

AMC Extension Committee Meeting
Thursday, August 23, 2007
Al Johnson Great Room – McNamara Center – University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Meeting Minutes

11:45 A.M. Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, AMC Extension committee vice-chair, welcomed the group to the meeting. Commissioner Reinhardt explained that Winona County Commissioner Marcia Ward, AMC Extension committee chair, would be unable to attend the meeting due to recent issues caused by major flooding in SE Minnesota.

Commissioners present: Commissioners Victoria Reinhardt, John Baerg, Bruce Kubicek, Loren Tusa, Dick Larson, Keith Nelson, Sharon Bring, Bob Gustafson, Nancy Schouweiler, David Benson
University of Minnesota Extension staff: Bev Durgan, Jeanne Markell, David Werner, Lee Raeth, Sarah Greening, Aimee Viniard-Weideman
Guest speakers: Karen Shirer, Dick Hemmingsen, Dave Moen, Julie Weisenhorn

12:30 Meeting called together by Commissioner Reinhardt. Commissioner Nelson moved and Commissioner Gustafson seconded the motion to accept the minutes from the last meeting conducted on March 28, 2007. Motion carried.

Update from Bev Durgan, University of Minnesota Extension Dean: Dr. Durgan welcomed the group to the McNamara building, location of the state 4-H program offices. Bev outlined the recent changes in Extension administration: David Werner will be serving as chief operations officer; Lee Raeth will assume the role of director of field operations for the entire state; and Jeanne Markell has accepted the one-year Ralph Tabor Fellow position in Washington D.C. at NACo starting January 1, 2008.

A new leadership program, “U-Lead Advisory Academy,” is specifically designed for advisory committee members and will begin this fall with seven introductory sessions across the state. Throughout 2008 the program will evolve into a more comprehensive leadership cohort program that county Extension committee members and other advisory committee members can apply to. This effort is modeled after the very popular MARL program and has been developed by Extension’s Community Vitality staff with assistance from government relations staff.

Update from Jeanne Markell, University of Minnesota Extension Associate Dean: Jeanne discussed her Tabor fellowship in Washington D.C. and the priority issues for NACo in 2008. The issues: obesity, foster care policy and green government will set the stage for an interesting year for her collaborative work with NACo.

Update on MOA: Lee Raeth and David Werner gave an update on the current status of the MOAs. Regional directors are working closely with county commissioners and administrators to discuss budgets and make arrangements to have all MOAs signed in 87 counties. So far 14 counties have signed the agreement and all 14 are going with the three-year option. Commissioner Reinhardt congratulated the commissioners for their work in negotiating the agreement. David and Lee asked the commissioners on the committee to help get three messages out to their fellow commissioners at district meetings or other events where there are commissioners and administrators. These messages

include:

- County Extension positions (FTEs) have increased each year since 2005
- County Extension financial support has been up each year since 2005
- County partnership presence remains at 100%

When discussing these numbers, remember that they only include the local positions in the MOA and does not include the NEAs or the county based support staff. All 87 counties continue to partner with Extension. One county does not have a position but they do have an Extension staff person working through a position funded by Soil and Water.

Commissioner Nelson expressed some concern about the career paths for newly hired local Extension staff. What kind of promotion system would there be for these individuals? Bev Durgan responded that there will be a promotion system established that recognizes local contributions. Extension administration finished the regional staff promotion system and will be working on the local process in the future.

Commissioner Larson commented that the Kandiyohi County Extension budget increased 18.7%. Commissioner Reinhardt stated that they have increased their funding for the master gardener coordination by \$15,000 with additional grant funds. Commissioner Kubicek stated that the current 4-H program is maxed out. The staff person is working as many hours as she can. They have asked for a part-time person to address the non-traditional program. Commissioner Tusa stated that the non-traditional program is increasing in Jackson County. Commissioner Benson stated that they are just starting Parents Forever in Nobles County. Commissioner Reinhardt stated that they were very happy to have Ramsey County selecting a farm family of the year. The family grows apples and there was a discussion about the new apple variety available on September 7th. The group discussed the newly released delicious apple called Zestar.

Update on Extension Family Development Programming Karen Shirer, University of Minnesota Family Development Capacity Leader and Associate Dean outlined the program emphasis in Extension family development: Family Relations, Family Resource Management, and Health and Nutrition. Commissioners may be familiar with some of the program titles: Families with Teens, Families Forever, Parent Education, Financial Security in Later Life, Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate, DollarWorks, Rent Wise, Home Stretch, Youth and Money and the Food and Nutrition education program. In 2006 the 110 nutrition education program assistants had 1,019,154 indirect contacts with MN clients and 231,031 direct contacts; (57,261 of these people completed an average of 6 hours of training).

During the discussion about prevention education Commissioner Reinhardt talked about her doctoral dissertation entitled; An Ounce of Prevention: Taxpayer Costs Avoided through Preventing Crime. The group wanted to read more about her study and they may access it:
<http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/cb/district7/newsletters/victoria.pdf>

The link for the PowerPoint summary is:

<http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/NR/rdonlyres/BFB1ACAA-D16B-4E52-8169-9639C82E0DB0/8026/AnOunceofPrevention507.pdf>

Commissioner Reinhardt had to leave the meeting at 2:30 p.m. so past chair Commissioner Kubicek assumed leadership of the meeting.

Stakeholder Valuation of Extension's Master Gardener Program: University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener Program Manager David Moen and Director Julie Weisenhorn discussed the results and implications of the public benefits study conducted on the Extension Master Gardener Program. There are 2,300 master gardeners in Minnesota and they pay \$200 each and are expected to give 50 hours of volunteer service followed by 25 hours each year thereafter. They are a direct face of the University across the state and their work has definite impact in communities throughout Minnesota. There are two values in the program: self-interest and public value. The self-interest includes personal education in horticulture and the opportunity to make a community contribution. Examples of how the program increases public value include work with Habitat for Humanity; plant clinics at farmers markets; junior master gardener programs for youth; and work with group homes, nursing homes and correctional institutions.

The group took a break at 3:00 p.m. and members of the University of Minnesota Extension Citizens' Advisory Committee joined the group to participate in the last program on the agenda.

Renewable Energy Programs at the University of Minnesota; Status, Challenges, Opportunities: Dick Hemmingsen, Director, University of Minnesota Initiative for Renewable Energy and the Environment discussed the research currently occurring at the University in the area of renewable energy. Examples of just a few of the research projects include: carbon negative fuels, diverse prairie systems; bacterial production of petroleum from sugar; unlocking lignin which is critically important for woody mass; wind energy; next generation engines; reforming ethanol and bio mass in hydrogen.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. AMC Extension Committee members and Extension Citizens' Advisory Committee members traveled to the MN State Fair where they toured the 4-H building, heard a special presentation on 4-H youth development programming in math and science and had front row seats for the 2007 performance of the 4-H Arts In show.