

CHIPPEWA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & EXTENSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 3, 2021
WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL
7:45 AM

DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THIS MEETING IS BEING HELD VIA CONFERENCE CALL TO COMPLY WITH THE SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES. IF YOU ARE A MEMEBER OF THE PUBLIC AND WISH TO SPEAK, PLEASE CALL THE DIAL IN NUMBER AND THE COMMITTEE CHAIR WILL ACKNOWLEDGE YOU AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME ON THE AGENDA. IF YOU NEED TO EITHER MUTE OR UNMUTE YOURSELF DURING THE MEETING PRESS *6.

Meeting Phone Number 1-415-655-0001

Meeting Number (Access Code): 1269520167

Meeting Password: 97956984

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Kari Ives	Chippewa County	District 12 (Chair)	Remote	
Ken Schmitt	Chippewa County	District 3 (Vice-Chair)	Remote	
Charlene Kervina	Chippewa County	District 10	Remote	
Annette Hunt	Chippewa County	District 13	Remote	
Glen Sikorski	Chippewa County	District 2	Remote	
Heather Lubs	Chippewa County	Meeting Clerk	Remote	

Others present via remote access: Randy Scholz until approximately 8:00 a.m., Catherine Emmanuelle, Jerry Clark, Margaret Murphy, Jeanne Walsh, Sandy Tarter. Nancy Fastner joined at approximately 8:00 a.m. and Heidi Benson joined at 8:19 a.m.

3. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO BE HEARD

No members of the public wishing to be heard.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Ken Schmitt, District 3 (Vice-Chair)
SECONDER:	Annette Hunt, District 13
AYES:	Ives, Schmitt, Kervina, Hunt, Sikorski

1. Approve the agenda
2. Approve the Minutes

Agriculture & Extension Committee

Minutes
Regular Meeting

Webex Conference Call

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7:45 AM

Agriculture & Extension Committee - Regular Meeting - Dec 2, 2020 7:45 AM

3. Schedule next meeting date - April 7, 2021 at 7:45 AM

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

No business items to discuss.

6. REPORTS

A. Area Extension Director - Catherine Emmanuelle

C.Emmanuelle reported that the Area 6 colleague continue to work remotely and have continued support to do so.

Dunn County is piloting a written reporting system. This will not replace the in person reporting the committee is receiving now; however, will be an additional reporting document.

Area 6 colleague continue to meet monthly to recognize the purpose, vision, to grow strengths and continue to grow.

When in person programming resumes, virtual learning will continued to be offered.

The Community Development position continues to remain vacant as the hiring freeze is still in place. It is noted the position is important and looking forward to fully restoring in 2021 when the hiring freeze is lifted.

C.Emmanuelle noted the WI Area Health Education Centers (a UW-Madison Family) is seeking internship sites throughout the state for Public Health students to work on health projects. No funding is required of the county. Students will provide 8 weeks of remote/virtual partnership. Some Area 6 colleague have reached out to Catherine to express their interest in an intern.

B. FoodWise - Sandy Tarter/Nancy Fastner

S.Tarter noted programming is continuing virtually in classrooms at Parkview and Southview, with WIC , StrongBodies, Chippewa Valley Alternative High School, etc. Additional connections in Bloomer and Lake Holcombe after school are being discussed.

The current session of StrongBodies has approximately 30 Chippewa County participants. Advertising of this program is done through ADRC and Food Panties for local participants.

The Cooking Matters program is being offered twice a month to WIC participants and Head Start Families through virtual format. Participants are sent gift cards to make the meals that were demonstrated during the virtual session.

Virtual sessions are being held with Chippewa Valley Alternative High School. Students receive food from the school to recreate the recipe at home that they learned about in our class.

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C. Agriculture - Jerry Clark

J.Clark reviewed the many webinar series podcasts that have launched since our last meeting. Topics include Focus on Forage, Saffron as an alternative crop, farm management, ruminants, etc.

He has continued to help Barron County and local Chippewa County farmers determine land rent and rent value.

Pesticide Applicator Training cannot be held in person due to COVID precautions. Certifications have been extended for applicators whose license expired in 2020. Applicators whose license expired prior to 2020 can do a self-study.

J.Clark noted his National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA) presidency expires in late June/early July.

He is also working on preparing his promotional rank materials, which requires a significant amount of time.

i. Groundwater Update

J.Clark noted the Ag Education Coordinating Committee meets quarterly with the Land Conservation & Forest Management Planning & Water Committee to discuss ground water issues. Nitrogen appears to be more severe in our county than in other counties. This continues to be monitored and will plan to host a field day in August, if community COVID precautions allow in person gatherings.

K.Schmitt inquired how communication will be provided to the community regarding upcoming webinars? J.Clark noted email lists, news release outlets and Co-ops will be sources of communication.

A.Hunt noted nitrates have increased significantly and inquired if additional information will be provided. J.Clark noted that the nitrate levels were previously tested during a drought year. Will do testing in a wet year to compare as these factors can affect testing.

D. Horticulture - Margaret Murphy

Though COVID-19 has resulted in reduced recruitment in the Master Gardener Program, Chippewa County is one of 9 counties in the state that will be training in new Master Gardener Volunteers this year. 11 individuals from Dunn, Chippewa and Eau Claire counties to get them started in our new on-boarding class, the last step before becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer. All participated in the horticulture class offered last fall by Diana Alfuth, Horticulture Outreach Specialist for Pierce and St. Croix Counties, and myself.

