basis for people wanting to live here is a very dangerous road to travel. Our tax payers understand the need for increased revenue, when an increase is needed. When things become so desperate that we consider cutting small budget items like our County Fair and Pioneer Park Museum complex, while considering seven million in capital improvement projects, something has to give. Saving ten or fifteen thousand just does not add up and threatens the outside attraction of our area. Please continue to fund these important programs and explore bigger expense items and additional revenue sources.

Jim Winkler read the letter from 4-H parent, Kim Gauthier, which expressed her appreciation of 4-H and Extension for opportunities afforded their daughter for eight years. She became empowered to complete projects and began to express herself through her work with the program. She learned how committees function and that young people can volunteer for positions on boards. There are opportunities to grow locally, at the State level and nationally and even internationally through Extension's 4-H program.

Several other letters from Master Gardeners of the North, Minocqua Library, the School District of Rhinelander, and others shall be on record.

The Funding Opportunity Chair will enter the support letters received into record and the comments of the citizens present. Hintz said that the Extension contract ends Dec 31, 2019 there is no renewal clause. Desmond noted there is a 60 day clause where the County has to pay for services. Jensen said LRES non-renewal of the Extension contract was more of a timing situation, given the 60 day clause, which would term out at the end of the year. If at budget deliberation there is a cut, it would make things more difficult, if the Extension contract was already renewed. Per Hintz, LRES passed two motions. First, the CUW Committee had to come up with a proposal for Extension, which passed. The second motion is on the contract renewal for next year. Desmond had concern over some staffing and mileage costs. LRES voted to not extend the new contract under consideration for next year.

Hintz said we must show why UW-Extension is important. People in support of it must justify their reasons to the County. Especially, we must defend any overlapping of service with Nicolet or the Health Department. Hintz felt that Teen Court and Economic Development are some of the top services. Salesmanship comes into play for the budget hearings to Administration on the value of Extension. Extension must emphasize what they do well. He suggested if out of a list of ten things, eight are great, but there could be two items eliminated, we should listen to the critics and take action.

The second item is the relocation to Nicolet. The proposal of shared staffing and sponsorships is a service that the Board needs to be convinced of as the right choice. Collaboration and shared services or classes are a great selling point. Another item, is the current \$40,000 in rent at the Airport. Airport needs funding from a new tenant and it is important to keep airport running. Nicolet rent will be \$18,000. Share these numbers with the Board. The County does not pay the full amount of Extension expenses, the State pays a large portion. Mott said we are just asking for a fair look at Extension. They should not isolate Extension. The three biggest departments are Highway, Social Services and Law Enforcement and reductions there could easily keep Extension operating. Equal treatment for all departments is what he is asking.

Sara Richie stated that it only costs a tax payer family about \$5 to keep Extension services going for the County. Most families will support Extension.

Myles Alexander is stymied by the term of duplication of services. The Northcentral regional planning Commission report stated in 2015 that no duplication of services existed for Extension. The County Social Services Department stated there were no duplication of services. Alexander said that you cannot just look at a problem or you will not build on your strengths. How can we influence the people who are against Extension, when we are doing what the County asks for? Collaboration is different than duplication of services. The critics do not understand what Extension does. It is a misunderstanding of Extension. Perhaps we need to get on TV and explain what Extension does.

Excused-2:35: Matt Leitner, Jim Morely, Gary Williams, Jon Stauner, Devin Biggs, and Brian Desmond.

Winkler asked for the status of the Fair from Funding Opportunities spreadsheet. The recommended change was to remove the \$16,000 and become self-sustaining. No funding was listed for 2020. Hintz advised that The Fair come before the Administration and the County Board requesting their funding. The Fair Budget Hearing is on October 9 at 8:30 a.m. Administration will vote to approve the Fair budget, for whatever number Fair presents, and present that to the County Board. Hintz, Jensen and Mott asked that the Fair look at their reserve, about changes tot the Fair Board Committee, the resources used, new contracts, and becoming more independent. See agenda item 15.

Winker asked if several people with comments regarding the Fair could speak at this time:

Kerry Bloedern - President of the Pioneer Park at Historical Complex. He is personally invested in the Fair and volunteered time. He finds it disappointing that that County Board at large cannot justify the expense in their minds to have a County Fair. He finds it strange that this County does not think it is a worthwhile effort to support the County Fair. It is a struggle without a County Fair Grounds as a revenue maker. (Hintz said we do not have the Fairground and this brings up part of the funds issue.)

Nathan Nuskiewicz: The Fair is the community and Extension is a community. It is not just a budget item but has far more reaching effects on the community, on tourism, economically, on things for families to do and to participate in. It is not just an item to eliminate, it is part of the community and affects everybody.

Josh Skubal: Vice President of Fair Committee. He recognizes the budget situation that the County is going through. They see themselves as a Committee operating for the County beyond providing a carnival. They do strive as a board of having their own fairgrounds, raising their own money and becoming self-sufficient, as a goal. They cannot start out self-sustainable. It costs money for entertainment and the carnival to operate. They did six new fund raisers this year that they have not done in the past. \$16,000 is necessary at this point. Skubal said that they need county support at this time. They are successful because of the influence of Alexander with Extension. They have a self-serving need to have Extension around.

Theresa Seabloom: It seems every year they have to prove their value and existence to the County. She said they have not given up it is worth the effort to put on the Fair. They want to keep the Fair alive.

Dave Hintz excused.

Discussion/Vote on Lumberjack Projects:

WHIP - Rosie Page presented a proposal to the Lumberjack Committee for a grant for funding of the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership. WHIP is ten years old and dedicated to the conservation of the native species, habitats and landscapes. WHIP recognizes the threat of invasive species and will work cooperatively to provide education, monitoring and invasive species control. They soon will expand into Lincoln County for outreach, education and some control of invasives. The grant proposal was included in the information packet. Lumberjack RC&D is the fiscal sponsor and grants are administered through them. In 2012, 82% was committed to AIS whereas WHIP is terrestrial. WHIP is funded thru small grant awards. 2020 additional grants, outreach, partnering with Extension. Their financial need is to fund Paige's position. They are requesting \$10,000 for 8 hours/week and the rest will be funded through other grant sources. A motion by Jensen/Winkler for approval of the grant proposal, as presented, was made and to forward onto the Lumberjack RC&D. All ayes; motion carried.

Bear Lake District Report – Robb Jensen:

The meeting was on Saturday, September August 31 with good attendance of about 40 people. An update on water quality and a report on some purple loosestrife were given. A male loon of 18 years and female of 16 years live on the lake and the offspring are the last to leave the lake. Offspring return after six years and then they breed. Their lake management report is at the DNR office. They continue to stock fish. The budget and the officers were approved.

Cost Share: They have three projects up for approval by the Committee. There are retaining walls up for construction for next year. Everybody has their deposits in. There are five projects for 2020 and Sadauskas is happy with the group they have. The Byczynski, Radue, and Bocker projects were up for approval.

Motion to approve cost share projects as listed was made by Jensen/Ives. All ayes; motion approved.

Up-coming Events:

There is a workshop in Plover regarding nitrate loss to groundwater that Sadauskas will attend. She is also excited about the Road-Stream Crossing Workshop on September 30 – October 1. Mott may attend as well.

2020 LWCD Budget:

They presented their supplemental information form and the budget checklist and signed by the Chair. Money received from DNR needs to be added in the amount of \$62,173. An increase was due to personnel cost. They received a slight increase in DATCP funding. There were no questions on the presented budget. A motion was made by Jensen/Winkler to approve the LWCD budget and forward on to Administration for review at Budget Committee. All ayes; motion carried.

Consent Agenda Items LWCD:

Motion by Jensen/Winkler to accept agenda items a, b, & c as presented. All ayes; motion carried.

Office Air Environment:

Three reports submitted for August. The new spreadsheet will be included next month.

County Fair Report/ Update/Discussion – Jim Winkler/Fred Andrist:

Winkler gave a report on things the Fair did well and things to improve. They will report on what they have worked on and in the next few months. Winkler said the Fair was successful and moved comments to Andrist. Andrist said they debriefed and are looking at operation improvement. They will work on their list of improvements and present them soon. Now that they have a quiet period, they will evaluate the Fair Coordinator. They have worked on the budget and are working with Myles on the strategic plan before the October budget hearing.

They think they lost only an hour or two of revenue during the short spells of Fair. The Fair is a significant county event. Part of the attraction is that the Fair is free and that the music is good. Winkler said people come to the 4-H tent just because it is a good time. They plan to survey people next year to see what portion of the public they serve.

