

## Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee

June 9, 2014

### Minutes (corrected copy)

**Committee members present:** Chairman Tom Rudolph, Scott Holewinski, Jim Intrepidi, Robb Jensen and Bob Mott. Excused: Clint Zimbeck.

**Others present:** Erica Brewster, Tim Brown, Lynn Feldman (UWEX); Tom Schmitz (UWEX Regional Director); Nancy Gehrig (Oneida County Fair); Lisa Charbarneau (LRES); Jean Hansen, Michele Sadauskas, Rosie Page (LWC); Matt Peplinski (FSA), Michael Stinebrink (NRCS) and Kerri Ison.

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in the UWEX Lower Level meeting room at the Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport. The meeting has been posted according to WI Open Meeting Law and the facility is handicap accessible. Rudolph noted the agenda is lengthy and would appreciate the Committee's effort to stay on topic.

**Approve agenda:** Motion by Mott/Intrepidi to approve today's amended agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All ayes; motion carried.

**Approve minutes:** Motion by Mott/Jensen to approve the minutes of the 5/9/14 meeting as recorded. All ayes; motion carried.

#### **Date(s) of future meetings:**

July 8, 2014	1:30 p.m.	Extension meeting room
August 11, 2014	1:30 p.m.	Extension meeting room

**County Meeting Time survey:** At the May County Board meeting a resolution was brought forth regarding county meeting times. Brown was directed to develop a public survey regarding this topic. Jensen noted the Board can currently schedule meetings at alternate times, but has chosen not to do so. Motion by Mott that Brown continue to work on the survey and bring back for final approval at the July Committee meeting. Discussion followed. Brown would like to release the survey by the end of the month in order to meet deadlines set by County Board. Committee members suggested changes to the survey (include specific times, address of person completing the survey, an explanation at the beginning providing some background information and the purpose of the survey). Brown noted a shorter survey will provide better feedback and there is a comment section at the end of the survey. Lengthy discussion followed. Mott withdrew the initial motion. Motion by Mott/Intrepidi to approve the survey as amended, provide a copy of the final draft to Committee members and go forward with release of the survey after Committee review. All ayes; motion carried.

**UWEX Support Staff vacancy review:** Brewster noted Kerri Ison (Secretary III) has taken a position with the County Clerk's office and Anna Gauthier (Secretary I) has taken a position with the District Attorney's office. Brewster requested a waiver of the vacancy review process for both positions. She and Charbarneau have worked together on the position descriptions and propose

changing each position to 80% each to maximize office coverage throughout the week (increase the Secretary III position from 60% to 80% and reduce the Secretary I position from 100% to 80%). A fiscal impact statement was provided for review. Charbarneau noted when there is a vacancy in a department it is normal to do a review of the position. She doesn't believe a position is being created—just a change to the percentage of time for each vacant position. Discussion followed regarding recruitment issues, job duties per position, future plans, etc. An open recruitment can be done without posting internally. Lengthy discussion followed. Motion by Mott/Intrepid to approve the waiver of vacancy review for the Secretary III and Secretary I positions with proposed changes and forward the resolution to the LRES Committee for approval. **All ayes; motion carried.**

**Preliminary budget for state 133 contract:** Brewster discussed the UWEX agents state 133 Contract (County pays 40% of the agent's salary). She provided handouts reflecting the draft 2015 fiscal year budget, noting there is an estimated increase of \$3,174. Schmitz discussed the increase for next year, noting equity adjustments have been implemented due to position evaluations, retirements, hiring replacements at a lower rate, tenure commitment and merit. He also discussed state duties of county agents. It was noted if the department head role is shared between several agents, the University will subsidize the increase.

