

**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee
August 17, 2017 Special Meeting
Minutes**

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

Others present: Steve Nelson, Lynn Feldman, Sara Richie, Beckie Gaskill, and Merry Lehner.

Call to order: Chairman Mott called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. noting the meeting was properly posted and the facility handicap accessible.

Approve Agenda: Motion by Van Raalte/ Winkler to approve today's agenda with the order of the items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the staffing of the three educators and the impact of the reduction of allocations from the University of Wisconsin system budget cuts to Extension and how it will affect their positions. The Committee will need to decide and recommend to the County Board what will be provided at the budget proceedings in October 2017. Recommendations will be coming from all the County departments on their budgets. We will need specific recommendations today about how we will proceed with staffing for UW-Extension in Oneida County. The re-organization will affect the type of services provided and which will be available and who will perform the services. As part of the reduction, we will review the choices available. One, we can keep the services as they are with three educators full time in our County, providing the same services. Two, we can opt for specific services at a percentage of time for our County to come up with the new costs. There might be other proposals to explore as well. Steve Nelson will provide an overview of how the new structure will work. Then each educator will present their position and what they recommend for program areas and what percentage they would recommend, if sharing their positions with another county.

1. Support Staff:

The Horticulture LTE position was eliminated. Those inquiries are now handled by the support staff. The Master Gardener Program is performed by the support staff. There are two components to it, one is the record keeping for active, certified volunteers who must complete an assigned number of hours annually, and the other component is facilitating the class for Oneida County every other year. The program is county funded but the resources are provided by the State. The horticulture position was a State position and supported program but it is now being run by county support staff. Under the new structure the Master Gardener program appears to be under the Agriculture Institute /Center for Horticulture. It needs to be determined if the support staff can or cannot continue in this role. Certified Master Gardeners now volunteer in the office addressing inquiries that formerly were handled by the horticulture position. Other programs that support staff oversee are soil samples, water kits, and administering PAT (pesticide application testing) exams.

The support staff provides many hours of assistance to the Fair which impact the staff budget due to the current amount of hours involved. The 4-H Program support position involved creating the Fair Book and inserting entries, extensive communication with exhibitors, setting up the school exhibit program, and creating the DATCP fair report, all of which require many hours. The record keeping for vendors and

sponsorships, deposits, contract monitoring, creating expense sheets and preparing vouchers, and other financial related duties are performed by Extension office staff. The State does not cover support staff salaries; it is County paid. It was questioned how an Area Director will keep tabs on the duties of support staff and even educators, remotely. If the Committee defines their roles and staff steps outside those duties, they want to know how it will be handled.

2. Educators

Mott commented that all the services are needed. Commentary was provided by the educators on the services that they provide. Nelson suggested if desired we could keep all the programming. If the Committee opts for this route, the County Board will have to be convinced. Jensen mentioned the challenge involved with working out the kinks between four different counties that embrace different cultures from each other. The role of the State Specialist in our county, will be to provide a service instead of the educator. The specialists based on UW campuses and in Cooperative Extension are responsible for developing and delivering programs across the state. They will identify the needs of audiences across the state and determine what programs or services will be developed to address those needs. Nelson said that the building of relationships is the difference. Pat Goggin is an example of what a state specialist would look like.

3. Steve Nelson

Nelson provided a breakdown for our counties of what the Extension budgets have been for the past four years along with the projected 2018 budgets. It outlined the number of full time employees for each county and cost per resident for those services. Cost per county resident figures are significant for rural and less populated counties. There was further discussion on future county percentages for educators and what other counties have decided on so far. The cost of services takes into account the baseline of staff from the statewide pool of 220 positions. Some counties will have higher paid staff while other counties will have newer, lower paid staff providing services. The higher and lower pay scales average out. Salaries run in the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range. If Oneida County proposed to keep educators full time, the \$10,000 discount would be applied as an equalizer, for the smaller populated rural counties in the first year. The job function will change from being an educator to the person that runs a program. Mott asked if educators kept their positions "as is" how their job would change.

Lynn Feldman – 4-H Youth Development

Feldman's role would still be different at 100% with this county due to less involvement with Fair duties and the elimination of her role as department head. She would change how she would approach 4-H. She would devote more time to volunteer development. Less time would be devoted to annual enrollment, which has increased from 48 to 97. Clubs grew from one to currently three. Even at 100% her focus would change and she would put more oversight into 4-H and less to grass roots. She would augment her leadership role. At 75%, she kept 4-H in all percentage scenarios. If 4-H is not picked up by a county, the clubs cannot exist. Another county is not going to pick up that cost. Afterschool programs cannot be run by schools without 4-H branding. Feldman wants to keep the 4-H program regardless of the 25%, 50%, or 75%. It is the base of her position. She encouraged the County to keep it. Diversity and anti-bullying is also something she wanted to keep. She wants to retain leadership development and work force readiness. If she had to eliminate something it would be (25%) allotted to AODA through Teen Court.

