

Green County

Agriculture and Extension Education Committee

January 3, 2024 MINUTES

The January 3, 2024, meeting of the Agriculture and Extension Education Committee was called to order at 8:31 am by Extension Green County Ag and Extension Chair, Sue Nelson.

Members present were: Sue Nelson, Jerry Guth, Dawn Sass, and Peg Sheaffer. Kathy Pennington was excused. Also present—Jayne Butts, Extension Green County Office Manager; Lynn Perkins, Area Extension Director; Jackie McCarville, Agriculture Educator; Ellen Andrews, 4-H Youth Development Educator; Bridget Mouchon, Health & Well-Being Educator; and Victoria Solomon, Community Development Educator.

Green County Educator Oral Report

Oral Presentation- Bridget Mouchon, Health & Well-Being Educator

Bridget Mouchon presented on her programming with “Sources of Strength”. This program is taught to shift the mental health messaging from discussing suicide, to discussing the importance of upstream prevention, as well as intervention and postvention. The model is based on sources of strength with an emphasis on positive messages (hope, health, and strength) rather than negative messages. Bridget will be working on presentations for Juda and Monticello schools to encourage implementing this in their schools. Argyle and Monroe School Districts already have this in place for the high school levels. Kids are the “conduit” for this program’s success. Possible other areas suggested for the training might be the libraries, HCE groups and Optimists.

Ellen Andrews – briefly discussed how it’s important with these types of programs to have updated trainings after the initial training. As with her Adult Volunteers, it used to be they were trained once and good to go unless they had interrupted service. Now, volunteers do the initial training and then have updates each year. Andrews also presented a request sheet for committee members to participate on a 4-H scholarship review committee.

Green County Educator Reports--Written Report for Educators

Written Educator Reports were discussed and the following questions were asked:

Nelson for Mouchon—asked about an educator funding issue for an event--Mouchon noted it is built into the cost of the event.

Nelson for all—questioned the online reporting system. Comments were made that we are working within the system, however there are still challenges.

Minutes Approval – Sass moved to approve the November 8, 2023, Ag & Extension committee meeting minutes and Sheaffer seconded. Motion passed.

Bill Approval – For minute purposes, Butts discussed a change on the October EFT payment approved amount of \$292.80 that was changed to \$161.14. (Bills were presented correctly to Finance); Discussed bills for November that were approved via email or committee members stopping in since there was no meeting—EFT \$346.19 and Check Payments \$664.32. Guth moved to approve the December EFT payments of \$202.62 and December Check Payments of \$2,232.90 second by Sass. Motion passed.

Area Extension Director Updates

Area 17 Staffing Update

- **Regional Livestock Agriculture Educator**—Kimberly Kester, will be starting February 20, 2024. Kim will be based out of the Grant County office.

- **Regional Crops & Soils Ag Educator** – Jordyn Sattler will be starting January 16th, 2024, and will be based out of the Green County office.
- **Regional Dairy Ag Educator**—Jackie McCarville will be switching to be based out of Iowa County.
- **Iowa County Human Development Educator**—Position was reposted, just closed and has six applicants.

UW-Extension Local Government Specialist

Bill Oemichen, UW-Extension Local Government Law, will be utilizing some vacant office space in Iowa County for his Extension work. Perkins is reviewing what he could do for counties in exchange.

Educator Performance Review Process

Perkins will be starting the review process with the educators, with the exception of Victoria, who is faculty. Discussions will be made with Sue Nelson about how best to gather general feedback from committee members. Butts also noted it would be beneficial for her to provide feedback.

Office Manager Updates

Annual Report Presentation Plans—Butts noted we plan to do our annual presentation at the March county board meeting on March 12. Prior to that meeting, at the February Ag & Extension meeting, we will discuss the Annual Report.

Donation To UW-Extension Green County—Butts discussed a \$5,000 donation received from the Wisconsin Swiss & Limburger Cheese Producers Association for agricultural and dairy related projects. Nelson questioned a thank you being written and requested a thank you be drafted for the Ag & Extension Committee to send. Butts will follow up.

County Support Staff Evaluation Plans—Butts noted the employee review process for County UW-Extension employees usually happens in January/February, however, Samantha will only have been here about 6 months by then and therefore, Butts asked if it could be extended until May/June. The committee felt that was fine.

Other Business

Internet Issues – Butts/Andrews noted we have been experiencing internet issues with delayed response time that interrupts our production efforts. Investigations are being made with the IT Department and the State, however, no detailed resolutions have been found to date.

Butts apprised the committee of some counties who have decided not to sign the state contracts with Extension. Discussion was made about changes in Washington County. As we begin to prepare our Annual Report and as an awareness issue for our committee members and other County Board members attending the Wisconsin Counties Association meetings, we wanted an awareness of this known. There is a general concern that people in Green County understand the value of Extension. Guth compared this to Southwest Regional Planning Commission and discussed understanding return on investment (ROI). Follow up will continue.

Good News Sharing—Ellen Andrews and Victoria Solomon have been invited to present to the UW-Provost in January as a result of the positive remarks from the previous Chancellor presentations.

Advertising has begun for the summer positions in the UW-Extension Department, which will include our college intern, our summer high school assistant, and our Americorp 4-H Position (focusing primarily on new recruitment) previously discussed.

Next meeting: February 7, 2024, at 8:30am.

Motion by Sass, second by Sheaffer to adjourn at 9:54 am. Motion carried.