

**AMC Extension Committee Meeting  
Conference Call  
February 5, 2009**

Commissioners present on conference call: Marcia Ward, Victoria Reinhardt, Tom Anderson, Sharon Bring, Jon Baerg, Bruce Kubicek, Jon Evert, Loren Tusa, Dick Larson, Dick Mattson

Guests: Dr. Bev Durgan, Dean - University of MN Extension and Lee Raeth, Extension Field Operations Director

Toni Smith, AMC Extension Liaison took roll call of conference call participants.

Meeting called to order at 10:05 A.M. by Commissioner Marcia Ward, AMC Extension committee chair.

Commissioner Ward asked Commissioner Reinhardt to give the sub-committee recommendation. Commissioner Reinhardt stated that the committee members included Commissioners Tusa, Schouweiler, Larson and herself. They have been in communication with David Werner, U. of MN. Extension Chief Operating Officer. The committee is recommending a 0 percent increase and a change in the staff notification change ruling from 6 months to 3 months.

*The MOA states that “ the costs payable for the local Extension positions will be reviewed annually by the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC Extension Committee) and University’s Extension central administration at which time the parties will agree on an appropriate inflation factor for the coming year. Unless County and University otherwise agree, the inflation factor for the year will be as agreed to by AMC and the University.”*

Commissioner Reinhardt stated that the committee was very happy to receive the University of Minnesota Extension administrations offer of a zero percent increase. Extension administration understands what counties are experiencing and the increasing difficulties in 2010. With this understanding of the financial constraints on counties they suggested the zero percent increase in the agreement. The second recommendation is

found in point #7 of the MOA. It states, *“The County or University will provide a minimum of six (6) months notice if either party desires a change in programs that result in a decrease in the staffing or funding level.”* As stated, it means a county that wishes to alter the percent time a staff person is hired in the county would be required to give a 6 month notice. The University is recommending that this be changed to 3 months. Committee members were aware that this change did not favor the University because in some cases Extension may be liable for the employee in some cases up to a year due to contract constraints. Even though they have this liability they are recommending the change to assist counties.

Bev Durgan, fielded questions about the recommendation. The commissioners wondered if a county cut a support staff person from full time to part time does it affect the MOA. Dr. Durgan discussed how we need to have a conversation about this issue to discuss how the support staff change may have an effect on the work load of the local educator and possibly the quality of the program. Another commissioner asked about the possibility of furloughs to save money. How might a one day a week furlough affect the MOA? Dr. Durgan reiterated that they need to stay in communication about the various ways counties were exploring to save funds. What about three year contracts, what will happen to them? Dr. Durgan stated that they will be amended with the changes. She also challenged the committee to think about creative ways counties may combine services or explore doing the work differently. Another question from commissioners focused on paying fees for 4-H. Dr. Durgan stated that she has asked staff to research and explore all options. At this time she would only be interested in fees if they can be used to supplement local programming. Commissioner Kubicek stated that he served on a 4-H fees committee about five years ago and he thought there was very good work done at that time to discuss fee options. Dr. Durgan will get the results of that committee work.

The AMC Extension MOA sub committee made the recommendation to the AMC Extension committee to accept the zero percent increase to the MOA and a change in the 6 month to 3 month stipulation for changing positions. Further discussion and final vote on this recommendation will occur at the April 29, 2009 AMC Extension Committee meeting. Dick Larson made a motion to send a notification about the changes in the MOA and the final vote on April 29<sup>th</sup> to all commissioners in the state. The motion seconded by

Dick Mattson and passed. Toni Smith will work with Commissioner Reinhardt to send the memo to commissioners before the April meeting.

II. Call for nominations for chair and co-chair of the AMC Extension committee. Commissioner Ward was nominated to serve in the chair position for the next year and Commissioner Reinhardt was nominated to serve as vice chair. Elections will be held at the April 29, 2009 meeting.

III. The AMC 4-H Community Youth Leadership Awards committee members including Commissioners Nelson, Woehler, Tusa, Bring and Anderson will be receiving the packet of applications to judge by March 20<sup>th</sup>. They will have two weeks to read the applications and submit their choices. This award is given at the April 29 AMC Legislative Conference.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at the Crowne Plaza hotel in St. Paul at 7:30 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Toni Smith