

Vernon County Agricultural and Extension Education Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2009

Vice-chairman Will Beitlich called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were: Beitlich, McClelland, Larson, Easterday, Rehbein, Pulvermacher, Lenzendorf and Traastad.

The public meeting notice was sent to the Vernon County Broadcaster, County Clerk, Personnel Coordinator, and Computer department on September 1, 2009.

Easterday moved, Larson seconded, to approve the minutes as sent. Motion carried.

The next meeting date will be October 12, 2009.

There were no visitors in attendance.

Easterday moved, Larson seconded, to approve the Teen Court expenses of \$600 and the office operations and special accounts expenses of \$4354.60. Motion carried.

Traastad discussed the agent annual contracts received from UW-Extension, Madison. These contracts reflect the 3.065% reduction in staff salaries due to the state employee 8-day mandatory furloughs.

Easterday moved, McClelland seconded, to approve the annual UW-Extension agents 133 contracts for the state fiscal year of July 1, 2009 through June 31, 2010. Motion carried.

Traastad reported she turned in the department's budget showing a zero increase to the 2009 tax levy. The lack of increase planned for the state fiscal year of 2008/09 year and the decrease in agent's salaries for the 2009/2010 year were used to offset county staff minimal fringe increases for 2010.

Fee policies were reviewed and noted they were last revised in 1988. McClelland moved, Larson seconded, that only organizations affiliated with the department's programs can utilize the services and will be charged for printing, specialty paper, and special project supplies. Also, requests for services of bulletins, lab fees for plant/insect identification, and postage will be charged to the general public. Motion carried.

Traastad led review of the draft Phase II Comprehensive Plan document. The Planning Commission is looking for comments and suggestions from county supervisors and public.

Lenzendorf reported on August activities: October 1st is the start of the WNEP new year. WNEP is on a federal calendar which goes from October 1-September 30. Much of the past two weeks have been spent adapting new forms, getting the database ready for the new fiscal year and scheduling education sessions. Sonya is continuing to go to the New Hope Food Pantry and recently has been taking recipes for pinto beans since the food pantry has many of these and people are not sure what to do with them. In October, Sonya will also start going to the Viroqua WIC clinic once a month.

Pulvermacher reported on August activities: Background checks required by new and continuing volunteers have increased in price from \$2 to \$7 each, more than tripled in cost! In a 4-H program the size of Vernon County's with 300 certified volunteers, this significant increase will directly impact the 4-H leaders who pay these fees. Colleen attended State Fair and was able to see Vernon County youth in the dairy showing and the Seas Branch musical. Colleen also met with the State Fair Clothing Revue coordinators who allowed our intern, Katie Rhodes, to sit in on the training for Vernon County Clothing Revue delegates. Katie brought back lots of useful information in planning next year's county Clothing Revue. Colleen and Joanne Hornby met with a woman whose parents were from Vernon County. This family is giving a large financial gift to the 4-H program. Colleen is working on developing the criteria for this money to be used in the program as the donor wishes. Teen Court had just one case last month, and Colleen used food available from a function earlier that day so no food expenses were incurred for Teen Court. The Advisory Board is planning a training for adult volunteers. Five people have expressed interest. Colleen shared feedback from a participant evaluation in which a 17 year old expressed how

she had changed as a result of Teen Court. Cloverbud Camp was canceled due to low enrollment – only 5 youth. Colleen submitted a professional paper to the University and will have an author conference with the Research and Publications Committee in October. The current organizational structure of the 4-H Leader Parent Federation isn't working well. There are many "lifers" on the committee, and many vacant positions. Anna Wendorf, President of the Federation, is leading the effort to review the Constitution to ensure fair representation on the Federation board. Everyone Ready is a new research-based curriculum on volunteer development. Colleen is making a 3 year commitment to take this free course and will in turn become involved in teaching this at the state level. Colleen noted that this program of volunteer management is open to all disciplines of UW-Extension. Colleen is looking forward to the fall, and indicated that she would not be able to attend on Sunday due to a family commitment.

Rehbein reported on July and August activities: Conducted a vineyard visit with the area WDATCP pesticide enforcement specialist to discuss the challenges of herbicide drift with grape production. Also discussed how to best educate vineyard owners on following the Worker Protection Standard when it comes time for harvest; Conducted a pork quality assurance youth training for 3 swine exhibitors that are going to exhibit at the Wisconsin State Fair; Attended the Secretary of the USDA town hall meeting at the LaCrosse County Fair with the UW-Extension Ag and Natural Resources Extension Program Director. One of the main topics was the very low milk price for both traditional and organic milk; Assisted the Cattlemen in hosting their annual July Beef Promotion event at the fairgrounds; Conducted farm visits during the morning to Amish greenhouses and the afternoon to vineyards with two plant pathologists from the UW-Madison campus. The specialists wanted to see first hand the disease pressure during the growing season; Organized and carried out a viticulture tour to Michigan State University's Viticulture Field Day at Benton Harbor, Michigan. Nine grape growers from Wisconsin and Minnesota attended.

In August: Met with the dairy promotion committee to plan for activities at the upcoming county fair; Conducted two dairy expansion farm visits with Ag Engineer Dave Kammel; Hosted the 2009 Wisconsin Grape Growers Association annual summer vineyard walk at the Gene and Terese Burgholz Vineyard between Westby and Coon Valley. Over 80 people attended with growers coming from around Wisconsin, Minnesota and as far away as South Dakota. The growers learned about the new grape called Marquette. At the request of the FSA Executive Director, hosted a producer meeting on a new USDA program called ACRE. The UW-Extension Crop Insurance Specialist gave the presentation. Hosted the southwest grape IPM meeting at the Jeff and Mary Aderman vineyard just south of Viroqua. Fourteen growers attended. The main guest speaker was Tim Martinson from Cornell University. His expenses were paid for by a special IPM grant out of UW-Madison.

Participated in a mentor team meeting for the La Crosse County Agent. The 3 members of the mentor team reviewed his portfolio documents which will be submitted this fall for his application for tenure.

At the end of August with special grant funding from the UW-Extension Emerging Ag Markets Team, participated in a hop production study tour out in Washington State. The Buffalo County Ag Agent also attended. It is possible to grow hops in Wisconsin but the harvesting and processing and marketing needs to be worked on.

Traastad reported on August activities: Worked with department staff on the development of the department's budget.

Participated in the Housing Coalition meeting where the Comprehensive Plan Phase I and II documents were reviewed and additions developed. Additions on the Housing Element were then sent to Lynn Chakoian to be included in the document.

Planned, coordinated and promoted new fall classes of the Strong Women program. Three new classes will start with two in Viroqua and one in La Farge. Two informational meetings were held in August and the classes will start the week of September 14th.

Attended the Wisconsin Associated County Extension Committee District II meeting in Columbia County which featured tours of the Arlington Research Station.

Attended Child Development update training by the computer as a "webcast" from Madison. Also attended a county department head meeting.

Larson moved, McClelland seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried.