

Rock County Agriculture & Extension Education Committee
Wednesday, August 14, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
2nd Floor Courthouse Conference Room
Rock County Courthouse
Janesville WI
Unapproved Minutes

Present: Supervisors Arnold, Wiedenfeld, Sweeney and Pleasant
Chair Bostwick arrived at 7:15 pm

Staff Present: Jim Stute, Department Head; Christy Marsden, Horticulture Educator and
Administrative Assistant Sheila JaDoul

Guests: Rob McConnell, Fair Board President

1. Call to Order, Vice-Chair Supervisor Arnold called the meeting to order at 7 pm.
2. Approval of Agenda – Motion to approve agenda by Supervisor Sweeney, second by Supervisor Wiedenfeld, motion carried.
3. Approval of July 10, 2013, Meeting Minutes
Motion to approve minutes as changed by Supervisor Sweeney, second by Supervisor Wiedenfeld, motion carried.
4. Citizen Participation, Information and Announcements - None
5. 4-H Fairgrounds Maintenance and Contracts
 - a. Fair Association Report – Mr. McConnell reported the 2013 fair was a success. Attendance was higher than previous years due to a combination of good weather and entertainment. Preliminary analysis indicates a profit of \$75,000. Large crowds on Tuesday created some problems including congestion around the grandstand and the Craig Avenue gate. The Fair Board met with the Sheriff's Department to discuss solutions. Mr. McConnell contacted City officials to estimate the Economic Impact of the fair is on the City. Christine Rebout, Executive Director of the Janesville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, said that Tuesday alone resulted in approximately \$8 Million in spending in the Rock County area.
 - b. Approval of Fairgrounds Rental Contracts- One contract:

September 10, Dean George Auction Service, Craig Center, \$365.

Motion to Approve by Supervisor Wiedenfeld, second by Supervisor Sweeney, motion carried.

6. Approval of Extension Bills/Transfers/Encumbrances

Stute presented the bills and a transfer request needed to purchase a new computer. Motion to approve by Supervisor Sweeney, second by Supervisor Arnold, motion carried.

7. Educator report - Christy Marsden

Marsden reported on her activities since beginning on July 1st:

- A. She has made many trips around the county introducing herself.
- B. She has been meeting other county horticulture staff to review what their duties are.
- C. She is working with the Master Gardeners program to reinstate the monthly meetings, trainings, log their volunteer hours, etc.
- D. She is working with the Farm to School Program.
- E. UW-Extension recently received a large donation of seeds from Wal-Mart which will be used with other Educators, School Garden programs, etc.

The condition of the ash trees on the fairgrounds was discussed. An inventory was done in 2012. Marsden will develop a plan to protect the structurally sound trees.

8. Discussion and Approval: Demolition of Garage at Rock County Farm

Stute reported on the condition of an unused garage on the North side of Hwy. 14. It is an eyesore and a safety/liability concern. The highway department can tear it down for a nominal cost. Motion to approve by Supervisor Sweeney, second by Supervisor Wiedenfeld, motion carried.

9. Discussion and Approval: Support for Regional Dairy & Livestock Educator

Stute reported that with the retirement of Mr. Thompson and other Dairy and Livestock Agents throughout the region, there is great need for a Regional Dairy and Livestock Educator. This Educator would be available to participating counties for answering producer questions and targeted educational programming. The Southwest Region Office and the Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Area are developing a plan for a shared educator which would be housed in the Dairy Science Department at UW Madison. Possible contributing counties include Dane, Jefferson, Dodge, Rock and Walworth. Stute proposes funding the position with program revenue and included \$5,000 in the 2014 budget proposal. Motion to approve by Supervisor Arnold, second by Supervisor Pleasant, motion carried.

10. WAEC Southwest Region Meeting, September 10th

The meeting will be held at the Three Bears Resort in Warren, agenda pending. By consensus, Rock County will not attend due to the conflict with the September committee meeting.

11. Rock County Farm Update

Stute reported that UW-Extension and the RECAP program cleaned up the former farmstead site, removing residual debris from the building demolition, former farm operation and materials which have been dumped at the site. The City of Janesville will again coordinate goose hunting on the farm.

12. Department Update

Stute discussed the proposed 2014 budget. In summary, it represents a 1% reduction from 2013, and is basically at a cost to continue level, but contains some notable actions. The 4-H Interim Club Advisor position has been converted to a permanent Program Advisor position with 20% funding from the 4-H Leaders Association. The budget also contains \$5,000 for support of a regional Dairy and Livestock Educator funded with program revenue. Both will be included in the 133 contract with UW-Extension. Farm revenue is up in 2013, estimated to be \$150,000, and was budgeted at that level for 2014. Cell Tower income for the fairgrounds will continue to increase per contracts.

Preliminary interviews for the 4-H Program Advisor position will be held August 30th with 6 candidates from an applicant pool of over 30. Final interviews will be done by Agriculture & Extension Committee on Friday September 13th at 11 am. Mr. Stute will send out further information to the Committee members when this is finalized.

There are plans to refill the 0.4 FTE Family Living backfill position internally. The employee is soon to be retired Family Living Educator from Dodge County. She is already experienced and will not need extensive training.

Note: Supervisor Arnold left at 8:30 am

13. Comments from the Committee

The committee discussed the need to address future uses of the fairgrounds and the need to get input from the Fair Association. This will be placed on the September meeting agenda.

14. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:40 pm by Supervisor Wiedenfeld, second by Pleasant, motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Sheila JaDoul, Administration Assistant