Sara Richie - Family Living

What could be reduced? All the programs are important and it is difficult to take any one of them away from the community. When an educator comes into a county they assess the county needs. They then come up with programs and go to training to provide the needed services. That is where their expertise comes in. Richie feels that Parents Forever is one of the most important programs and should not be cut. The program is once a month and the Department of Social Services refers parents. The Parenting percentage should be kept at 20% and that would include all of her parenting programs, such as eParenting and Just in Time Parenting Newsletters. The mailings could be an administrative function. Aging programming is very important based on the ages of the population in our county. The first area, Youth and Family-Center for Human Development and Relationships, total could be reduced from 40% to 30%. That would include all parenting, aging and Trauma Informed Care programming. For Health and Well Being, the highlighted areas, Reducing Rural Cancer Disparities percentage could go down and the Nutrition Education Healthy Eating on Budget could be reduced or eliminated. She would hand the Safe and Healthy Food Pantries Project over to FoodWise. When asked if she could chose her preference, she stated that she would want to be 100% in Oneida County. If decided to keep Richie's position in this county at 75% could she do it? She said that is what the new model requires of most educators.

Myles Alexander

Alexander was not able to attend the meeting, but the major priorities of his position are identified as Economic Development, Attract and Retain Young People, Community and Organization Capacity Building and Leadership, Common Vision, Trails and Natural Resources, and Broadband Access. The following areas were considered for areas that could possibly be eliminated. One, eliminate 15% for the Rhinelander Parks Public Participation, where much work has been completed. Another elimination would be 8% involved with OCECD and Broadband, and the Oneida County Lakes and River Association (OCLRA). The 8% for Rhinelander Parks Public Engagement could be eliminated as well. This would total 31% of his documented programs he supports.

The Committee needs to consider the options available. If there is a list of what they decide to remove, recommendations would be needed on who would take over those tasks. We will not have that programming anymore, once a decision is made. One option is to elect to have the educators work at 75% in Oneida and 25% elsewhere. The other option is to ask if the Committee wants to advocate to keep the educators at 100% in Oneida County. One would have to prioritize and rank duties for each educator under the proposed percentage cost of the \$87,415. An example would be to eliminate Teen Court and have it funded by the court system. It is difficult to know where to draw a line on Extension programming. Each educator will receive a new job description with expected outcomes. The process of the county saying what they want will not be made until after budgets are completed. Specialists may engage in some programming that an educator cannot perform as mandated by the county. Out of county travel funding, as it relates to professional development, will need to be more fully defined based on the percentage model. There will be a flat fee for travel. How will professional development be covered under the approved program? The Committee could recommend the county cost of \$114,062 or could keep all educators at full time in Oneida County.

If the educators remained at full time, the cost would be \$114,062 opposed to the percentage model at \$87,415. If at the budget meeting the 100% proposal is rejected, then they will propose the \$87,415 percentage budget as the alternative and reconvene with UW-Extension. The other plan is to present the cuts as discussed at this meeting for each educator. The Committee will propose the full budget and then present the percentage budget.

A motion was made by Winkler/Mott that they are asking for three full-time educators at 1.0 (100% for three positions) at the estimated cost of \$114,062 and to be presented to Administration. All ayes; motion carried.

4. Fair Budget:

For last year, \$16,000 was brought in by the County plus the billable amount put in by support staff out of the extension budget. Unless they wish to increase that, it was proposed to keep it the same for 2018. Feldman's role in the fair will be only in the in educational aspects of the Fair. The Fair will have to find volunteers or employ additional help for areas covered by Feldman in the past. The Fair will have to determine how the \$16,000 will be used to accomplish those tasks in the future. With Feldman's reduced duties, those tasks will either be assumed by volunteers or could be billed out to another Fair staff position. In the second scenario the Fair might ask for a budget increase. A decision will need to be made to be included in the agenda for the September 11 meeting. The other option is to explore if the Fair can reimburse support staff for their services.

Support staff logged in, to date, 305 hours to the Fair. It was estimated to cost \$2,000 for support staff to provide those services, and would cost even more, once the LTE position goes back to a permanent position. Currently, approximately 19.5% of support staff time is devoted to the Fair. Feldman will prepare the Fair budget based on the 2017 parameters. There will be 20% allotted to 4-H in the budget. Feldman logged 250 hours at the Fair. If Feldman reduces her time by 80% and support staff duties increase, this must be presented to both the Fair Committee and to the County Board. Logged hours will have to be presented and raised at the Budget meeting.

Winkler and Feldman cannot attend the Fair Committee meeting on August 29. Mott cannot attend as substitute on August 29 and asked if it could be rescheduled. No committee member will be present at the August 29 Fair meeting and it was asked that a memo will be drafted to see if the Fair will consider re-scheduling the August 29 date to Tuesday, September 5.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn was made by Jensen/Ives at 2:00 p.m. All ayes; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bob Mott, Committee Chair



Merry J. Lehner, Recording Secretary