

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors
Agriculture & Extension Education Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 19, 2020
Walworth County Government Center Room 114
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

Chair Brian Holt called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present, either in person or by remote attendance: Chair Brian Holt; Vice Chair Daniel Kilkenny; FSA Representative Sharon Travis; and Citizen Members Kathleen Papcke and Jennifer Straus. Supervisor Nancy Russell was absent. A quorum was declared.

Others in Attendance

County Staff: County Administrator Mark W. Luberda; Area UW-Extension Director Christine Wen; Human Development and Relationships Educator Amanda Kostman; Horticulture Outreach Specialist Julie Hill; Agriculture Educator Jim Versweyveld; 4-H Youth Development Educator Debbie Harris; 4-H Youth Development Coordinator Janel Heidelmeier; and FoodWise Program Coordinator Lisa Krolow

On motion by FSA Representative Travis, second by Citizen Member Straus, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.

On motion by FSA Representative Travis, second by Citizen Member Papcke, the July 20, 2020 Agriculture and Extension Education Committee minutes were approved.

Public Comment – There was none.

New Business

7a. 2021 Extension Contract

Area UW-Extension Director Christine Wen provided an overview of the 2021 Extension Contract and highlighted sections pertaining to volunteerism and the financial commitment of Walworth County.

Citizen Member Papcke offered a motion, second by FSA Representative Travis, for recommended approval of the 2021 Extension Contract. Motion Carried 5-0.

Reports

8a. Program and Telecommuting Report

Wen stated UW-Extension has been adapting programs by following all rules set by the County, State, and University of Madison in regards to face coverings, social distancing, and sanitizing procedures. UW-Extension will continue to monitor guidelines provided by Health and Human Services in order to maintain good relationships with County partners.

8b. Horticulture Outreach Specialist Educator Report

Horticulture Outreach Specialist Julie Hill provided highlights regarding the following programs that occurred during the growing season this summer and early fall:

- She continues to receive normal horticulture diagnostic questions from residential consumers regarding their home lawns and gardens. She either provides consumers with resources they can use at home or refers them to other resources for consultation. Overall, compared to last year she has seen a 200% increase in inquiries.

- Master Gardener volunteers and Hill provided weekly virtual programming in partnership with Aram Public Library using Facebook live. They offered gardening advice on a variety of topics, provided resources, and answered participant's questions. For those unable to attend, these programs are saved on Aram Public Library's Facebook page. Hill anticipates they will continue to work with local libraries and offer similar programming throughout the winter and into next year.
- A Foundations in Horticulture course is now being offered online with removed limitations so a greater number of people can have access. The online format allows participants to take the course based on their own schedule, which participants have found to be beneficial.
- The Master Gardener program saw an increase of 17 new volunteers and training has been switched from in person classes to an online format. Recently, more volunteer opportunities have opened up that can be done safely outdoors which is valuable to the community.
- Hill discussed a recent virtual presentation and stated they have noticed an increase in attendance at these virtual programs because participants are better able to attend. Participants are asked to complete a survey that provides valuable feedback on what to offer in the future. Hill anticipates seeing more of these events either from herself or from other guest speakers.

8c. Agriculture Educator Report

Agriculture Educator Jim Versweyveld provided a brief overview of agricultural programs offered over the next few months. Additional information regarding these programs can be found on the UW-Extension Agriculture page on Walworth County's website or on the UW Extension Walworth County Facebook page.

- The Heart of the Farm is an outreach program for women in agriculture beginning next month on November 9th.
- Farm Management Fridays is a webinar series starting January 8th at 11 a.m. that will continue every other Friday through April.
- Winter Dairy program series beginning in December will take place every Tuesday afternoon at 1 p.m.
- Pesticide applicator training will be in February. The training modules will be offered online and then small groups will be brought in for testing. Any farmers reluctant to do the training online can come in for individualized training.

8d. 4-H Program Educator Report

4-H Youth Development Coordinator Janel Heidelmeier spoke about the following topics:

- The new 4-H Community Club Program. She referred to the secondary packet of information provided and stated within that packet is a welcome letter, which provides a more in depth look at the four pillar framework for this program.
- Cloverbuds at Home series. Cloverbuds at Home is offered to grades K-12 with two activities per month; one being self-led and the other staff-lead with optional Zoom interaction.
- Fliers will be distributed at schools to promote 4-H within the County and possibly gain new members.
- Heidelmeier explained that these programs and challenges are created so that there is equal opportunity for participation. Virtual programs can be accessed via either phone or computer, but if a child does not have access to a phone or computer, they can still participate in the challenges.

8e. 4-H Educator Report

4-H Youth Development Educator Debbie Harris elaborated further on the following 4-H programs that she has had the responsibility of coordinating:

- 4-H Road Trip, Geocaching, and monthly interactive meeting challenges.

- Outreach efforts, one of which is a virtual career series where guest scientists shared presentations about their career and participants were then able to ask questions.
- Walworth County will also be collaborating with four other Southwest Wisconsin counties for a six session series titled Discover 4-H. This program is designed for families to learn more about the 4-H programs.
- Harris concluded by sharing that she worked with colleagues to prepare a presentation titled, Volunteer Training: Escape the Ordinary, which displays efforts to use escape rooms as a training tool. This presentation will be shared at the upcoming virtual conference.

Chair Holt read an email from Supervisor Nancy Russell where she complimented the group on their innovation to keep 4-H interesting and fun for its members.

8f. Human Development and Relationships Extension Educator Report

Human Development and Relationships Educator Amanda Kostman provided a brief update on recent and upcoming events:

- They received a 1st place National award from the National Association for Family and Consumer Sciences for the Rent Smart Program and she presented the Rent Smart Program at the National Conference. Kostman stated this program has participation across the State and County of both renters and landlords. This is a partnership program with a variety of educators throughout the state.
- There are plans to do another Train the Trainer program in December, which already has registrants.
- Other programs are Independent Living Program, encouraging financial conversations that is a professional development opportunity; Aging Mastery Program; Taking Care of You, and Strong Women Online.

8g. FoodWise Coordinator Educator Report

FoodWise Program Coordinator Lisa Krolow provided the following updates:

- FoodWise is starting programming now and completing partnership agreements with all former partners. Due to COVID, they are moving lessons to virtual formatting and working with their school partners to see what formats work best.
- Currently, they are in their third week of the program at the Community Learning Center in Delavan. She reports the program has been going well and the kids have adapted well to the virtual format.
- They are working on adapting the Strong Bodies Program to a virtual format. This strength-building program is aimed at older adults to help participants stay independent longer.
- The monthly program at the Association for Prevention Family Violence is being moved from face-to-face to a virtual format.
- Literature with nutrition information is being delivered to local food pantries for distribution to families picking up food.

8h. Extension committee report feedback

Wen asked for feedback or suggestions from the Committee about this group style of reporting. Holt felt this was an effective method of reporting and believes this format is preferable for the time being. He also asked for feedback regarding the need to innovate these programs to adapt to COVID. Wen, Heidelmeier, Harris, Verswyveld, Hill, Kostman, and Krolow all responded with their individual experiences and thoughts in regards to the changes in programming as it pertains to COVID.

Reports/announcements by Chairperson – There were none.

Confirmation of next meeting: The next meeting was confirmed for Monday, December 14, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion by Citizen Member Papcke, second by FSA Representative Travis, the meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Submitted by Lindsey Ross, Administrative Assistant. Meeting minutes were approved at the December 14, 2020 Agriculture and Extension Education Committee meeting.