**Office space – air quality update:** Brown referenced the prioritized list which was discussed at the May meeting as well as the formal response from the Buildings and Grounds (B&G) Department regarding this list. Brown noted there are not timeframes included the letter and would appreciate that information. Staff feels B&G is working to address the departmental needs satisfactorily at this time. B&G Committee Chair Billy Fried has requested all communication be formal, organized and funneled through the B&G Department. Discussion followed regarding the offer to have Nicolet College students assist with a plan to efficiently utilize current space. Jensen appreciated the ability to provide input on the prioritized list but is unhappy that his comments weren't included in the letter. He believes staff and committee members need to move forward, work together and have open communication. Mott noted the installation of the new phone system is included in the 2015 budget but funds could be spent in November with approval. He noted the new system is portable and Grube will contact Frontier to see what can be done to make the current phone system work better until the new system can be installed. Brown noted staff is currently inventorying phone issues. Committee directed Brown to draft a letter to B&G thanking them for their timely response and cooperation.

**Creation of Program Assistant program:** Background/justification information for the position including job description, resolution and notes from the Finance Director were provided in the Committee packets. Hansen provided staffing history noting that in 2013 the job duties for the conservationist and conservationist positions/duties were combined and the County Conservationist position was re-created. She also noted following the retirement of a 1.0 FTE Secretary in 2012, the position was reduced to .40 FTE as LWC and UWEX were co-located. LWC moved back to the Courthouse in March and it has become apparent that a .40 FTE does not provide adequate support for the department. It has also become apparent that a 1.0 FTE County Conservationist position is

not adequate to run the department effective, efficiently or to complete the goals in the Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) plan which was approved by County Board as well as DATCP. DATCP provides grant funding for staff as well as the cost-share program. The proposed 1.0 FTE Program Assistant position would include secretarial/administrative duties as well as technical duties to assist the Conservationist and help meet the goals of the LWRM plan. Hansen provided a list of items not currently being addressed including goals in the LWRM plan for review.

Charbarneau agreed the priorities set forth by the LWRM plan, and this Committee, are important however this request would create a new position outside the budget cycle and there is an issue of funding the additional hours. If approved at today's meeting, the request will be discussed at the 6/11/14 LRES meeting.

Rudolph noted the LWRM plan is approved by DATCP and the County Board, by not fulfilling goals of the plan the County is in jeopardy of losing DATCP funding which was approximately \$122,000 in 2014. The proposal is a step in the right direction to fulfill those obligations and protect the land and water resources of the County.

Holewinski supports the .40 FTE position at this time but would like time to research the issue to see if all of the items listed actually need to be completed. Mott reiterated that the LWRM plan was approved by County Board and agreed that the plan should be supported. He questioned whether general fund money could be used to cover the increase until it can be included in the 2015 budget.

Discussion followed whether or not LRES has studied the position to see if the department has taken advantage of opportunities to work with other departments.

Jensen believes the position should be considering during the 2015 budget process but is supportive of providing additional help with current clerical needs. Charbarneau agreed that an LTE could be hired for up to 90 working days. Lengthy discussion followed.  
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**Resolution to approve the creation of Program Position:** Motion by Rudolph/Mott to forward the resolution to create a program assistant in the Land and Water Conservation Department to the LRES Committee for consideration. Discussion followed. Ayes-four; nay-one; motion carried.

**Oneida County Fair update:**

- Intrepidi noted the bylaws were not approved regarding a quorum as the statement must read half plus one according to Corporation Counsel. It was suggested to reduce the number of members to help meet quorum requirements. Jensen suggested using "GoTo" meeting option to help alleviate quorum concerns.
- Fair contracts: Brewster provided 11 entertainment contracts and six judge's contracts for approval. Motion by Mott/Intrepidi to approve the entertainment contracts as presented. All

ayes; motion carried. Motion by Jensen/Mott to approve the judge's contracts as presented.  
All ayes; motion carried.

- Gehrig is still seeking donations noting good community support.

### **Consent agenda items:**

- Discussion followed regarding the necessity of monthly budget reports. It was the consensus of the Committee to discontinue providing monthly budget reports.
- Motion by Mott/Intrepidi to approve the consent agenda items as discussed. All ayes; motion carried.

