

Vernon County Agricultural and Extension Education Committee
Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2014

Chairman Kevin Larson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were: Larson, Easterday, Johnson, Lenzendorf, Whitty, Pulvermacher, Rehbein and Traastad.

The public meeting notice was mailed to the Vernon County Broadcaster, County Clerk and IT departments on January 8, 2014.

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

The next meeting date will be February 10, 2014, to conduct agent annual reviews with the regional director from UW-Extension, Madison.

No visitors from the public were in attendance.

Johnson moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the December 2013 Teen Court expenses of \$60.73. Motion carried.

Johnson moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the December 2013 office operation expenses of \$2,627.10. Motion carried.

Johnson moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the January 2014 Teen Court expense of \$750. Motion carried.

Johnson moved, Easterday seconded to approve the 2014 office expenses of \$905. Motion carried.

Lenzendorf & Whitty reported on WNEP activities for December 2013: WNEP provided lessons to both the North Crawford and Hillsboro After School Programs again in December. Both Sonya and Jen attended the Family Living Program District meeting in Madison. Sonya presented at the meeting with Jane Schaaf, Family Living Educator in Crawford County. Their presentation outlined the work that they have been doing in Crawford County organizing the Healthy Roots Coalition whose goal is to create healthy communities that help to reduce childhood obesity. Sonya has also been working on the multi-county project of producing the Food Sense newsletter – a quarterly WNEP newsletter about various nutrition topics. The newsletter has expanded in scope to include distribution statewide, was placed on a FYI website, and translated to Spanish and Hmong. Jen began visiting some of the senior meal sites in December. Eating more whole grains is the focus of this round of lessons. Jen presented on what constitutes a whole grain, why they are important for good health, and how to increase them in the diet. Jen has begun teaching in the La Farge Elementary and Sonya at Seneca Elementary. Jen reported that she will not be teaching at Prairie View Elementary in De Soto this year as she will be taking personal leave with the adoption of a son. De Soto has been notified and WNEP plans to resume teaching there next year.

Pulvermacher reported on December 2013 and early January 2014 activities: Colleen began with appreciation to Kevin Larson for attending the 4-H annual leadership banquet, as a 4-H dad and as a member of the Ag & Extension Committee. All of the required

charters, including tax reporting have been completed for all 16 4-H clubs. Colleen displayed the new UW Extension 4-H cobranded logo. The importance of this cobranding is so that the public understands that 4-H is an integral educational program offered through University of Wisconsin Extension. The new logo will be featured on letterhead, brochures, etc.

Colleen reported that she has collaborated with Tim in working with the horse project leaders, along with the horse superintendent at the county fair. To date the group has met four times. Colleen and Tim will be submitting a status report to fairboard members for their annual retreat this weekend. Copies of this status report will also be sent to Ag & Ext Committee members.

Colleen attended a Multicultural Awareness Training in Madison. This training is fully funded through the Dean's Office, at no expense to the county. During this training Colleen learned of her father's stroke and, once the training ended, she headed to the twin cities to be with her family. Colleen reported that her father did subsequently die and she was out of the office for 7 work days. Colleen expressed appreciation for the support from the office during that difficult time.

Colleen shared a year end Teen Court report which is submitted to the Wisconsin Teen Court Association. Highlights of that report include 45 youth being served in 2013 by Teen Court, most referrals coming from Circuit Court, underage drinking and traffic violations being the most common citations. Thirty two youth have successfully completed their sanctions, with 13 youth in the process of completing sanctions.

Colleen indicated she has two state reports due the end of the month and she plans to get those completed this week.

Rehbein reported on November and December 2013 activities: Participated in a new educational program that is conducted by a group of trained ag agents. The program is called "Management Assessment Center". The purpose is to evaluate participant's management skills and offer suggestions for improvement or for what areas to hire consultants for help. The program was aimed at farmers in the commercial fruit industry. A Vernon County grape grower attended the session. The grower indicated that the program is very useful when employees have to be hired to run the business. At state funded expense, met with the retiring president of the Wisconsin Wineries Association to discuss direction of that association and the Wisconsin Grape Growers Association. During the same trip, met with the president of the Wisconsin Brewer's Guild to invite him to speak at the annual hop seminar in March of 2014. Initiated the 4-H horse project review that was requested and how the horse project functions with the Vernon County Fair. This is a joint project with the 4-H and Youth Educator. Work will continue in the early months of 2014. Attended the area pest management update meeting and the soil and water update meeting in Sparta. This is where the University of Wisconsin Extension specialists share the results from all the research plots for 2013. A grievance was filed by a Extension Educator in another county with the Secretary of the Faculty in Madison. As a member of this committee, documents needed to be reviewed and as a result, a hearing was granted for January, 2014. This is at state expense. Met

with the dairy promotion committee to review holiday promotions and to select the farm for the 2014 dairy breakfast. The committee selected Steve and Gina Nickelotti of Genoa to host the breakfast. Planning meetings will start in late February. Assisted the Wisconsin Grape Growers Association in conducting the second phase of their strategic planning session. Carl Duley the ag agent in Buffalo County was lead for the two day event. The strategic plan is designed to guide the board decisions over the next couple of years. Attended the Vernon County Ag Society's annual meeting. Continue to serve on the advisory board for the UW-Center for Cooperatives housed at UW-Madison. A brief report was given as to how two large state-wide ag cooperatives have just recently bought out two of Vernon County's larger cooperatives. Continued monitoring the situation with the liquidation of Premier Meats. The sooner that the facility makes it through the bankruptcy process, the sooner it can be sold to a new owner, the sooner the doors can be hopefully opened again. Several days of vacation were used around the holidays.

Traastad reported on December 2013 activities:

Worked with staff on end of year review of the 2013 office operations budget and HoChunk funds for the UW-Extension department budget.

Ended the Strong Women/Strong Senior fall classes in Viroqua, Westby, La Farge and Chaseburg where 78 women participated. For the winter 2014 classes, organized, promoted, coordinated program, mailed flyers to participants and delivered flyers to county medical clinics for referrals.

Attended a state training in La Crosse on use of the Nexus tablet computers state UW-Extension issued each agent. Very informative day.

Spent time organizing and developing materials for the first planning meeting of the 2014 Reality Daze event to be held in January. This year the event will be held April 23, 2014, at the Westby Schools Field House gym as WTC is undergoing remodeling. I wrote for and we received the Wal-Mart Foundation grant of \$1,000, to hold the event. Schools cover their own busing and faculty expenses.

Spent time working on annual year-end reports for the UW-Extension system. They are due January 10, 2014.

Attended the Vernon County Agriculture Society annual meeting December 14, 2013.

Attended an Erlandson Building department head meeting December 31, 2013, to discuss building security concerns. A threat of violence came through the Human Service Department. This has raised questions of safety for employees working with the public. The department heads initiated discussion with the sheriff and facilities manager. More meetings to gather and analyze ideas will be held.

Took vacation time for family activities and the holidays.

Easterday moved, Johnson seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried.