

Vernon County Agricultural and Extension Education Committee
Meeting Minutes – March 10, 2014

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

The public meeting notice was sent to the Vernon County Broadcaster, County Clerk and Computer Department on March 3, 2014.

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

The next meeting date is set for May 12, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

No visitors from the public were in attendance.

Beitlich moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the remaining December 2013 office expenses of \$48.15. Motion carried.

Johnson moved, Beitlich seconded, to approve the Teen Court expenses of \$787.25. Motion carried.

Beitlich moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the February office operations expenses of \$963.84 and special accounts of \$216.57. Motion carried.

Traastad reported on January and February activities: On behalf of the staff, we want to thank you for your evaluation input on our programs and work this past year.

Worked with the Reality Daze planning committee from 10 schools to get set for the event on April 23rd. As chairman, need to keep the committee on track and help with contacting volunteers, organizing and obtaining needed supplies, updating the expense booklet the volunteers use, coordinate with the new facility on set-up needs for event, publicity, release, etc.

Winter sessions of Strong Women and Strong Seniors started up January 7, 2014, in Viroqua, Westby, La Farge and Chaseburg. Same instructors will again teach, with 81 registering for these classes.

Worked on state reports for UW-Extension and wrote success stories on the 2013 Healthy Hearts Program and the HCE celebration. These written and statistical reports were due by January 10, 2014.

Conducted a financial counsel session with a retired individual from the Hillsboro area.

Attended the Southern Region annual meeting in Wisconsin Dells February 20 and 21st as part of the office team.

Rehbein reported on January and February activities: For January assisted Westby Coop Credit Union in planning a farm business management program that was held in Richland Center. The two keynote speakers were a faculty member from the UW-Madison School of Business and a faculty member from the Department of Ag and Applied Economics. They presented information on the current status of the national economy, interest rates and the price of farmland. Provided organizational leadership to the grape track of the Wisconsin Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Conference held in Wisconsin Dells. Over 100 grape growers attend the grape track, over 800 attended the full conference and 58 grape

growers attended the beginning school held on the Sunday afternoon of the conference. Met with the livestock sale committee to set weigh in dates for the 2014 fair. At state expense, participated in a UW-Extension Faculty Governance Hearings and Appeals committee in Madison. Cooperated with La Crosse County UW-Extension Office in hosting a dairy modernization conference on robotic milking and robotic calf feeding. In February, met with the 4-H horse barn project committee to continue the planning for the proposed remodeling of the horse barn. As of now, if work is to be done with converting over to pens, the Viroqua High School Ag construction class will start the work after this year's fair. Met with the Cattlemen board to plan the annual late winter cattlemen program and to get the 2014 scholarship program started. Served as a judge for the sectional FFA speaking contest at the Brookwood High School. Hosted a program in Readstown on managing downer dairy cows. Attended an update meeting of the Northern Grapes Project in Minneapolis, MN as a member of the advisory committee. Plans are to submit another grant application by the June of 2014. Organized a meeting in Hillsboro on current issues in crop production. Topics covered were nutrient management, weed control in prevented planted acres, insect scouting methods and crop insurance update. Also organized and conducted a fresh vegetable producer meeting for the Hillsboro area growers. Topics include disease control and insect control in vine crops, enterprise budgeting and understanding sprayer calibration and making the right nozzle selection. Attended the regional cattle feeders program in Sparta. Towards the end of February, the WDATCP state animal health veterinarian announced that the PED virus was infecting hogs in Wisconsin so he banned all county fair weigh-ins. A special livestock sale committee meeting was held to discuss the options for the hog project. A final decision will be made at another special meeting in March.

Pulvermacher reported on recent activities: Leader retreat was held with emphasis on technology – handouts shared on calculating your digital footprint, facebook: friend or foe, understanding different apps and their uses. 4-H Day at the Capitol will be held March 19th and has been a logistical challenge with 62 Vernon Co. folks attending. 4-H Summer Assistant – there are six applicants to date with the closing this Saturday, March 15th. Colleen is working on the orientation for State Youth Conference delegates. Colleen explained she will again use wisline technology to record the session as finding a date everyone can attend is nearly impossible. This way of teaching is family-friendly, saves on time and fuel, as the teleconference can be attended from the comfort of your own home. Parents are encouraged to participate with their children so their questions are completely answered. Colleen serves on the Epsilon Sigma Phi professional association grant committee. This work helps her in honing grant writing skills and she evaluates the grants submitted. Colleen authored and received a \$450 professional development grant from Wisconsin Association of 4-H Youth Development Educators Association for a conference she is attending in May to become a certified Colors (personality inventory) Trainer, enabling her to lead these workshops to assist groups in improving communication and resolving conflicts. Teen Court heard six case in February and has two sessions scheduled in March – the 11th and 18th. Two new Teen Court volunteers have been added to the program. Colleen attended the regional meeting and did a presentation on the new Peer Support Network – a system of support for all UW-Extension colleagues, across program areas, counties and rank. Colleen has had challenges with 4-H volunteers being willing to provide leadership in certain project

areas and then not following through. There are two project areas now with this challenge. Colleen will be headed to Costa Rica for a cultural immersion project as a member of the National Extension Leadership Development cohort. Colleen is adding in some vacation days and therefore will be out of the office from April 1st to 21st. Colleen is very excited about the experience and will return (hopefully) with stories to tell!

Sonya shared that she is on the statewide Food \$ense Newsletter team. In the past year, they have worked to get this paper-copy newsletter onto an FYI site. Sonya shared the FYI site with the committee members. Posting the articles on this website is Sonya's responsibility on the team. In the last month, WNEP has provided education to schools, meal sites and food pantries, discussing whole-grains and making food from scratch instead of a box. Jen and Sonya both attended the 2-day Regional meeting along with the other Extension Agents. Last week, Sonya attended a 2-day WNEP Coordinator conference which discussed WNEP's curriculum, goals and overall strategies. Much of this time was spent starting planning for 2015. In the next month, Sonya will be talking with partners and putting agreements in place for FY15 which starts in October but paperwork is due by early May.

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