### **Agency reports:**

- Lake districts: Mott noted Mid Lake is preparing for their annual meeting. ~~Enterro~~ **Onterra** was unable to locate the curly leaf pondweed so was unable to treat. Intrepidi noted ~~Enterro~~ **Onterra** treated EWM at Lake Nokomis recently.
- Matt Peplinski from FSA (Wausau, Merrill and Rhinelander offices) was present to discuss FSA issues. Due to staffing issues the Rhinelander Office is open by appointment only but staff can be reached at the Wausau office daily. A new election cycle begins today and closes in December. He noted that for 2015 Oneida and Vilas Counties will have only one representative and this Committee will need to make a decision to have a representative or not. Clint Zimbeck is the current representative and will be seated until the election closes in December. Peplinski will attend the January meeting regarding the 2015 appointment. A handout regarding the 2014 Farm Bill was provided and available FSA programs were highlighted.
- Michael Stinebrink, NRCS, provided written report and reviewed in detail. NRCS offers several incentive programs for forest, pasture and crop land in Oneida County. He estimates having \$1 million to fund projects in a seven-county area. The first meeting of the Headwaters Local Work Group will be held from 9 am-noon on 7/10/14 in Rhinelander to give input on how federal conservation funds are spent. He also provided a copy of the Local Work Group survey for Committee members to complete and submit to Hansen by 6/18/14. Discussion followed. Committee instructed staff to post the meeting so that Committee members can attend if desired. Stinebrink provided handout of the young forest initiative and provided program detail.
- WLWCA: Rudolph reported Dave Solin (Langlade County) will replace him as the new NCA representative on the WLWCA Board. Solin may also be appointed to the NACD Board in the future.
- RC&D: Rudolph attended a national RC&D meeting in Mobile recently. Mott noted RC&D is seeking "Friend of the Forest" nominations.
- The WACEC State Conference will be held 6/23-24/14 in Eau Claire. Rudolph and Mott plan to attend. Rudolph has been elected to serve on the WACEC State Board.

**Introduce Rosie Page – LTE for Land Conservation Department:** Hansen introduced Rosie Page, LTE for the Land Conservation Department. The 500-hour position is funded by a grant from

RC&D. Page worked with Land Conservation previously and is also the current WHIP (WI Headwaters Invasive Partnership) Coordinator. Page reviewed the goals of the position: update the department website, research and provide outreach to lake landowners regarding downed woody habitat and the importance of emergent and floating vegetation in the water. Discussion followed.

**Use of soil map funds to purchase canoe(s) and/or tablet(s):** Hansen noted there is approximately \$3,300 leftover from the soil map project from many years ago. She spoke with Sorenson regarding dispensing of these funds as these maps are now available electronically. After discussing needs with staff, Hansen/Sadauskas requested permission to purchase a canoe; a kayak or solo canoe; and one or more tablets (once ITS issues are worked out). Discussion followed regarding wireless access for the tablet and laptops in the office and the purposes of these devices. Motion by Holewinski/Mott authorizing staff to purchase a canoe, kayak and tablet(s) not to exceed the balance in the soil map account with the Chair's approval. All ayes; motion carried.

**DATCP Farmland Preservation Plan:** Hansen reported a work agreement with NCWRPC is needed. Desmond is currently working with the County's Risk Assessor regarding insurance requirements. Motion by Holewinski/Jensen to approve the work agreement contingent upon the Risk Assessor's insurance requirements and approval by the Administration Committee. All ayes; motion carried.

**County Cost-Share Program update/approval:** Nothing to report.

**Monthly staff report:** Tabled to next meeting.

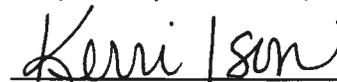
**Public comment:**

- Rudolph provided North Central Area Association meeting materials provided at their last meeting.
- Mott provided a copy of an article in the WI Counties magazine regarding the value of Extension.

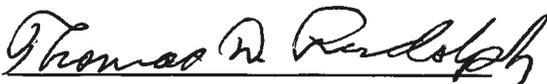
**Items for next agenda:** Staffing update, update on office space/air quality issues, DATCP Farmland Preservation Program Plan.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Mott/Holewinski to adjourn at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kerri Ison, Recording Secretary



Thomas Rudolph, Chair