2020 Fair Budget:

The Fair concluded that they will ask for the \$16,000 for the Fair next year. Fred Andrist distributed the budget. Winkler said donation boxes increased from last year at \$300 to \$1000. Placement of the boxes helped. Fundraisers from CT's and Pat's Tavern were very successful this year. A new fundraiser, Movie Night, raised \$600 raised between the gate fee and concessions. Sponsorships were down from \$8,000 to \$4,000 due to some sponsorship requests being denied. Several of the entertainment costs were paid by business in place of a regular monetary donation. In-kind contributions will need to have a dollar value assigned. The year-to-date budget was shared but there will be more expense entries made for next month. Last year the Fair was in the black. Last year they had requested \$20,000 and received \$16,000 so there are anticipated expenses. They will continue to reach out to outlying communities, hosting events, because it is a county fair. There has been much progress with the Fair.

Jensen/Winkler made a motion to approve the Fair budget and forward on to the Administration Committee Budget Hearing process. All ayes; motion carried.

Consent Agenda Items Fair:

Motion by Jensen/Winkler made on approval for b presented. Monthly reports are pending. All ayes; motion carried.

Extension 2020 Budget Update:

The Committee approved the budget checklist and supplemental information last month, to forward onto the Budget Hearings. No new updates.

UW Extension Office Relocation:

Steve Nelson, Bob Mott and Merry Lehner toured the Northwoods Center building at Nicolet. The facility was recently updated and there were several areas presented for possible future office space for Extension. One room had two entrances that seemed appealing as office space, with some re-design. There are several classrooms available as conference rooms. Security is available in the evenings. There is short term parking available and the larger parking lot across the street. Sandy Bishop offered many options that could be negotiable. It seems like a good fit for Extension.

Educator Reports:

Carrie Kubacki: Numbers presented were from evaluations completed last year. Teen Court does not duplicate any services in Oneida County. There were 55 youth respondents last school year and 40 volunteer youth panelists, which Kubacki serves and basically run the program. The completion rates of the 55 youth 80% completed all sanctions on time and 20% did not. Teen court is in all major school districts for Oneida County. With her annual salary and expenses and an

estimated 100 teen youth, it would cost around \$300 a respondent to go through court. If youth panelists were included, it would be about \$200/youth for a year. Cost Savings and benefits in the county reveal according to the National Academies Press (2013) found an average of \$17,000 cost savings per youth participating in teen court versus the regular juvenile justice system. The cost of incarceration for youth on average (2014) is \$400/day and a full year would be \$100,000. A half time educator and volunteer monetary value is at about a \$25,000 estimate. Teens completed 140 hours of service, which equals \$3,500 in community service. There were 611 in youth volunteer time or \$18,000. The youth run the program. Extension provides the training and expertise to lead these youth who are the future of Oneida County. This is why Extension is valuable. There are options where youth would rather just pay a fine. The Youth Development portion of program would be to teach such individuals coping skills.

Andrea Rippley: Shared a graph and she received seven letters of support. The breakdown of support for youth and adults consists of Rippley and volunteers. The figures represent last year. The total number of Youth and Adults is 90. This year, 22 youth and eight adults volunteered with 4-H. The second column represents 4-H Community Service hours. The four essential elements are belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity in the community. The Committee asked her to show where youth are active and the clubs, in the County and outcomes gained.

Myles Alexander: Distributed a handout on the major programs performed by the Community Development Educator. It included the specifics of what happened, and who was involved. This is something that will happen if you do these things, which will produce positive outcomes. The Community Vitality Team Place Making Team along runs the Northwoods Economic Summit will make this valuable program happen in the Northwoods.

Terri Lindner: Will be receiving letters from Guy Hansen with the Rhinelander Food Pantry, the School District, and others. Lindner stated that Extension starts a program, such as the backpack program to help needy student, helps get the Community Garden going, the Food Pantry going. Extension and FoodWise get them established, and then those organizations are able to proceed on their own and Extension pulls out. This is how Extension operates behind the scenes to enhance the Community to help themselves. These efforts of Extension are often overlooked.

Consent Agenda Items – Extension:

Jensen/Ives moved to accept item b as presented, with monthly budget reports pending. All ayes; motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Items to include on next Agenda:

Report review for LWCD and UWEX after the budget hearings. Follow up on FSA representative. LWCD Cost Share, events, consent agendas, Extension and Fair consent agendas, UWEX office relocation, Air environment, educator reports.

Adjournment:

Mott adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Merry Lehner, Recording Secretary

Bob Mott, Committee Chair