To assist new volunteers, I've been working with certified Master Gardeners from all three counties to develop a mentorship program. 14 Master Gardeners from all 3 counties have volunteered to serve as mentors in 2021. We will be taking a team approach to mentoring to allow for a full array of skills and interest to be available in supporting our new volunteers.

MGVs have done a great job in conquering Zoom and other virtual platforms to allow for new approaches to educate. They are moving full speed ahead in transitioning their traditionally in-person annual garden seminar to a virtual platform and have embraced partnering with other counties in the western region to create a robust virtual seminar: Growing Together 2021 which is set to begin February 20. Currently, we have 187 people registered. I've been assisting with the registration and creating the evaluation surveys.

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The seminar is a series of four weekly, online presentations. Presentation topics were based on needs identified by horticulture questions we received this season, and include soil preparation and beginning vegetable gardening, design strategies in the yard for privacy, how to properly plant trees and shrubs, and native plants for the region. The fee is \$10 which includes all four presentations. MG virtual seminar - <https://www.eauclaireareamastergardener.org/education>.

Chippewa County MGs have a grant program to help fund horticulture projects

- Parks and Rec together with the CF Rotary Club to fund the purchase of trees that will be planted along the path from Irvine Park to the new Erickson Park.

- CF library received funds to purchase garden / environmental based books for kids

- Boys & Girls club received funds for a youth garden - will help mentor them

Collaborating with 4H - with Clover College not doing an in-person program I am working to create a program to learn how to start tomatoes plants indoors. Discussing gardening mini camp with other 4H/hort colleagues.

On the plant diagnostic front, I have been fielding questions on trees, planting groundcovers, building raised beds, soil sampling, native plantings and houseplants.

A couple of schools have been reaching out for guidance on school gardens. Will explore a train the trainer program for teachers & other school staff involved with the garden

Will be participating in an virtual conference for community garden manager & participants in February.

Registrations for Chippewa Falls & Bloomer Community Gardens are being updated and distributed soon.

E. 4-H - Heidi Benson

H.Benson reported that a new virtual format of mini camps kicked off in late November/early December. These virtual session have been very well received.

Areas 5/6/9 are collaborating on providing programming such as International Cookie Camp, Arts & Crafts Camp, Breads Camp, Gardening Camp, STEM Camp, etc. Kits are put together for participants to pick up or have delivered to participate in these virtual programs.

H.Benson will be co-leading a virtual learning community session that will be offered state-wide. A 6-week Pie program will be provided with a certified fair judge joining the last session to provide feedback to the youth. This is open to any youth, not just 4-H members. Link information will be provided to the committee as requested following today's meeting.

The Discover 4-H Program provided in the Fall of 2020 was a huge success. Another version of this program will be provided this Spring identified as "Digging Deeper into 4-H". This program will be provided to youth in grades 4-8th grades, open to any youth.

STEM kits have been provided monthly to the Bloomer and Chippewa libraries. They have been a great supporter of 4-H.

Clover College, typically one of our biggest programs will be held virtually this year. Any youth in grade K-6 can register for up to 3 kits out of 7 to follow pre-recorded or written instructions.

An in-person ice fishing program is planned for March 20th.

H.Benson continues to work to provide additional virtual programming to the youth while we still wait to again program in person.

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F. Human Development & Relationships - Jeanne Walsh

These past couple of months I have been involved with a new Dean's initiative program called Youth Forward Wisconsin. I am part of a group of Extension colleagues across WI, including 2 other colleagues in Area 6 involved in this statewide initiative that is exploring ways to develop a Universal Child savings account. A universal Savings Account would help youth to have more opportunities open to them, and allow communities a way to support their growth and development. Universal Child savings accounts have been used in many states and some Wisconsin communities, to help every child have a small amount of funding for their education after high school. Data shows that with just \$1-\$499 in a post-secondary education account, youth are 3 times more likely to attend post-secondary education, and 4 times more likely to graduate. Community support helps youth feel confident and supported as they look at future schooling and career goals.

At this time, we have all been interviewing partners in our communities about their interests regarding having, and possibly being involved in, helping to create a Universal Child Savings Account Program. Those that I have interviewed in our county have all been very interested in learning more about Universal Child Savings Accounts. They are cautious about how we would fund such a program, and wanted to make sure that all children would be able to enroll.

I continue to keep busy with the Learn & Earn Program that is a partnership with myself, RCU, and Dept of Workforce Development. The Youth Build- or Fresh Start Program is now actively using the program, with (5) 18-25 yr olds completing in the past month. We have 94 total participants thus far.

I have been asked to be involved with the NW Wisconsin Hope Consortium, as they assess and plan prevention, treatment and recovery in Chippewa, Rusk, Barron, and Washburn counties with the focus on opioid use disorders with alcohol as secondary. Successful completion of this planning process will put us in a position to receive an implementation grant that will be used to improve AODA prevention, treatment, and recovery in our counties.

Things on the radar:

I will be providing a training in April to partners called Encouraging Financial Conversations. This virtual program is 6- 1 hour sessions, and is designed for case managers, social workers, and other front line staff to help empower clients to achieve their financial goals and manage their money. Participants will learn techniques and strategies to help their clients create a financial goals action plan, build and maintain good credit, pay off debts, and more. Participants will also learn coaching strategies that are based on client's strengths and resources in coming up with solutions. Dates of this program will be April 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28.

Completing the WeCOPE (Wisconsin Empowering and Connecting with our Positive Emotions) training with plans to offer programming this late spring.

7. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Ken Schmitt would like report on the number of participants from the ground water webinar scheduled in the coming days.

8. ADJOURN

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